

Montessori 101

All children come into the world with a human potential that is barely revealed unless adults create environments specifically designed for children to exercise their learning capabilities. ~Dr. Maria Montessori

<p>Current Montessori Programs in CCSD Schools in Charleston County and Principals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montessori Community School (West Ashley) Countywide Magnet - Kimberly Hay (Central Zone) • East Cooper Montessori Charter School- Jody Swanigan (East Zone) • Montessori Children's House at Malcolm C. Hursey Elementary (Partial Magnet) ~ Dr. Tim Schavel (North Zone) • James Simons Elementary - <i>A Montessori Focus</i> (Partial Magnet) Quenetta White (Peninsula-District 20) • Murray LaSaine Elementary - <i>A Montessori Pilot</i> (Partial Magnet) Sherry Peterson (Southwest Zone) 	<p>Dr. Maria Montessori (Born in Rome, Italy): Founder of Montessori Education (1870-1952) She was a woman physician in Italy. She specialized in pediatrics and psychiatry. Heralded as a leading advocate for early childhood education almost a century ago; she worked to change adult beliefs about children and their education through her observations. Many elements of education have been credited to Dr. Montessori such as multi-age classrooms, development of the open classroom, developmentally appropriate and individualized education, role of the teacher as a guide, and the use of manipulative (concrete) learning materials. She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her work with children and education. The methodology is 107 years old.</p>														
<p>Maria Montessori discovered that when young children concentrate and investigate a set of purposefully designed activities, they tend to develop self-control; their movements become ordered, and they appear peaceful. Their demeanor towards others becomes kind and gentle. Terms you will hear:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Normalization</td> <td>Prepared environments</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grace and courtesy</td> <td>Montessori materials</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Self-discipline</td> <td>Shelf lessons/shelf work</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Control of error</td> <td>Three period lesson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nomenclature</td> <td>Focused concentration</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Work Cycle</td> <td>Uninterrupted Work Period</td> </tr> </table>	Normalization	Prepared environments	Grace and courtesy	Montessori materials	Self-discipline	Shelf lessons/shelf work	Control of error	Three period lesson	Nomenclature	Focused concentration	Work Cycle	Uninterrupted Work Period	<p>Core Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~Children are intrinsically motivated and they will succeed when their learning activities incorporate movement and opportunities for independence ~Children become self-disciplined when they are empowered to choose learning activities designed for specific development and learning needs. ~Each classroom is a respectful community of mixed-age learners. (grace and courtesy) ~Classrooms and other school spaces are learning environments prepared with curriculum and materials. ~Parents understand and support the purposes of the school; they are partners. 		
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<p>Levels in the Montessori Programs:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">Infant</td> <td>(birth through 18 months)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Toddler</td> <td>(18 months to age three)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Primary</td> <td>(age three to six) Early Childhood</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lower EL</td> <td>(age six-nine) Grades 1st-3rd</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Upper EL</td> <td>(age nine-eleven) Grades 4th-6th</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Middle</td> <td>(age eleven to thirteen) Grades 7th-8th</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High School</td> <td>(age fourteen to eighteen) Grades 9th-12th</td> </tr> </table>	Infant	(birth through 18 months)	Toddler	(18 months to age three)	Primary	(age three to six) Early Childhood	Lower EL	(age six-nine) Grades 1 st -3 rd	Upper EL	(age nine-eleven) Grades 4 th -6 th	Middle	(age eleven to thirteen) Grades 7 th -8 th	High School	(age fourteen to eighteen) Grades 9 th -12 th	<p>Montessori Classroom and Materials:</p> <p>Tools used to guide children into logical thought and discovery. Each of the Montessori classrooms is filled with a vast array of sequenced learning activities known as the Montessori materials. The materials are displayed on the shelves sized for the height of the children. They are arranged to provide maximum eye appeal without clutter. Each object has a specific place on the shelves, arranged from the upper left hand corner in sequence to lower right. Each shelf in every area is arranged and ordered from simple to complex and concrete to abstract.</p>
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Sensitive Period from Birth to Six

Movement (birth - one)	Writing(three-four)
Language(birth -six)	Reading (three -five)
Small Objects (one-four)	Order(two-four)
Grace & Courtesy (two - six)	Music (two - six)
Refinement of the Senses(two - six)	
Spatial Relationships(four - six)	Mathematics (four-six)

Sensitive periods are characterized by the following five observable behaviors:

- *A well defines activity with a beginning, middle and end.
- *The activity is irresistible for the child, once he /she starts it.
- *The same activity is returned to again and again.
- *A passionate interest develops.
- * A restful and tranquil state comes at the finish of the activity.

