

Montessori Schools of Central Texas Newsletter

December 2022

Dr. Jerry O'Donnell – Headmaster
Mrs. Jennifer Watson – Director

News from the Top



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What Every Child Needs!

Edward Fidellow

What is it that every child needs that parents don't seem to have? (Lifetime passes to Disney World and unlimited shoe budgets don't count!) You can fill in your own blanks. It is something that a Montessori school can help offer. Of course, a good education comes to mind, but that is not even the greatest gift your Montessori school can offer.

What your child needs most is one of the attributes that makes a Montessori school so special. Yes, it is a safe place emotionally; a challenging place intellectually; and a caring place socially. It is designed for your child and populated with adults who care. These are all good things but not the greatest thing your child receives. And your final answer is?

Time! Time is our most treasured commodity – we always seem to be running out of it. We always seem to be talking about “making” time for things when in reality we need to “take” time – making it a priority. And to make it even more challenging for us, it is not just “time” but what you do with time that creates its value.

With time an acorn becomes an oak, a tadpole becomes a frog, a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, and a child becomes --- What? We are prone to say “an adult” but even that is not the ultimate destination of time. It is what you do with time!

If time were the only factor an acorn would become a bigger acorn, a tadpole a bigger tadpole etc. but it is time and attention (what you do with time) that begins this extraordinary transformation. Your child is already DNA'd with the marvelous characteristics of who they are to become – right-handed, left-handed, artist, musician, scientist, doctor, or Indian chief. It takes time (and observation) for these unique character qualities to blossom and become apparent. And that is what your school does – is to take time to know your child, to take time to open the world of learning and to take time to watch your child grow and learn and to be transformed.

Upcoming Events

December 2022

12/16 Christmas Party @ 10:30 am (Elem, Prim, Todd)

**Early Release
@ 12:30pm
(All Classes)**

12/19/22-Christmas Break
1/2/23 **SCHOOL CLOSED**

1/3/23 First Day of Spring Semester

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Infant 1

With 2022 coming to a close, we're preparing for colder weather and Christmas celebrations. Throughout the month we'll be reading stories about bears and hibernation, as well as, focusing on the reason for the season, the birth of baby Jesus. We are continuing to emphasize the students' understanding of the words "please" and "thank you" in English and Spanish and adding lessons about the color green and the shape and sound of a bell. Music this month will be a variety of Christmas carols.

The infants who are participating in snack and table meals are progressing well. We know independent eating can be messy, but we encourage you to let your child hold their own bottle or open cup and eat with utensils during the holiday break. This will progress their table skills and fine motor skills.

Thank you all so much for sharing your littles with us! We love nurturing them and watching them grow and develop. We hope everyone has a blessed holiday!

--- Mrs. Terri Wallace



Infant 2

December will be a great month in our infant class. Each day we will be learning about the birth of Jesus during circle time. We'll also talk about wild animals, weather, Christmas colors, and we are going to start counting 1-2-3. In Spanish we'll add the words "water" and "good morning," and continue singing songs in Spanish. This season brings many opportunities for sensorial work that help us build our motor skills. We'll practice hammering golf tees into pumpkins to develop our hand-eye coordination, comparing fall leaves to differentiate between textures, colors, and shapes, and transferring items with tongs to develop our pincer grasp. We will also continue our practical life lessons like sweeping leaves, mopping, and cleaning the shelves. During lunchtime we be practicing scraping food into the trash and washing our plates in the sink. As a reminder with the weather changing, please make sure your little one has a jacket and warm extra clothing.

--- Mrs. Karla Torres

Toddler 1 & 2

This month in our toddler classes, we will be reading about the Christmas story, listening to Christmas music, and singing Christmas songs. For our small group lessons, the students will transfer jingle bells with a spoon in preparation for pencil grasp, practice putting on our own coats for further independence development, and we will have fun decorating a Christmas tree. The children will create different ornaments, a Star of David, Christmas-themed paintings, and Christmas wreaths. For food preparation lessons, the students will prepare gingerbread cookies which will serve as an opportunity to teach serving food to one another. While outdoors, we will tend to our fall plants and make our own sand angels. In Spanish, we will learn the words for Christmas (Nacimiento del Nino Jesus), Christmas tree (arbol de Navidad), and snowflakes (copa de nieve). All of our teaching staff wishes you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

--- Mrs. Clausen & Ms. Gonzalez

Primary 1 & 2

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During the first week of December, the primary students will classify rocks by igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic. We will discover the animals indigenous to South America and make a Columbian dish, pan de bono. The following week, we will review our in-depth study of volcanoes, and shift our continental focus to Antarctica. For Earth Science, we will learn about clouds and the water cycle, followed by an experiment for further understanding. The children will be able to classify vertebras and invertebrates. Our Biblical stories will center on the Angel who visited Mary and the birth of Jesus Christ.

