

# Montessori Schools of Central Texas Newsletter

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## Upcoming Events November 2020

11/10	Parent Enrichment Meeting 6-7 pm Elementary & Primary Parents
11/11	Veteran's Day – <b>SCHOOL CLOSED</b>
11/17	Samaritan's Purse Donation Drive Ends
11/20	Thanksgiving Celebration @ 11 am (Elementary, Primary and Toddlers Only)
11/23-27	Thanksgiving Break – <b>SCHOOL CLOSED</b>

## News from the Top

*I believe that this article is of such importance that I will continue it on page 6, so that you can better understand its relationship to a Montessori learning environment.*

### The First Five Years of Life Can Shape the Destiny of Your Child

The birth of a child heralds many new beginnings. Each day is a first. Every second is precious, with each building towards the development of an entirely new person with their own particular set of emotions, opinions, and views. Your baby is a human being capable of independent thought, but in the first five years of his or her existence, the responsibility to shape that capacity lies in the hands of the parents.

Consider the numbers: Babies are born with more than 100 billion nerve cells in their brains. Learning occurs when these nerve cells, or neurons, connect with each other through synapses. By the age of five, 90% of the brain's capacity has already developed. A child's brain is more receptive to learning during the first five years of his life than at any other point in time. What's most relevant here is that the brain is most pliable or flexible in the first five years of life. The more you exercise different areas of the brain in the early years of development, the more lasting of an impact it will have on their learning ability.

Think of your child as a sponge -- they will absorb all possible information around them at amazing speed which is why it's imperative to create an exciting and challenging environment for them. These first five years will form the fundamental building blocks of their future health, happiness, growth, development and learning achievement in school. This is also the time when they will learn how to interact, how to build and maintain social relationships. What they experience today is what they will exhibit tomorrow.

*Continued page 5*

## Dear Parents

The month of NOVEMBER is such a beautiful time with the fall season moving forward, the weather cooling down from summer, and the leaves changing into their once-a-year vibrant colors – WOW!

November also brings to remembrance the need for all of us to be more thankful for all that we have going for us, which is a lot. Do you tend to be a thankful person? Reflect on your attitude and verbiage for a minute. Being a thankful person is a skill that must be developed in the sometimes less-than-positive environment that most of us find ourselves daily. I have observed that expressing thanks has gone by the wayside in most of our retail and restaurants businesses today. When was

the last time that a cashier thanked you for your business? What I hear most often is "Have a good one," whatever that means.

November is also the month that the holiday Thanksgiving is celebrated across America. It is a time for family members to come together around a common meal and share their fond memories of the year and perhaps to renew outdated relationships. My prayer is that each of you have a very nice Thanksgiving celebration, that the time spent with one another is sweet, and some wonderful memories are made. Also, that whichever meal you serve (it doesn't have to be turkey) is the best meal that you have ever prepared. Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at the Montessori Schools of Central Texas.

### Infant 1 – Mrs. Amanda Cruz

October was a great month filled with many learning activities. The children were introduced to pumpkins and gourds and were able to feel the differences in each variety. We also served pumpkin mousse and knew it was a big hit by the happy orange smiles! However, no one was a fan of the steamed broccoli, but they were all great sports and tried it. Moving into November we'll be continuing our fall themed snacks and activities. Our 9-12 month old little ones are focusing on movement. You may have noticed our room arrangement has changed a bit to promote different types of movements. Our infants under 7 months have been hard at work building their core muscles to sit, push-up, and begin the first stages of crawling. We continue to focus on self-feeding during mealtimes. As an important reminder, please have your child's meals fully prepped and cut to the appropriate size for their consumption. Let the count-down to Thanksgiving begin!

---Mrs. Amanda Cruz

### Infant 2 – Ms. Rosa Gray

During the month of November, we will be focusing on social graces and courtesies. The children will learn to say: *please*, *thank you*, and *excuse me*, when appropriate. We will also practice our inside voices when indoors. Our large group discussions will be about Thanksgiving, gratitude and turkeys. The children will make their own Thanksgiving placemat to take home when they are finished. Also this month, the students will create art using feathers and fall colored paints. Throughout November, we will sing a Thanksgiving song and I will send a copy so that you can sing along too.

