



Community Guide 2021—2022

Toddler – Upper Elementary

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Montessori Academy Administration

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Board of Directors

The Board of Directors functions to oversee the financial viability of the school as well as the strategic path upon which it travels. The board is involved in major financial issues if they arise, approves the annual review of tuition levels, and sets governance policy. The board also oversees the Head of School.



Accreditations

American Montessori Society (AMS)
AdvancEd (formerly Southern Association of Colleges & Schools - SACS)
International Montessori Council (IMC)

Not-For-Profit School

Montessori Academy, Inc. is a Tennessee not-for-profit corporation per IRS code 501(C)3.

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[2021-2022 School Calendar](#)



1. WELCOME FROM EMILY BREAUX, HEAD OF SCHOOL

Welcome to Montessori Academy! We are an accredited Montessori school that fosters a love for life-long learning within every student and are delighted your family is going to be a part of our community.

You have chosen to join the most amazing school! Our staff is made up of highly educated professionals who have dedicated their career to Montessori education and are fully prepared to provide a quality, nurturing experience to educate the whole child. Montessori philosophy is based in the science of child development, which all our staff are experts on.

Montessori Academy is a community of adults and children, working in tandem, to meet the needs of each individual learner. We strongly encourage an open and honest dialogue among staff members and parents to ensure that each child's needs are met to the fullest degree.

Please read this guide carefully to ensure that you are aware of our policies and procedures. The goal of this guide is to represent the spirit of the positive expectations of everyone within our school community as well as provide knowledge about protocols and procedures. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have questions, concerns, or ideas to share. We look forward to an exciting journey with your family filled with purposeful learning, genuine laughter, and celebration of community!

Warmly,

Emily Breaux
Head of School
ebreaux@montessoriacad.org

2. MISSION, VISION, AND PHILOSOPHY

2.1 Our Mission

Our mission is educating and inspiring life-long learners.

2.2 Our Vision

Our vision is to be a community that supports, encourages, and empowers all students to reach their full, unique potential. We accomplish our vision by fostering social, emotional, physical, and academic development in an environment that encourages curiosity, exploration, and a love of learning.

2.3 Our Philosophy of Education at Montessori Academy

- Montessori Academy is a safe place where students feel accepted, secure, and loved. Each of our students is treated with *kindness and respect*.
- Curriculum extends beyond the State of Tennessee curriculum requirements and is comprehensive, rich, and effective.
- Instruction is carried out individually, and in small and large sharing groups.
- Our positively stated ground rules help to develop and maintain a community that reflects harmony and respect for the environment, one's peers and oneself.
- Multi-age students bond as a community that reflects peace and respect. Each year first-year and new students move into established classrooms. Older students *mentor* the first-year students and become the leaders in the class.
- Each classroom is guided by Montessori certified and trained teachers.
- Teachers and students speak quietly in the classroom. Students respect the need of their peers to concentrate during work time.
- Montessori materials are sequentially arranged. The materials invite hands-on learning and stimulate motivation.
- Students organize their daily/weekly plans and are expected to do most work at school. They work independently and can finish their work without being stopped by the "bell".
- Students become increasingly excited about learning.
- Accountability and responsibility are basic tenets of the Montessori philosophy.
- Use of the peace rose (in Lower Elementary) teaches conflict resolution skills.
- Students develop confidence and leadership skills.
- Students are exposed to foreign language beginning in Primary and through High School.
- Life skills are taught at every level at Montessori Academy.
- In LE and above, students have "Character Development" discussions and lessons, concentrating on developing accountability, confidence, conflict resolution, leadership, motivation, organization, self-respect, and responsibility.
- A strong partnering of teachers, parents and students enables students to achieve their maximum potential academically, physically, socially, and spiritually at Montessori Academy.

3. ACCREDITATION & ORGANIZATION

3.1 Affiliations and Accreditations

Montessori schools vary greatly in interpretation, consistency, and teacher training. In the United States, there are over 5,000 Montessori schools with varying degrees of competence, standards and sizes. Some schools are connected with and funded by churches, and others are privately owned. Montessori schools are not franchised.

Montessori teacher training is extensive and essential to the excellence of the classrooms. To be fully certified as a Montessori teacher, one must have the minimum of a Bachelor's degree and successfully complete an accredited teacher training program.

In the mid-1990s, Montessori Academy became jointly accredited by AMS (American Montessori Society) and SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools). There are only 217 AMS accredited schools in the nation currently. In Tennessee, there are only three AMS accredited schools: Montessori Academy, our satellite school in Clarksville (Amare Montessori) and Lamplighter Montessori in Cordova, Tennessee. Montessori Academy is also accredited by the International Montessori Council (IMC).

3.2 Child-Care Licensing

Our Toddler and Primary Programs are certified by the Tennessee Department of Education. A copy of the *Rules of the Tennessee Department of Education State Board of Education* is in the Administrative Office and is available for review by parents.

3.3 Organizational Structure

Toddler: (18-36 months)

A Toddler class begins the educational process during the sensitive period for language and movement, from 18 months – 36 months. In this class, Toddlers are encouraged to have independence and to explore and make choices in a safe environment. Toddlers are given many opportunities for learning, including being taught to care for their own needs and the needs of the classroom. They love to help set the table for snack, fold laundry, sweep crumbs off the floor, wash dishes, and learn to put their belongings away. They also have available to them Montessori materials, which teach language, counting, sorting, and all about the world around them. The learning environment is home-like and fully equipped with Montessori materials, outdoor play area and a full-size gym. Montessori Toddler programs worldwide are very successful in meeting the developmental needs of Toddlers and allowing children the freedom to develop in a rich and joyful environment.

A child is ready for our Primary school when ...

- Turns three by September 30 of desired school year (Turns five on or before Aug. 15 for the Kindergarten year of Primary)
- Separates from you with little difficulty
- Can communicate wants and needs
- Is independent in the restroom: follow's body's signals without adult direction and can manage clothing, wiping, and flushing independently
- Follows simple directions
- Demonstrates age-appropriate ability to focus
- Demonstrates age-appropriate independence
- Can rest quietly for 90 minutes without adult one-on-one attention (20-30 minutes for Kindergarten year of Primary)
- Has completed all recommended screenings and/or evaluations

Primary: (3-6 years, including Kindergarten)

Primary students enjoy and need repetition. The environment is sequenced so that the student can move from less to more difficult work. During work time students are absorbed in a lesson they have chosen. The student receives a presentation of how to do the lesson and then may repeat it as many times as desired. If the student chooses the same work repeatedly throughout a week or two it is because the student has discovered the satisfaction of skill-building and mastery. The key to mastery is the desire to skill-build. Mastery produces confidence and the motivation to try another task. Kindergarten is the last year of our PR program. Our extensive curriculum prepares our children for LE.

