

HAPPY NEW YEAR



January Newsletter 2017

From the Director

Happy New Year!

Everyone is excited to be back from break and start a new year!

Our Montessori family would like to welcome our new students Eleanor and Liam. They have jumped right in and are excited to learn!

Please come and support our school during Chick-fil-A® Spirit Night, Tuesday, January 24th from 5-8 pm!! What this means is our local restaurant will donate a percentage of the sales made during our Spirit Night hours. Just say you are there for the Montessori school. The more people who dine during our specified time, the higher the donation from Chick-fil-A®! Plus – you and your family will enjoy a delicious dinner!

Sandra Pellisier
Director



We've included an interesting article on "The Origin and Theory of Montessori Education," from the North American Montessori Center. It's located on the last page of the newsletter, and ties in with our Montessori quote this month.

"Development is a series of rebirths."

Dr. Maria Montessori



UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan. 24 Chick-Fil-A Spirit Night

FUNDRAISING MADE EASY

Please help the school by shopping with PUBLIX. Pick up your Publix card – no sign up necessary. Give them to family and friends! Publix honors multiple cards from different schools and they can be used in their other locations.



Looking forward to learning in the New Year



Montessori Today, Chapter 1: The Origin and Theory of Montessori Education

<http://montessoritraining.blogspot.com/2017/01/montessori-today-chapter-1-origin-theory.html>

Over her lifetime, Maria Montessori examined childhood behavior throughout various countries and cultures and during times of war and peace. Her discoveries in human development and behavior uncovered universal principles that apply across cultures and time. In the first chapter of Montessori Today, Paula Polk Lillard discusses key points surrounding the origin and theory of Montessori education. Following is a brief review of Lillard's discussion, focusing particularly on human development and behavior as it relates to Montessori's shift from science to education.

Human development is not a constant linear advancement but a progression that occurs during four formative planes

Montessori noticed profound differences in what she described as the four planes of development. She recognized that two of these planes occur during childhood (ages 0–6 and ages 6–12) and two planes occur during adolescence (ages 12–18) and adulthood (ages 18–24). Each plane has specific developmental characteristics with particular sensitive periods for learning and achieving particular developmental goals. By systematically examining how they learned, how they interacted with their environment, and what their natural tendencies were, Dr. Montessori observed children newly inventing and recreating themselves at each plane of development.

Rather than the conventional view of education as being a linear progression, Montessori saw each plane as a uniform, consistent triangular progression. Each plane begins with rebirth followed by a rapid developmental progression that, after reaching its peak, declines at a slower pace. Through her observations, Montessori determined that education required a revolution. Her work turned to constructing an educational methodology that follows the child through this natural ebb and flow.

Montessori curriculum is designed to respond to the unique developmental aspects of each plane, with the ultimate goal of education being the development of the complete human being who is connected and contributing to society. With this goal in mind, Montessori set about teaching children according to what they inherently needed, not to what the state determined was appropriate. "Instead of dividing schools into nursery, primary, secondary, and university, we should divide education in planes and each of these should correspond to the phase the developing individual goes through." (Montessori, 1971)

Human development is dependent upon interaction with the environment

In her first school, the Casa dei Bambini, Montessori witnessed children absorbing their world through sensorial exploration. We still observe this today, beginning with infants who touch and taste objects to learn more about them. As they grow and with each discovery, they begin to classify objects based on such criteria as what is and is not edible, what tastes and textures they prefer, how things feel to the touch, how things sound, if objects in their environment are safe or harmful, etc. No one can do this important work for the child; she must explore and gain this knowledge independently. From the beginning children are creating their own knowledge.

Humans of all ages attach meaning to information based on impressions made by their experiences. Sensorial knowledge is categorized and organized in the brain based on the repetition of patterns. Children will choose to do something over and over again to see if they obtain the same results, much like a scientist testing a hypothesis. Through repetitive action they are attaching meaning to their exploration.

Montessori education contains "three essential elements: a prepared environment, a prepared adult, and freedom with responsibility." (Lillard, p. 21) Although curriculum changes to accommodate the unique aspects of each plane of development, these principal elements remain consistent because they are critical to the success of the method.

There is very little need for behavior modification or intervention. He applies imagination and repeated manipulation, striving for order, precision, and perfection.

One final human behavioral tendency that Lillard touches upon is communication, calling it part of the spiritual makeup of human beings. Its importance in the Montessori environment is further explored in later chapters.

In later chapters, Montessori Today presents in-depth discussions of important tenets as they relate to human behavioral tendencies described by Montessori: exploration, orientation, order, imagination, manipulation, repetition, precision, control of error/ perfection, and communication.