---Ms. Rosa Gray

### Toddlers I & II-Mrs. Ronelus & Ms. Armas

November will be a month filled with many fun, learning activities. During our large group lessons, the toddler classes will be discovering the life cycle of turkeys, Native Americans, Pilgrims, and we will teach and then practice gratitude. As the weather grows colder, the toddler students will learn how to put on their own sweaters and jackets to build more independence. During our small group lessons, the children will spoon cranberries to refine their fine motor skills to prepare their hands for handwriting. We will shuck corn, and create many Thanksgiving arts and crafts this month, to include Native American Chief hats, ice cream cone teepees, and paint Pilgrim hats using dots. On the menu this month, the children will enjoy the fruits of their labor from shucking fresh corn and will be treated to steamed corn and homemade corn bread. While outside, the toddler students will practice walking on a straight line to build balance and coordination. We will also continue to tend our fall gardens and hope to harvest some nutritious vegetable soon.

---Mrs. LaDonna Ronelus & Ms. Yesenia Armas

### Primary 1 & 2 - Mrs. Alvarado, Ms. Prudencio, & Mrs. Prudencio

We have a lot of exciting lessons in store for the month of November. The students will wrap up their study of our solar system with a focus on Saturn, Neptune and Pluto. Next we will delve into the layers of our Earth and move into rock classification and volcanoes. For social graces and courtesies, the students will be taught how to care for books, where to place a napkin and proper usage, and table setting. Cooking lessons will be spiced pumpkin muffins, a dessert for our Thanksgiving celebration, and Arepas con queso, a Columbian dish, to tie into our study of South America. For our Bible lessons, the students will hear the stories of *A Baby in a Basket*, *The Burning Bush*, and *The Ten Plagues*. Lastly, in Science, the primary students will be able to define an isthmus and strait, compare the size of planets, learn weather patterns, and classify plants and animals. We also look forward to honoring our Veterans this month.

**Important Reminder: Children with tennis shoes are allowed to play and enjoy the playground safely. Slick shoes, such as cowboy boots & rain boots, are not permitted on the playground.** ---Mrs. Carmen Alvarado, Ms. Katherine Prudencio, & Mrs. Veronica Prudencio



## Lower Elementary-Mrs. Abraham

The elementary students sure enjoyed their field trip to Salado Glassworks this past month. They were amazed to see glass being heated into a pliable form to be blown into different shapes. They found great appreciation when touring the art gallery after watching the mechanics that go into creating glass art.

For the month of November, we will shift gears studying our first President, George Washington. In geography, we will focus on the South American continent, learning the culture, countries, flags, and capitals. Our Botany studies will center on roots to learn the parts and the types of roots, and root adaptation. The students will take this knowledge with them outdoors to do gardening with our volunteer gardener every Thursday this month. In Bible, we will read about *The Ten Commandments*, *Jonah and the Whale*, and the story of *David and Goliath*. For history, the students will continue working on their personal family timeline and we will also learn about our first Thanksgiving. In Zoology, the children will learn the parts of a fish and also research different species. Our Physical Science experiments will encompass states of matter and the water cycle.

---Mrs. Doline Abraham

## Notes from Mrs. Watson:

1. On Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 p.m., the primary and elementary classrooms will be hosting parent enrichment meetings for our Montessori parents. The Elementary theme will be, "The 6-9 year old child-what do I expect?" and the primary meeting will be, "The Montessori Language Curriculum." **\*\*\*Since these meeting are for parents only, childcare will be available by reservation to allow for proper staffing. If you need childcare, please email Mrs. Watson no later than Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup>.**
2. From November 2<sup>nd</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, the students and staff of MSCT will be participating in community service by collecting filled shoeboxes of various goods to send to Samaritan's Purse to help those in need and to spread the Gospel. Items to put into shoeboxes should be non-perishable, non-breakable, and please no liquids. Examples include: Personal Hygiene items (comb, washcloth, adhesive bandages), "Wow" Items (soccer ball, stuffed animals, clothing, small musical instruments, backpacks), Crafts & Activities (puzzles, binoculars, compass), School Supplies (pencils, markers, calculators, scissors), Toys (foam balls, frisbees, kaleidoscopes), etc. Personal notes inside of your shoebox is welcome! More information can be found on the Samaritan's Purse website. Also, Samaritan's Purse encourages donors to give \$9 each to cover the cost of shipping. Please make your checks payable to the school (write Samaritan's Purse on the memo line) and we will write one combined check.
3. Our annual Thanksgiving Celebration for Elementary, Primary, and Toddler students and parents will be at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. A sign-up sheet will be made available for items needed to make our celebration a great success!
4. Two buildings down and one left to go before our beautiful buildings are completely re-painted. Also on the schedule, a new front porch for the Toddler 2 classroom and a music wall on the playground for the students of Infant 2 and both Toddler classes. Over Thanksgiving break, the Primary 1 building will have a new heating and air conditioning unit installed.
5. Lastly, please be aware that if our parent body continues to drive by the dumpster at the back of the American Legion, they will close the parking lot permanently per the Commander.