Lower Elementary (6-9 years, 1st-3rd levels)

When the Primary student meets the exit requirements and moves up to LE, the student is welcomed into a classroom of helpful students with beautifully arranged, more advanced materials. The ground rules are important, especially in the areas of respect, kindness and caring. Work time continues to involve the use of appropriately sequenced Montessori materials and more advanced science, history, and literature curriculum. Each classroom's library allows the student to develop research skills. The multi-aged classroom gives the younger student the opportunity to observe the older student complete advanced work. Mentoring is a critical life skill that is taught and practiced in our multi-level classrooms which helps to develop leadership skills. Beginning at the 3rd level, students take yearly standardized tests.

Upper Elementary (4th-6th levels) and Middle School (7th-8th levels)

Upon completion of LE, a student is welcomed into an already established UE class and is ready for the most advanced Montessori materials. Work time continues to be the concentration with the exploration of a variety of subjects. Students are expected to do most, if not all, of their work at school, edit their written papers, write the results of science experiments, give oral reports, and improve computer keyboarding skills in speed and accuracy.

An important component of Montessori educational instruction is to design a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. The students continue to move from concrete toward abstract thinking, working from the big picture to increasing detail. The foundational materials, which serve as the backbone of the Montessori philosophy, will continue to be utilized and expanded upon as needed. The math, science, language, history, and geography materials give the students full advantage for comprehension and application of basic concepts as well as continue to build higher level thinking skills including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

High School (9th-12th levels)

Maria Montessori described the high school environment as a "center for study and work." Students work with their teachers and advisors to evaluate their previous coursework, current interests, and future goals to choose classes and electives that best meet their needs. Our academic portal offers each student the opportunity to select individual courses that fit their needs and interests from a vast library of options. Curriculum is uniquely presented through an integrated approach.

A student's day consists of self-study, Socratic seminars, service-learning projects, foreign language electives, career development, limited direct instruction in core subjects, and our exceptional fine arts programs with offerings in band, strings, chorus, and composition. Where applicable, curriculum can be technology driven with electronic textbooks and assessments through an educational portal with student and instructor access.

4. MONTESSORI ACADEMY COMMUNITY

4.1 Parent Responsibilities

- Be sure your child arrives on time each day.
 - Toddler/Primary by 8:15 a.m. and LE & Older by 8:00 a.m.
- Build independence in your child through daily responsibilities at home.
- Communicate with teachers (ex. going out of town, new baby, death or change in family).
- Read the school-wide newsletter and communication from the administration and teachers.
- Attend Conferences and "All School Events" and become involved in the school community.
- Look over your child's work in the Friday Folder and return the folder on Monday.
- Observe in your child's classroom to gain a better understanding of how the classroom functions.
- Enjoy and explore the world through nightly reading with your child.
- If you have any concerns or questions, contact your child's teachers or Director.
- Read Community Guide and return Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A1). (DOE Requirement)

4.2 Teacher Responsibilities

- Create a peaceful, stimulating environment where children can learn.
- Convey friendliness, caring, and respect to students and parents.
- Communicate with parents.
- Clarify academic and social requirements to students and parents at each level.
- Facilitate the students' social and emotional development.
- **LE/UE:** Meet with students regularly to discuss assignments, issues and review progress.
- **UE:** Prepare daily/weekly and monthly assignments.

4.3 Student Responsibilities

- Know and follow the classroom Ground Rules.
- Dress in accordance with our Dress Code.
- Be polite, considerate, mannerly, and courteous to peers, teachers, and adults.
- Be a contributing, positive member of Montessori Academy's student community.
- **LE/UE:** Help develop family and personal routine for a successful school week.
 - Be responsible for book bag, lunch box, and personal property.
 - Complete weekly/monthly assignments on time and to the best of your ability.
 - Complete unfinished work at home and return it to school promptly.

4.4 Parent Leadership Program

This program gives parents the chance to connect with the Montessori Academy Community as well as their child's classroom. It is Montessori Academy's hope that all parents will commit to using personal time and skills to benefit their child's classroom and school experience. A monetary donation is also an option and can serve as a resource for the classroom. Opportunities for leadership and modeling service for children may include organizing school picnics, coordinating food and toy drives and assisting teachers with classroom projects.

5. ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT RECORDS

5.1 Enrollment Policy

Montessori Academy admits students of any race, gender, religion, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to any student. Montessori Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, national origin, or ethnic origin in administration or educational policies or in any school programs.

Kindergarten Age Admission Policy: Children entering Kindergarten shall be 5 years of age on or before August 15. Our Montessori 3-6 program allows for children to continue to be challenged academically and excel as they grow socially and emotionally. Unlike traditional classrooms, there is no "ceiling" on what a child can learn in any of our classrooms. Sometimes children who turn 5 on or before Aug. 15 may still need an additional year in Primary before beginning the K year. Any questions about readiness for Kindergarten should be directed to [Adrienne Baker](#), Toddler/Primary Director.

5.2 Withdrawal Policy

Montessori Academy has a well-established withdrawal policy that is included in the "Enrollment Agreement." If you have any questions about this policy, or if you have any special circumstances that are not addressed in the policy, please feel free to discuss your concerns with Emily Breau. (See the Discipline Procedures section of this Community Guide for other dismissal circumstances.) The withdrawal policy is as follows:

To be released from this contract, I must submit a letter to the Head of School and give a paid full calendar month notice of intent to withdraw, or I will owe the tuition for the following month. Student's enrollment is subject to the general statements, rules, policies, and financial terms of Montessori Academy (as stated in the Community Guide and future revisions).

5.3 Student Records

Files are kept for each student at Montessori Academy. Access to the files is limited to the Administration, the student's parents and the student's teachers. Any request for records to be sent to another school must be approved by parents and a form signed. Student records will not be released if there is a balance owed on the account. Student accident reports, immunization forms, and standardized test scores will be kept permanently.

6. FINANCES

6.1 Tuition

Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month. A \$25 late fee must accompany payments received after the 4th. If necessary, a parent may temporarily make weekly payments to avoid going into arrears or losing the child's space. Montessori Academy reserves the right to fill a child's space if tuition is not paid in full by the 4th of each month unless arrangements have been made with the Head of School. You will not receive a bill unless you are late on your payment. If receipts are needed, email your request to cprather@montessoriacad.org. If paying by check or cash, bring it to the box on the wall beside Mrs. Prather's desk. Please do not send your check in with your child or give it to a teacher.

[2021-2022 Tuition Rates](#)

6.2 Tuition Discounts

- A 2% discount is applied to yearly tuition (not After Care) if paid in full before August 1, 2021.
- Families receive a \$50 per month sibling discount on the 2nd child's tuition. Families receive a \$100 per month sibling discount on the 3rd child's tuition. Families receive a \$150 per month sibling discount on the 4th child's tuition.
- Families with 2 or more students in Elementary and above receive an additional \$50 per month discount.