The Spiral of the Montessori Curriculum:

- Everything is interrelated. One lesson leads to many others.
- The child moves from the concrete toward abstract understanding.
- We always work from the big picture to increasing detail.
- Every three years major themes in the curriculum are studied again and increasing levels of abstraction.

Normalization:

A process that takes place each year in the Montessori classroom around the world, in which young children, who typically have short attention spans, learn to focus their intelligence, concentrate their energies for long periods, and take tremendous satisfactions from their work.

E.M. Standing, in his book, *Maria Montessori: Her Life and Her Work*, describe the following characteristics of normalization in the child between ages three and six:

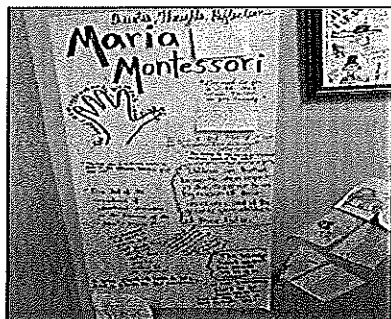
- A love of order
- A love of work
- Profound spontaneous concentration
- Attachment to reality
- Love of silence and working alone
- Sublimation of the possessive instinct
- Obedience
- Independent and initiative
- Spontaneous self-discipline
- Joy
- The power to act from real choice and not just from idle curiosity

Well known people who were educated the Montessori way: Julia Child, Jackie Kennedy, Peter Drucker, Anne Frank, Annie Sullivan, Larry Page and Sergi Brin, founders of GOOGLE, Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder of FACEBOOK; Prince Harry and Prince William, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Helen Keller, Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, Yo Yo Ma, Henry Ford, Sigmund Freud, Leo Tolstoy, Bertrand Russell, Erik Erikson, John Holt.

Areas of Exploration and Investigation: -----

Children are self-motivated to learn from their environment.

Practical Life Grace and Courtesy
 Sensorial Language Mathematics
 Arts Integrated into the Curriculum
 History, Geography and International Culture
 Science (Zoology, Botany,
 Health, Wellness and Physical Education
 Peace Education and Service Learning



Areas of Exploration and Investigation: (continued)

The Great Lessons

The Elementary Classroom is a source of countless life lessons in social skills, everyday courtesy, and ethics. It is at this age that the concept of justice is born, simultaneously with the understanding of the relationship between one's acts and the needs of others. The sense of justice so often missing in man, is found during the development of the young child.



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Montessori Teachers work with three powerful tools:

- 1) Their knowledge of child development and the sensitive periods.
- 2) Knowing how to prepare the classroom environment so that each sensitive period is satisfied. Principles to prepare a classroom environment:
 - Principle of Freedom
 - Beauty
 - Contact with Nature and Reality
- 3) Knowing how to observe.

Pedagogical Principles: Each piece of material, with its corresponding lessons, has been developed to include the following teaching and learning principles:

- ~Use of knowledge of human tendencies
- ~Awareness of psychological characteristics
- ~Prepared environment
- ~Limitation of material
- ~Teacher is link between child and environment
- ~Freedom of choice and development of responsibility
- ~Auto-education or self-construction
- ~Whole to parts; concrete to abstract
- ~The working of the hand and mind
- ~Isolation of difficulty

Reading Resources:

The Montessori Way: An Education for Life by Tim Seldin and Mark Epstein

Montessori- The Science Behind the Genius by A. Lillard

The Courage to Teach by Parker Palmer

The Tao of Montessori by C. McTarnany

Spirit Whisperer by Chick Moorman



Pedagogical Principles: (cont.)

- ~Observation of the child at work
- ~Repetition through variety
- ~Indirect preparation
- ~Techniques that lead to physical and mental independence