~~Mrs. Jennifer Watson



Cleaning a conch shell  
Tissue paper pumpkin

Serving snack



- Leah Ellis                      Infant 1                      November 1<sup>st</sup>                      1 Year
- Rosemary Schaefer              Toddler 2                      November 4<sup>th</sup>                      3 Years
- Avery Brakeman                      Infant 1                      November 6<sup>th</sup>                      1 Year
- Pearl Foster                      Primary 2                      November 6<sup>th</sup>                      5 Years
- Vibhav Atluri                      Infant 2                      November 12<sup>th</sup>                      2 Years
- Henry Samfield                      Primary 1                      November 15<sup>th</sup>                      4 Years
- Amara Johnson                      Infant 2                      November 16<sup>th</sup>                      2 Years
- Siyona Naik                      Primary 1                      November 18<sup>th</sup>                      4 Years
- Nidhi Atluri                      Primary 2                      November 19<sup>th</sup>                      4 Years
- Maxwell Freeman                      Elementary                      November 21<sup>st</sup>                      7 Years
- Aiden Stewart                      Elementary                      November 21<sup>st</sup>                      8 Years
- Paxton Pehl                      Primary 2                      November 23<sup>rd</sup>                      5 Years

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So, how do you manage to do this to the best of your ability? How do you make sure that the environment you create for your child is challenging enough for him or her to realize their best potential? The answer is right before you: **keep them enrolled here in the Montessori Method of Instruction.**

The key is to maximize the learning capacity of children in their formative years through mental stimulation, attention, encouragement, love, and good healthcare. Exposing your child to different activities helps them activate synaptic connections to maximize use of different areas of the brain. This allows children to acquire new knowledge, learn new skills, and set and achieve goals for themselves. Many early learning experts, such as Dr. Maria Montessori, viewed learning via eclectic activities as one of the most important domains of early childhood development.

Each child has his or her own learning curve. They tend to develop at their own pace even if they grow up in the same environment. While interacting with children, it is important to understand subjective growth curves. Each child will take a different route for maximized learning. This means that often as a parent you will have to use different learning methods depending on their learning curve.

The easiest way to do this for parents is to actively engage a child's curiosity. All those hundreds of questions a child keeps asking are the moments when a child's brain is developing. Answering those in a satisfactory manner, not only addressing the question, but also encouraging them to think further and ask new ones should be a parent's aim. Alongside interacting in a way that rewards and boosts their curiosity, also let them explore their surroundings as it encourages creative play and positive behavior.

Another aspect to keep in mind is how much you're "helping" your child. It is tempting to step in and help your child, but you may end up obstructing their learning by taking over. You should offer minimal assistance and let them discover solutions by themselves. Observe a Montessori child actively engaged in "work" and you will see focus and concentration until they achieve their goal. *"Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed."* (Dr. Maria Montessori)

An additional important factor in maximizing learning is for the child to get into a routine. Kids who are encouraged to consistently practice their organization skills at home typically transfer those skills to the classroom. A Montessori guide (teacher) emphasizes order and consistency through individual and group lessons. Morning, after-school, and evening routines all require organization skills to run smoothly. Whether it's emptying their lunch box right after school, picking out school clothes the night before, or going to bed at a certain time, an organized routine teaches children consistency, which pays off in other spheres of life as well.

The kind of support provided in the early years of a child's life paves the way to an individual's well being throughout life. Your simple interactions from the moment a child awakens to the second they go to sleep have a deeper impact than you can imagine. For working parents, it is vitally important where your child spends their day.

*"Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words but by experiences in the environment."* (Dr. Maria Montessori)