*4-Step Student Referral Program: \$250 credit

1. Refer a family to MA...
2. Once the child is enrolled and begins...
3. New family mentions you referred them...
4. You earn a \$250 credit on your account *per child* enrolled, (or if you pre-pay the entire year, then MA will write you a check).

6.3 Policy for Payment by Electronic Bill Pay

The preferred payment method is ACH Automatic Debit.

[ACH Direct Debit Authorization Form](#)

Payments can also be made via the online [Family Portal](#). An additional option is using your bank's online bill-pay system just like you electronically pay your other bills. Use your child's name as the account number. To allow five days processing time, put the due date as the 25th of the prior month for us to receive it on the first.

7. GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

7.1 Safety

7.1.1 Emergency Situations

Montessori Academy has procedures in place in the event of a weather emergency, fire, lockdown or bomb threat. All classrooms have designated "safe places" and exit plans, depending on the nature of the emergency. All staff members are trained in the procedures and classrooms have regular drills to practice evacuation and lock down procedures. Please contact the Administration Office if you would like more information on the specifics of the emergency plans.

7.1.2 Crisis Management Plan

The safety of children and staff is always our top priority. In the event of a crisis, highest ranking administrators will make safety and physical needs decisions based upon the information available at the time. The following address the most basic and primary concerns:

Communication Challenges: Communication with parents is offered in multiple formats. In the event of a crisis, not all communication forms will be available, but administrators will take the following steps to encompass as many forms of communication as possible:

1. Text message to parents via FACTS SIS Parent Alert
2. All school email blast
3. Phone list with parent phone numbers as well as parent approved secondary contacts

Location of Children: Keeping children on the MA property is always the first choice due to transportation issues. Parents are advised to check with their parent approved secondary pick-up list (grandparents, friends, etc.). Children will be in campus locations as follows:

- Normal campus locations (classrooms and after care locations)
- Normal "Safe Place" locations specified for each classroom
- Gymnasium, Administration Building, Fine Arts Building
- Campus property – Ex. Baseball Field, Big Rock

Continuing Operations: Covered in the MA Emergency Recovery Plan and allows room for flexibility as needed.

7.1.3 Minor Accidents

Minor accidents that happen at school will be promptly treated by a staff member and the parents will be notified either by phone or through a note/email. We are only authorized to use soap/water/hydrogen peroxide on wounds (DOE stipulation). Our classroom teachers and after care teachers are all trained in CPR/First Aid and are required to keep their CPR/First Aid certification current.

7.1.4 Asbestos Inspection & Smoke Free Environment

You may contact Dr. Jim Bernstorf as the AHERA designated person concerning Montessori Academy as an Asbestos-Free School. The result of the inspection done by Law Engineering Firm is on file in the Montessori Academy office.

Montessori Academy ensures a smoke free environment campus wide.

7.2 Health

***In addition to the Sickness Policy Below, please make certain to carefully review the Community Guide to Pandemic Protocols in Appendix A.3 of this Community Guide. ***

7.2.1 Sickness Policy

One of the most important ways we can keep our classrooms free of illness is to ensure that the children who attend the program every day are healthy. Children are given a routine visual health check each day upon arrival. Any child who shows symptoms of being ill or infectious will not be admitted to school. Students displaying symptoms during the school day will be sent home from school.

ILLNESS/EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL:

Regular attendance is important; however, there is no advantage to sending a sick child to school. Not only does a sick child pose a risk of infection to other children, but a sick child also (even one who is not contagious) cannot function effectively in the environment. We WILL NOT keep actively sick children, and it is the parent's responsibility to make alternative arrangements for care in the event of illness. We will call if your child is ill and your child MUST BE PICKED UP WITHIN AN HOUR OF THE FIRST CALL TO THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN. Though extremely rare, it is possible that MA could close a classroom or entire department if there is widespread illness in students and/or teachers.

A physician's report form must be completed before a child may return when:

- 1) A child has had a diagnosed communicable disease, (Strep throat, head lice, pink eye, impetigo, measles, etc.).
- 2) A child has undergone surgery or has been hospitalized.
- 3) A child has been seen by a doctor because of illness.

A child MAY NOT come to school if any of the following conditions exist:

- FEVER of 100-degrees OR HIGHER (Underarm temperature of 99 or higher): A fever indicates that a body is under stress or is fighting infection. With a fever, the child should be given time to rest, recover, and regain strength even if fever suppressants are effective in reducing the fever. Even if the fever is caused by a non-contagious illness, the child may not attend school. A child may come back to school after 24 hours if they are symptom free (without fever suppressants) AND have proof of a negative COVID test AND no known exposure to COVID. Otherwise, a child may come back to school once symptom free for 36 hours.
- RASH: If your child develops a rash and the cause is not known, we will ask that the doctor check out the rash and verify in writing that it is not contagious. With a note from the child's doctor, we will administer lotion or salve to treat Poison Ivy, Poison Oak, or bad chigger, flea, or mosquito bites.
- DISCHARGE: From the eyes or ears; inflammation of the eyes
- SORE THROAT or PERSISTENT RATTILING COUGH: Child may return to school with doctor's note.
- STREP THROAT: Children who have been diagnosed with Strep Throat cannot return to school until they have had three doses of their medicine, which is usually 24 hours after they have started their medication.
- FRESH COLD: A constant runny nose with green or yellow mucus.
- PINK EYES: With or without discharge
- VOMITING: A child may come back to school after 24 hours has passed since the last episode without medication if the child also has proof of a negative COVID test AND no known exposure to COVID. Otherwise, a child may come back to school 36 hours after the last episode without medication.

7.2.1 Sickness Policy (continued)

- DIARRHEA: A child may come back to school after 24 hours has passed since the last episode without medication if the child also has proof of a negative COVID test AND no known exposure to COVID. Otherwise, a child may come back to school 36 hours after the last episode without medication.
- OPEN SORES: From Impetigo; Hand, Foot & Mouth, Cold Sores
- CONTAGIOUS CONDITION: Any Type
- Any health condition that prohibits the child from FULL PARTICIPATION in the program, or which the teacher or school believes to be unhealthy for the child or other exposed children.
- LICE: We have a NO NIT Policy. The child must be nit free to return to school and must have a note (stating that the child is nit free) from Lice Solutions or a trained Lice Professional. Family has choice of treatment plan, however, note must be provided before child can return to school.

Should a child require constant one on one attention, become ill during the day, or arrive too ill to participate in the activities of the day (in the opinion of the teacher and in consultation with the Director), the parent will be notified to pick up their child. If we are unable to reach the parent(s), we will call the contacts on the Emergency Contact sheet. Please notify the office promptly if your child will be absent for any length of time. Also, notify the office when your child contracts a contagious disease. We will often in turn notify parents of classmates with possible exposure.

