



Curriculum Overview – Toddler

Ages 18 – 36 months

This curriculum overview reflects basic materials that will be covered in the Toddler program. Teachers utilize a multi-sensory approach, which addresses all learning styles. One of the essentials of early Montessori is largely based on the idea of the sensitive periods. The teachers observe carefully for their presence in each child's development. There are eleven sensitive periods occurring from birth to age six. The sensitive periods that occur while a child is in the Toddler program are movement, language, small objects, order, music, grace and courtesy, and refinement of the senses. The four remaining sensitive periods occur between ages three and six when the child is writing, reading, and working with spatial relationships and math. Early Montessori offers a unique learning environment and specialized materials for students to accomplish these outlined goals.

The Environment

Specially designed activities and materials that will meet the Toddler's interest in:

- Movement
- Independence
- Order
- Language
- Music
- Toddler size furniture which enables the child to explore the classroom
- Gross motor play area in the classroom
- Safe environment
- The child is able to explore
- The child is allowed to make choices
- The child is able to have independence
- The environment is fully equipped with materials
- Practical Life consists of care of self, care of the environment and food prep
- Each material or work is done in four phases: choosing and placing a mat on the floor, taking chosen work to the mat, completing the work, and putting the work back on the shelf in its correct place

Toddlers learn best through:

- Purposeful movement
- Self chosen activity
- Activity that fulfills the need of a sensitive period
- Repetition
- Concentration
- Experiencing order
- Organization

Life Skills/Development

- Manners
- Cooperation
- Learning to use a soft voice
- Lengthening attention span
- Ability to adjust to transitions
- Self chosen activity
- Learning to listen and follow directions
- Completion of task
- Respect for materials and peers
- Independence
- Social skills
- Developing a sense of responsibility
- Gross motor control
- Fine motor control
- Listening to directions
- Conflict resolution
- Empathy
- Patience
- Impulse control

Manner of Working

- Self directed
- Work independently
- Practice/repeat for internalization of skills
- Follow directions
- Partnership/team relationships
- Concentration

Group/Circle Time

- Learning to sit in group
- Learning to sit quietly
- Singing
- Story
- Vocabulary
- Counting and number recognition

Practical Life

- Learning to carry a tray
- Rolling up a mat
- Putting work back on the shelf
- Preparing for snack
- Cleaning up after snack
- Spooning
- Pouring
- Sorting
- Opening containers
- Stringing beads
- Folding
- Large peg boards
- Hammering
- Stacking/nesting activities
- Wooden slicing work
- Puzzles
- Putting on coat
- Hanging up coat
- Mirror cleaning
- Pouring with a funnel
- Sewing cards
- Dusting
- Sweeping
- Table setting
- Watering plants
- Washing plant leaves
- Food preparation
- Lunch preparation
- Washing hands
- Toilet training
- Putting on socks and shoes
- Changing clothes
- Wiping one's nose

Language Development

- The adult talks and listens to the child
- Looking at books
- Wooden puzzles
- Learning to express themselves
- Learning to communicate needs
- Vocabulary enrichment cards
- Object discrimination
- Object picture matching
- Pictures for naming
- Simple finger plays and movement to music
- Classification materials

Math

- Stacking and nesting cubes
- Number blocks and puzzles
- Sorting and counting materials

Art

- Painting with watercolors on an easel
- Crayons
- Rubbings
- Push pin
- Cutting work
- Gluing

Readiness for Primary (ages 3-6)

Some of the benchmarks for Primary are as follows:

- Toilet trained: child is wearing underwear and infrequently has an accident. The child can go to the bathroom on his/her own without reminders. Independence in washing hands after using the bathroom
- Independent care of self - ability to change clothes by him/herself - dress and undress him/herself
- Ability to change shoes by him/herself
- Independence: a child's successful separation from the parents and the ability to choose work in the classroom
- Able to follow basic directions that are age appropriate
- Gross motor and fine motor development is age appropriate
- Walking around floor mats/awareness of the work of others
- Ability to focus
- Ability to sit quietly and still during group time
- Ability to wait for a turn (to speak in group, to wait in line at the sink)
- Use of slow, controlled movements in the classroom
- The child can lie down quietly on his/her rest mat without a book
- The child feeds him/herself
- Ability to unpack and pack lunchboxes and fold napkins