Later this month, the students will be introduced to an analog clock for telling time and how to take and read temperatures outdoors. In Spanish, we will learn how to greet each other with Feliz Navidad and other Christmas related vocabulary. The children will also make their own ornaments and Christmas cards to celebrate the season.

--- Mrs. Veronica Prudencio, Mrs. Alvarado & Ms. Copeland

Elementary

This has been a very productive semester filled with many learning opportunities. During the chilly month of December, we will be studying the earth's southernmost continent, Antarctica. The students will learn about the sparse number of inhabitants, such as seals, penguins, and migrating whales.

For Physical Science, we will be introduced to our solar system, naming and defining our planets, stars and constellations, moons of various planets, and the Milky Way. In Zoology, the students will research amphibians and be able to anatomically label their parts. Our Civics topic for the month will be our nation's presidential residence on Pennsylvania Avenue, the White House, in which we will learn the history, importance, and purpose of this famous landmark. In History, we will create "the long black line" for a better understanding of the age and history of our planet.

The featured artist of the month will be Leonardo da Vinci, otherwise known as the "universal genius". We will observe and discuss his many creative works. For Bible, the elementary children will learn the true reason for the season and prepare for Christmas when we study the shepherds, the Magi, and the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem.

--- Mrs. Dolline Abraham & Mrs. Monica Walker

Notes from Mrs. Watson:

Thank you very much to our wonderful parents that came out to celebrate Thanksgiving with us. The day was spectacular, filled with many special moments from the heart-warming student performances, to the delicious feast provided by our gracious parents.

We will host our annual Parent-Student Christmas Party (for toddler, primary, and elementary) on Friday, December 16th at the American Legion Hall. Performances start at 10:30 am sharp and lunch follows directly after. The School lunch for all students and parents alike. Parent volunteers will be needed for this special event.

****Don't forget, early dismissal is at 12:30 p.m. for all classes.****

We wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We look forward to a successful Spring Semester ahead!

Mrs. Jennifer Watson



Happy
Birthday



Serving snack

- Fernando Castro-Rodriguez Primary 1 December 1st 4 Years
- Harmony Ivicic Infant 2 December 2nd 2 Years
- Elouise Regier Primary 2 December 4th 4 Years
- Oliver Jackson Toddler 2 December 6th 3 Years
- Breece Conley Primary 1 December 11th 6 Years
- Charlie Hilton Primary 2 December 12th 5 Years
- Charlotte Rodriguez Elementary December 15th 7 Years
- Avery Van Velzen Toddler 2 December 18th 3 Years
- Arthur King Primary 1 December 28th 5 Years
- Johnathan Jones Elementary December 29th 8 Years

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If your child doesn't have time to develop and there is no one there to observe and encourage development, then your child may miss the opportunity to create the person he or she was designed to be. A Montessori school gives children time to discover – not only the marvels outside of themselves but the marvels of their personality and passions within themselves. Montessori offers a child a window on the world and time to take it all in. It takes time to flourish.

There is no need to rush learning. The Montessori secret is that given enough time children will learn everything they need. And given enough time they will joy in the discoveries because they will not be pressed for time, and they will go on to master what they have learned.

So how do we deal with the pressure of time in regard to our children? Take a deep breath! In fact, you may need to take many of them as you set your clocks back figuratively and literally. Figuratively, scale back your time expectations for your child. Being the first to walk, the first to talk, the first to read or the first whatever has nothing to do with the marathon of life. It takes time to build a solid foundation. The gift of time doesn't mean you lower your goals and expectations. It means you give them the gift of time to be children; the gift of time to explore and discover; the gift of time to make mistakes, to recover and to learn from those mistakes. Give them time to discover their strengths and passions. Give them time to build the adult they will become.

Take another deep breath and set your clocks back literally. You have a choice – you can do for your children (and make them dependent) or you can give them more time (more time than it certainly would take you) to get dressed, brush their teeth, eat breakfast, feed the dog, clean their room, etc. Part of time is patience – or is that patience is a part of time?

They want to do it for themselves. They want to become independent. Give them the time to achieve the ability to be independent (self-governing, self-ruling) and to do that you have to give them the gift of more time. The ability to do things for yourself, to accomplish, and to finish the task is what builds real confidence and real self-esteem.

A Montessori school is successful because it is governed by the observation of the child's needs and not the pressure to achieve according to the clock or the calendar. When the teacher does not seem to share your concern over your child's progress it is not from a lack of concern but out of experience and observation knowing that given the time your child will blossom and learn all that is needed.

The great gift of childhood is the gift of time!



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