****Children who are sent home sick from school may not return the following day.****

7.2.2 Medicine Policy

Prescription medicine, cough syrup and suppressants may be sent to school in the original (unexpired) container, labeled with the child's name. The medicine must be handed to a teacher. (Please do not send medicine in the lunch box.) Medicine must be accompanied by a note of authorization every day and specific instructions as to how to administer, how much to administer and when to administer. Tape a reminder on the lid of the child's lunchbox. Teachers will return any medicine that is not allowed. Fever-reducing medicine may not be given to a child in the morning to "hold down" a fever. State guidelines classify diaper cream and Neosporin as medicine. If a child needs either diaper creams or Neosporin, a note of permission from the parents must be submitted to the teacher. Cough drops may be sent with LE/UE students, but will be kept and dispensed by the teacher.

Medical Conditions – If a student has a medical condition such as an allergy or asthma, send a detailed explanation to the office with multiple copies (with your signature) - include symptoms and warning signs and appropriate measures to be taken should an emergency occur. Please make sure to add your emergency phone numbers to the note and keep the numbers current.

*For severe allergies, please have your pediatrician fax the Emergency Action Plan to (615) 833-3680.

7.3 Attendance, Tardiness, and Absence Policy

7.3.1 Attendance Policy (LE/UE)

Missing ten or more days of school, excused or unexcused, will require the completion of work missed during absence.

7.3.2 Tardiness Policy

Punctuality is a lifelong skill that we should model for children from a very young age. At Montessori Academy, we take punctuality very seriously. Late arrivals disrupt the classroom environment. We expect all children to be in their classrooms on time each morning. Children who arrive on time get the best possible start to their school day.

7.3.2 Tardiness Policy (continued)

We understand that sometimes there are special circumstances (major traffic issues, car trouble, medical or dental appointments) that may cause you to be late, but repeated tardiness is detrimental to your child, negatively impacts the classroom, and interrupts the work of our administrative staff. If we determine that chronic tardiness is an issue, we will take the following steps:

- After 3 unexcused tardies, your child's teachers will speak with you about the effect of tardiness on your child and offer suggestions to help with your morning routine.
- If tardiness continues, you will be contacted by the level director, who will offer more ideas and assistance with how to adjust your morning routine.
- If these steps do not resolve the issue, you will have to come in and speak with the Head of School and level director about whether MA is the right fit for your family.

Toddler/Primary

Toddler and Primary students need routine and must arrive by 8:15 a.m. The front doors will lock at 8:15 a.m. at which time parents will need to walk their child to the Administrative Office, sign in and then walk your child to the back door of the classroom. Teachers are already working with children at this time and are not available to talk.

LE

All students are expected to be in their classrooms and ready to begin the school day (with lunch boxes, instruments, books, and coats put into place) by 8:00 a.m. Any student not in place at 8:00 a.m. will be marked tardy.

UE

Students who arrive after 8:00 a.m. need to stop by the office to get a "tardy pass" to be allowed to enter the class. After three tardies, time will be made up at the teacher's discretion.

7.3.3 Absence Policy

Absences due to trips or vacations (1st-6th) - Please schedule vacations during school breaks. If your family must be out of town for more than three days, please inform the teachers one week in advance (unless it is a family emergency) to request assignments for your child to complete. These assignments will be due on the day that the student returns to class. Incomplete work must be made up before the next report card can be issued.

7.4 Arrival and Dismissal

There are certain instances (severe weather, fire drill, lock down situation) when teachers may not be outside during arrival/dismissal. If this is the case during arrival, please walk your child to the classroom. If during dismissal, please first check your child's classroom. If students are not there, check your child's safe place. In the event of a lockdown – all doors will be locked, and entry will not be possible until the lockdown is over.

7.4.1 Arrival

Toddler Arrival

You may walk (not carry) your child to the classroom backdoors (Toddler 1 & 2 via back playground and Toddler 5 via front playground) between 7:45-8:15 a.m. Say goodbye at the door and allow your child to enter the classroom independently. Encourage and help your child learn to carry the lunchbox/belongings.

Primary Arrival

Primary Arrival is 7:45-8:15 a.m. You may drive up and let a teacher or administrator walk your child to the classroom or park *in a parking space* (not at the curb) and walk your child to the classroom door. To promote independence and healthy patterns of separation, parents may not enter the classrooms in the morning. Children should carry their own lunchboxes and belongings to build independence. **Between 7:50 and 8:00 a.m.** each morning, a teacher from your child's room will be on the curb. An administrator will usually be at the curb during the rest of the drop off time.

For your child's safety we ask that the **car seat** be on the right side of the car.

Keep goodbyes short and positive. This empowers your child and demonstrates your confidence in them. You may call the office for reassurance. If your child experiences anxiety, work with their teachers to create a plan.

Lower & Upper Elementary Arrival

For safety, students may not be dropped off under any circumstance before 7:30 a.m.

Beginning at 7:30 a.m. each morning:

- We ask parents to drop their students off at the curb and watch them walk into the building. Please do not enter the classrooms unless it is an emergency.
- Please make sure your child is dropped off **no later than 7:55 a.m.** to be ready to start the day promptly at 8:00 a.m.

Additional Arrival Notes

- **Children are not accepted after 10:00 a.m. unless a doctor's appointment delayed arrival. Please ask your child's doctor for a note to verify appointment.** Missing work time or playtime disrupts your child from having a productive day. Rest time (Toddler/Primary levels) is extremely difficult for teachers if a child has slept late. Montessori Academy is a school and not a daycare.
- If your child has a doctor's appointment, please send a note to the teachers, come to the office, and sign him/her out.
- If your child forgets something important (ex. lunchbox), please drop it off in the office.
- Please leave all breakfast food in the car.

7.4.2 Dismissal

Half Day Program (Toddler & Primary)

Students registered for our half day program will bring a lunch and eat with their friends. Parents come to the classroom front door and wait for a teacher to bring your child to you. **There are not tickets or drop ins to extend the day past 12:00 p.m. for Half Day Program students.**

- 11:45 a.m.–12:00 p.m. - Dismissal for Toddler Students (must be picked up by 12:00 p.m.)
- 12:00–12:10 p.m. - Dismissal for Primary Students (must be picked up by 12:10 p.m.)

Full Day Program

- 2:45–3:00 p.m. - Dismissal for Toddler & Primary Students
 - Toddler pick up is in front of the gym. Pick up Toddler students before older siblings (siblings are not walked over).
 - Primary pick up is along the curb in front of Rooms 1 – 5. For Primary pick up, place car seats by the right rear door so children enter the car from the curb.
- 3:00–3:15 p.m. Dismissal for Lower & Upper Elementary Students
 - LE pick up is in a car line in front of the LE classrooms.
 - UE pick up is in a car line in front of the Admin. Building

7.4.2 Dismissal (continued)

It is the driver of the vehicle's ultimate responsibility to ensure the child is buckled and buckled correctly. When every driver assumes the responsibility of efficient pick-up, the dismissal time will be a pleasant closure for the school day.

After School Care (ASC)

After School Care is paid monthly (4:30 p.m. or 5:30 p.m. dismissal option). **Occasional ASC tickets are not available.**

ASC closes daily at 5:30 p.m. (except for several half days), at which point After Care workers leave campus. Habitual lateness will result in a call from the Head of School and the possible suspension of ASC privileges.

Irregular Pick-Up During School Hours

We discourage irregular pick-ups as they are a disruption to the school day. However, if you need to pick up your child during the school day, please send a note with your child for the teacher. When you arrive at school, please report to the office (except in the case of severe weather). We will call for your child to be sent to the office. Please sign your child out on the clipboard while you wait in the office. Exception to this rule: In case of severe weather, please do not go to the office, but go directly to your child's classroom or "Safe Place" and sign your child out on the classroom's clipboard.

Early Dismissal Days (Please check school calendar for dates)

The Toddler & Primary Early Dismissal Window is 11:00–11:15 a.m. The Lower Elementary and Older Dismissal Window is 11:15–11:30 a.m.

We require your written permission for your child (fax or email is also acceptable):

- To be picked up at any irregular time other than normal dismissal time
- To be picked up by anyone other than parents or the usual carpool
- To go on all field trips

Authorized Individuals: Students will be released only to parents and authorized individuals (per the Enrollment Contract). Tennessee state car seat laws state that children may only be released to a person with proper seat restraints for the child's age and size and who present themselves capable of operating a vehicle. Employees of Montessori Academy are not permitted to buckle children into their car seat. It is solely the responsibility of the adult picking up students to buckle them. In the event of an emergency and a parent cannot be reached to pick up their child from school, the school will contact the authorized people on the Enrollment Contract.

7.4.3 Campus Driveway Instructions

Please refrain from cell phone use when dropping off and picking up your child, and while on the campus driveway. Please follow all instructions given by school staff directing traffic.

Visiting the Admin. Office: The Admin. Office is directly behind the three flagpoles.

Drop Off/Pick Up:

Toddler: Turn right into the circular drive by the Woodlee Memorial Gymnasium (one-way traffic only). Do not back up! Please watch for traffic as you re-enter the main drive.

Primary/LE: Pass the gym circular drive and continue straight into main circular drive – a one-way street.

Large Circular Drive (PR/LE)

- Always drive slowly when on campus.
- Please park in the parking area if you must leave your car.
- Do not leave your car unattended in the drop-off/pick-up lane.
- Please observe the directional arrows when driving around the circle.
- Never leave your car with the engine still running! Drive safely and please buckle up.
- Never back up! (One-way traffic only)

UE: Turn into the driveway adjacent to the Fine Arts Building – a one-way street.

7.5 Room Placement

Next level placement is determined by teachers and administrators based upon several factors, including space availability. Parental requests will be considered but final determination is made by the administration.

Based upon our accreditation status, all rooms are staffed with highly qualified teachers and are strong both academically and socially.

Fall room placement is made in late spring/early summer. For students transitioning mid-year (Toddler), decisions are made as the student approaches the transitioning date.

Any specific questions may be sent to the Head of School or appropriate director.

7.6 Student Support Protocol

Montessori Academy's Student Referral and Support Protocol is designed to help teachers and parents navigate the process of determining the best method of guidance for a child who is needing extra support. This process forms a team of adults who know the child including: parents/guardians, teachers, level directors, and any therapists working with the child. It starts when the teachers have identified some areas of concern they have about the child's development, whether that be physical, emotional, mental, or academic.

Once the teachers have identified an area of concern, they observe the child and strategize ways to make classroom-based accommodations or support. Their observations may include:

- Anecdotal Observations
- Antecedent – Behavior – Consequence (ABC) Observations (recording when an incident happens, what happened before, what happened after, time of day)
- Time Intervals (at designated intervals record what the child is doing)
- Frequency data (collect frequency data on one specific behavior)
- Developmental Checklist (observing for typical milestones in speech and language, gross and fine motor, self-care activities, executive function skills, social emotional skills)

After they have implemented classroom-based strategies, more observations are done, to see if these accommodations are helpful in achieving greater success for the child. When the classroom-based strategies are not able to help the child consistently become more successful in the environment the teachers begin the student referral and support process.

There can be several routes taken at this point depending on the needs of the child. Screening for speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or a full psychological evaluation are often needed as the next step to identify any roadblocks that are in the child's path. MA partners with Project Play Therapies to provide speech, OT, and PT screenings free of cost. After the initial screening, if an evaluation and therapy are recommended, these are paid for by the family. A full psychological evaluation is also paid for by the family. PPT offers therapy both at MA, and at their clinics. Some insurance companies will pay for services provided at the clinic. There are also other organizations the family can choose, including contacting the local school district who will provide free support for school age children. Kid Central TN is an excellent place to look for more information on programs available for children of all ages in TN [KidCentral TN - KidCentralTN.com](http://KidCentralTN.com)

Next, the level director and teachers determine a plan to accommodate the child and implement suggestions from the therapist and continue observations and gather data. After a 2-8 week period of implementation the teachers and level director communicate with the parents as to if there was consistent and significant shift in the child's success and experience in the classroom environment.

A plan is made by the level director and teachers to continue implementing accommodations and watching for growth, gain further training for the teachers, or begin an exit plan based on what is best for the child and level of support they need. This plan is shared with the parents.

MA recognizes that early intervention is the best practice to help a child who needs extra support. The earlier a child can receive therapies and interventions, the faster the strategies take hold. MA works in partnership with parents to love and support the development of the whole child and to make decisions based on what is best for the child.

7.6 Student Support Protocol (continued)

Classroom Responsibilities

- Observe the child taking anecdotal notes
- Plan classroom-based strategies
- Request an in-house Student Support Team (will end up being the teacher, the director, and another faculty member)

Support Team Responsibilities

- Review observations/incident reports
- Brainstorm ways to intervene using Montessori curriculum
- Decide what types of observations will best support the process (checklists, frequency count, etc.)
- Go through the support process to determine supports/goals

Support Process

- Identify the problem and set a measurable goal
- Determine what information is still needed
- Use observations to create hypothesis and prediction about the targeted skill
- Determine assessment criteria, establish timeline

Review

- Did in-house intervention work based on the criteria? If not, begin the referral process or decide on new supports.

Referral

- Classroom teachers fill out referral form, obtain parent permission and input
- Include all the documentation from the previous steps

7.7 Discipline Procedures

Classroom ground rules are created by each classroom community as part of a conversation about freedoms and responsibilities. Students feel ownership when they have a say in rules, sometimes referred to as a classroom constitution. Here are some examples:

- We speak kindly to others.
- We walk softly and slowly.
- We talk quietly.
- We do our own work.
- We put our work away carefully.
- We ask for a presentation of new work.
- We may do any work which has been presented.
- We respect the personal space of others.

Many strategies are used in the classroom to help community members succeed in learning in a peaceful climate. These strategies include positive discipline, redirection, encouragement, lessons in grace and courtesy, conflict resolution, removal of a child from an unsafe situation, and helping children regain social emotional regulation.

Disciplinary Policies – (Toddler & Primary)

In the Toddler program, it is developmentally appropriate to see behaviors such as hitting, pushing, and biting. However, the school takes these behaviors seriously. Teachers will address these behaviors with the child immediately. An incident report (completed in Transparent Classroom) will be sent home and filed with the program director by the end of the day.

If repeated behavior issues arise in the classroom, the teachers will consult with an administrator and begin the Student Support Protocols. The Student Support Protocols rally a team around the student, including the caregivers, teachers, administrators, and other interventionists when deemed necessary.

There may be times when the student support protocols reveal that another environment will better meet a child's needs and the caregivers will be asked to withdraw the student. This is a 'no fault' policy and the enrollment contract will be released without penalty.

Disciplinary Policies (LE/UE)

Students learn best when they feel physically and emotionally safe. Inappropriate behaviors (e.g. disruption, physical or verbal aggression, bullying, etc.) are usually the result of an unmet need or a lagging skill. The Elementary teachers work with the students to bring attention to behavior and work toward meeting the unmet need or lagging skill.

If inappropriate behavior continues after a student/teacher conference, the director and the teachers begin/update student support protocols for the student. The student support protocols rally a team around the student, including the caregivers, teachers, administrators, and other interventionists when deemed necessary.

There may be times when the student support protocols reveal that another environment will better meet a child's needs and the caregivers will be asked to withdraw the student. This is a 'no fault' policy and the enrollment contract will be released without penalty.

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable or permitted and will be handled with diligence. Bullying includes but is not limited to, verbal threats or demeaning speech towards another child or adult. Bullying is defined as intentionally and habitually cruel behavior towards others. Not all interpersonal conflict is bullying; however please be assured that we take bullying seriously. Working as a team, we can help all our students to become strong, considerate, contributing members of our Montessori Academy community and future leaders of the world. Please let your child's teacher(s) know if your child needs help in this area and please notify your teachers if your child informs you of any instances of bullying.

Montessori Academy reserves the right...

Montessori Academy reserves the right to suspend, dismiss, or require the immediate withdrawal of any student at any time if, at the sole discretion of Montessori Academy's Head of School, a student's work or the conduct or influence of a student or parent/guardian (on or off campus) falls below acceptable educational or social standards. Each student's enrollment is subject to the rules and policies of Montessori Academy, as interpreted by the Head of School.

7.8 Communication

7.8.1 Office Hours

Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday when the school is open.

7.8.2 Online School Directory

For our online school directory, please go to our website and click on "[Family Portal](#)". We reserve the right to keep private any personal information that a parent does not want published. USING THIS INFORMATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOLICITATION IS PROHIBITED.

[Montessori Academy Staff Directory](#)

7.8.3 Tools for Communicating

All classrooms have an email address to communicate more effectively with caregivers. Teachers will check emails around 1:00 p.m. each day. If you send an email in the evening, it will not be checked until the next day. **If you would like to talk with a teacher or schedule a conference**, please send a short email to your child's teacher or tape a note to your child's lunchbox and a teacher will call or email you as soon as the teacher is free. Please do not text or call the teachers' cell phones. **If it is urgent**, call the office and we will contact the teacher.

We are careful not to put calls through to a classroom during the morning independent work time. Thank you for understanding.

7.8.4 Communication Avenues

- **Parent Information Meetings (PIM'S)** are pivotal to your understanding of Montessori philosophy and curriculum. Each PIM will be unique and will help you understand your child's developmental and academic progress. At these important meetings, parents will meet your child's teachers and learn about the classroom routine, program objectives, daily schedules, curriculum and current classroom events.
- Weekly take-home folders (sent home on Fridays)
- Weekly digital newsletter
- Classroom Newsletters and/or photos shared on Transparent Classroom
- Report cards: Toddler & Primary; three/year, Kindergarten & Older; every 9 weeks
- **Open House Days** (Toddlers only participate in the Family and Special Friends Open House) Parents may visit the classroom during the designated time on these days. Open House is a wonderful time for parents to visit their child's classroom. The students are proud of the work they do and are eager to show it to you. Guidelines for Open House visits are as follows:
 - Enter the room quietly to experience the wonder and peace of a Montessori environment.
 - Make other arrangements for younger sibling(s) so that your child has your full attention.
 - Schedule an appointment with the teachers at another time if you have other questions. The teachers will be better able to give you and your questions their undivided attention at another time.
- **Two Conference Days** – scheduled in October and February. There is no school on these days. Childcare is provided at no charge during your scheduled (20 minute) conference time.
- Conferences with the teachers as needed by parent or teacher
- Classroom Observations are encouraged

7.9 Classroom Observations

Please invest time in the **fall** (after your child has been enrolled for 6 weeks) and the **spring** of each school year to observe your child's classroom. To set up an observation:

- Contact your child's teachers to schedule a date/time for the observation. After the visit, you may schedule a follow-up conference with the teacher to discuss your observations.
- Check-in at the office before your scheduled observation time. The office staff will give you a form to aid in your observation of the classroom and a "Visitor's Badge" to wear.
- Your child's teachers will have an "Observation Chair". Please do not sit with your child during this time. You need to be free to watch the entire classroom.
- Remember that this is not a time for a parent conference.

(*Please refer to Appendix A.3 for COVID protocol)

7.10 Time Management/Homework Policy

Time Management (LE/UE)

All our classrooms have a minimum three-hour uninterrupted work time each morning. We feel strongly that if a student works hard during this work time at school that the student should not have to spend the entire evening working on homework. Just like adults, students need time with their families in the evening to be refreshed and ready to work hard again the next morning.

Each LE student has a daily or weekly plan and is given time to plan for the day. Students choose the best time to accomplish each assignment. A teacher will check the work that has been finished, provide lessons, and help as needed. Unfinished work must become a priority the following day.

The student who can mentally plan for the day is also able to survey and reflect on how much is accomplished. The Montessori philosophy of flexibility is accomplished when the student is choosing the order or sequence of the work assignment – enjoying either the fun or stimulation of doing a favorite subject first or saving the best until last by getting the most difficult subject out of the way. This is one of the ways the Montessori student becomes increasingly responsible, motivated, and self-confident.

Make time management a part of your family meetings. Let your child set goals for daily routines. This is especially helpful in the morning. If your child needs more time to prepare for the day, then your child can get up earlier. If less time is needed, your child can sleep longer. Empowering your child can eliminate many family conflicts.

Homework Policy

LE: We have occasional homework assignments and research projects, but our goal is that each child has free time to explore interests outside of school (ex. team sports, music lessons/practice, playing, exploring, and helping with practical life work at home).

UE: There may be limited routine homework assignments involving additional practice with reading, spelling, writing, and library research. The Montessori 3-hour morning work time allows most students to get assignments completed during the school day, although some project-based assignments may need to be finished at home.

7.11 Field Trips (Kindergarten & Older)

7.11.1 Field Trip Guidelines

- Younger siblings are not permitted on field trips.
- NO STUDENT WILL BE PERMITTED TO RIDE IN A SEAT EQUIPPED WITH AN AIR BAG.
- **All students must bring the appropriate car/booster seat that meets state regulations.**
- Car assignments are arranged by the teachers, are filed in the office, and must be adhered to until students return to school, except in a case of an emergency.
- Field trips are cancelled if not enough drivers are available.

Tennessee's passenger child restraint law is covered in Tennessee Code Annotated 55-9-602. Children age four (4) through age eight (8), and measuring less than four feet nine inches (4'9") in height, must be secured in a belt-positioning booster seat system, meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards in the rear seat, if available, or according to the child safety restraint system or vehicle manufacturer's instructions. (Note: If the child is not between age four (4) and age eight (8), but is less than four feet nine inches (4'9") in height, he/she must still use a seat belt system meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards.)

Children age nine (9) through age twelve (12), or any child through twelve (12) years of age, measuring four feet nine inches (4'9") or more in height, must be secured in a seat belt system. It is recommended that any such child be placed in the rear seat, if available. (Note: If the child is not between age nine (9) and age twelve (12), but is four feet nine inches (4'9") or more in height, he/she must still use a seat belt system meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards.)

7.11.2 Chaperones/Field Trip Driver Responsibilities

- Supervising and safeguarding the students in your care is your primary responsibility.
- Arrive at school at least 15-20 minutes in advance of our scheduled departure time to allow time to get organized and get the children safely into their designated cars.
- Chaperones **may not** leave their group and always must eat with their children.
- Do not use your cell phones during the trip unless it is related to the field trip.
- **Do not stop for food or drinks** because it is unfair to children in other cars.
- Escort your children back to their classroom and stay with them until the teacher arrives.

7.12 Former Student Visits

Former students are welcome to visit Montessori Academy after school and by appointment. Visits can be scheduled through an Administrator. Visitors must check in at the office. Visits are not permitted during the school day.

7.13 Snow Day Policy

Announcements of school closure will be made via the following methods:

- Text Message to Parents via *FACTS SIS Parent Alert*
- Email from Montessori Academy

Please do not call the office. If you need to pick up your child, please do so.

We try to avoid unnecessary closings by waiting until early morning to make the decision and announcement. The safety of your family is most important, so please use your own judgment about bringing your student late, picking him/her up early or just staying home on those troublesome days. If the weather worsens as the day progresses and we must close early, we will announce the closing time via email/text.

7.14 Videotaping School Programs/Events

We encourage you to take pictures and videos of *your own children* as a record of their growth and accomplishments through their years at Montessori Academy. We are extremely careful about publicizing pictures or information about families, which is why we use a formal photo release form. We ask that you bear this in mind when videotaping performances. You may post pictures of *your own children* on the internet (YouTube, Facebook, social media websites, etc.) at your discretion. However, please do not post pictures of children from other families to any of these websites without the parent's permission.

8. CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

8.1 Entering the Classrooms during School Hours

If you are volunteering in a classroom or observing in a classroom during school hours, please check-in first at the Administrative Office. All parents, visitors, and volunteers need to sign-in and get a visitor's badge. (*Please refer to Appendix A.3 for COVID protocol)

8.2 Lunch and Snack

8.2.1 Lunch

A Montessori Academy issued lunch box is required for daily use for Toddler and Primary Students. It is given to each new student when the initial registration fee is paid. (Broken lunchboxes should be replaced promptly for continuous ease of use by the child. New lunchboxes are available in the office for \$20.)

Lower Elementary and older may use the Montessori Academy lunchbox (at a cost of \$20/each) OR an alternate lunchbox of the families' choosing. Lunchboxes may not have characters and may not be flashy/distracting.

We encourage the use of labeled containers instead of plastic baggies. Containers should be easy for students to open by themselves.

Refrigerators are not available for the storage of lunch items/drinks. Lunches may be kept cool by putting a frozen cool pack in the thermal lunch box. Write your child's allergies on the top of the lunch box with a permanent marker. Please send any necessary utensils.

Each child is allowed a minimum of 30 minutes to eat lunch each day. Children will bring home, in the lunchbox, uneaten items so parents are able to adjust lunch proportions appropriately.

Please send two cloth napkins or adult washcloths and a sealable water bottle daily. A small bottle of milk (unflavored) may be sent.

We encourage parents to send lunches that reflect good nutrition by using the food groups in preparing lunches. A nutritious snack or lunch means one which provides nutritional value in addition to calories. We ask for your support as we establish and maintain healthy habits. Keep in mind that the lunch should include protein as well as be nutritional in terms of vitamins and minerals.

You may not send the following items to school for either snack or lunch: Jell-O, pudding, anything with chocolate chips, cupcakes, frosted cookies, sugar-coated cereals, candy, chewing gum, chips, and similar high-calorie low-nutrition foods.

Only UE & Older students may bring food to school that needs to be warmed in the microwave. You are welcome to send items that need to stay warm in a thermos that fits in the lunchbox.

8.2.2 Toddler/Primary Snack

Your classroom will communicate the logistics of morning snack – students might bring an individual snack from home or there may be a snack rotation provided by parents. Please send an extra snack in the Montessori Academy snack bag if your child stays for After School Care.

8.2.3 Elementary Snack

Students bring individual healthy snacks in their lunchboxes each day to be eaten during the morning. The teachers will advise you concerning their room's policy. Elementary students eat lunch at 11:00 a.m. Please send an extra snack if your child stays for After School Care.

8.3 Dress Code

School Dress Codes are necessary for the safety and utility of the school environment. As we expand our outdoor classrooms and Montessori curriculum across all levels, it is important for students to be prepared for a variety of weather conditions.

8.3.1 Toddler & Primary

Clothing and shoes should be comfortable and easy for children to manage independently. Students are not required to wear MA logo apparel (*Exception* - Kindergarten students will need a red MA polo for field trips.) Please help your child learn to dress at home so your child can do it at school as well.

- Please label all items brought to school (books, coats, sweaters, changes of clothing, etc.).
- Overalls or other one-piece outfits should not be worn – all clothes should be easy for children to take off when using the restroom. Dresses are acceptable. Clothes that zip down the back are impossible for students to manage and should not be worn.
- Shoes should be close-toed and appropriate for running, jumping, and climbing on the playground. Please do not send children in any kind of boots, because these are very uncomfortable for children as they work on the floor and sit in group. (Rain boots should be brought and left at school for rainy days.) "Light up" shoes may not be worn. These are very distracting to children who are working in the classroom.
- Clothes/shoes/outerwear depicting characters from TV, movies, games, etc. may not be worn. Montessori classrooms focus on connecting children to the real world, and character clothing is a distraction for your child and your child's classmates. Children dressed inappropriately will be asked to change into their change of clothes in the classroom.
- Children may not bring/wear jewelry. (Children with pierced ears may wear small earrings.) Analog watches may be worn by older children who are learning to tell time. Lip gloss, make-up, and perfume should not be worn to school. (Lip balm may be sent in the lunchbox if the child's lips are chapped.)
- Please do not bring the following to school: pillows, stuffed animals, toys, gum, candy, umbrellas, or money. Backpacks or overnight bags are permitted only if the child is spending the night elsewhere. Dance or sports bags are permitted when the child goes directly to dance or practice/games from school.
- Toddlers should only wear pants/shorts with elastic waist bands to promote independence.

Change of Clothes: Please Send

Send extra clothes in a gallon-sized zip-lock bag labeled with the child's name to be left at school.

If your child has had an accident, replace the clothing in a zip-lock bag the very next day. (Make sure your child always has a change of clothes at school.) If we cannot find a change of clothes, extras will be used, but must be returned. As the weather changes, please send a new set of clothes.

8.3.2 Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary

Everyday Dress Includes:

- MA logo polo shirts or MA logo t-shirt
- Solid colored skirts/shorts/pants, without characters/graphics or holes. Blue jeans (without holes) are acceptable for everyday dress.
- MA logo polo dresses or jumpers
- Solid colored leggings, shorts, undershirts, etc. may be worn underneath the MA logo polo/t-shirt
- Comfortable shoes that are suitable for the classroom, PE and outdoor play.
- Navy/ Black/ White, leggings, shorts, undershirts, etc. may be worn underneath the approved uniform.

Additional Notes

- For performances, students are normally required to wear a white shirt or blouse (with or without MA logo) and black pants or skirt. Black shoes or dress shoes are preferred for these events. Some concerts and plays have costumes, and parents will be notified accordingly.
- Lower Elementary - Rain boots may be brought and left at school for rainy days



All MA logo apparel must be purchased from Dennis Uniform:

www.dennisuniform.com

63 E Thompson Lane * Nashville, TN 37211

Care and Share Closet; in the workroom for each student level. Place your child's clean outgrown garments in the closet and take out items that your child can wear.

8.4 Rest Policy – Primary Students

At Montessori Academy, we believe strongly in the importance of sleep and rest for children. Adequate sleep is essential for children's physical and emotional health, and a lack of sleep has a strong negative impact on both behavior and learning. We encourage all families to make sure that your children are getting the 10-13 hours of sleep recommended for the Primary age group by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and we help by providing a daily rest time for all Primary children.

For Primary children under Kindergarten age, rest time is approximately one and a half hours. For Kindergartners, rest time is approximately 30 minutes. During rest time, all children are expected to lie on a mat and rest quietly. Children are not required to sleep (though most do), but we do require that all children be able to rest without disrupting other children. Even if children do not sleep, this rest time gives them a chance to relax and recharge after a busy morning of work and play.

If your child is not able to rest quietly without disrupting the other children, you may have to consider the half day schedule.

8.5 Independence in the Restroom – Primary Students

We do expect all our Primary students to be completely toilet trained. This means that they are independent in the restroom. They go to the restroom on their own, not when directed by parents or teachers. They manage their clothing on their own, and they wipe on their own. Of course, for very young children, this is a process, but they should be attempting the full process independently before beginning Primary.

We do understand that children may have a few accidents as they transition into Primary, and Primary teachers will work with those children to help them be successful. If frequent accidents continue after those early weeks, we will need to ask for your assistance. Primary teachers have up to 24 children in their care with a broad curriculum of materials to present, and they cannot give up that instructional time with other children to work continually on toilet training.

Our Student Support Process will be implemented as needed to address these issues.

8.6 Enrichments

8.6.1 Physical Education (Kindergarten & Older)

Gym Shoes (All K – 6th Level Students): Students must have appropriate shoes to wear on PE days.

All K – 6th Level Students are expected to participate in PE classes unless written permission for non-participation has been received. The doctor or parent must state the reason and length of time that the student will be unable to participate. The note should be sent with the child to the classroom teachers. (Please do not email unless you send it 2 days in advance.) The classroom teacher will pass the note along to the PE teacher to excuse the student from participation during the designated period. The student will remain with the class but will be allowed to watch rather than participate.

General fitness is the major emphasis of PE. The physical activities taking place during these classes are designed to build fine and gross motor control, athletic skills, endurance, and a general feeling of good health. Kindergarteners meet once per week and all other classes meet two days per week. Sandals and flip-flops are never appropriate and should not be worn to school.

Medical Conditions – If a student has a medical problem such as an allergy or asthma, please send a detailed explanation to the office with multiple copies (with your signature) for your child's classroom teacher and each of the other teachers with symptoms and warning signs and appropriate measures to be taken should an emergency occur. Please make sure to add your emergency phone numbers to the note and please keep the numbers current.

8.6.2 Spanish

Primary students are exposed to different foreign languages in class through their cultural studies. Kindergarten and Lower Elementary students attend a Spanish class once a week. Upper Elementary students attend Spanish twice per week.

8.6.3 Art

All students K and older attend **art** classes each week. Two art shows each year showcase the fabulous work of all students. This thorough curriculum is presented in a three-year cycle and explores visual art from every historic period and art forms from around the world.

8.6.4 Music

Students at Montessori Academy experience music in every level. Our Toddler and Primary students have a music time each day in their classrooms taught by their teachers. The Kindergarteners have a special music class once per week in the music room in the Fine Arts Building. The Lower Elementary students have general music with singing and have the option to study violin using the Suzuki method, with a certified Suzuki teacher. Third level students also train with recorders. In Upper Elementary, students have general music and a choice of further studies in choral music, strings, or band with highly qualified specialists.

[Lower Elementary Suzuki Violin Program](#)

8.7 Birthday Celebrations

Montessori schools throughout the nation observe a child's birthday with a "Celebration of Life" ceremony. Your classroom teachers will communicate the specifics for how birthdays are celebrated in each classroom.

Party Invitations may be brought to school to be placed in the child's Friday folder ONLY IF all children in the class are invited. **We are not authorized to distribute parent e-mail addresses.**

8.8 Electronic Device Policy

UE students may bring cell phones to school, but they may not be turned on, brought out, or used during school hours. This includes calling, texting, taking pictures, etc. It is understood they are only for the security of the student after school hours, and not during school. Cell phones must be kept in the students' backpack.

8.9 After School Care

After School Care is offered for all levels daily (option of 4:30 p.m. or 5:30 p.m. dismissal time) and is paid monthly. Please contact Ashley Marshall with any questions or concerns regarding After School Care: amarshall@montessoriacad.org.

Students must be signed out of After School Care on the classroom clipboard. Your child will only be released to people on the authorized pick up list. You may update your pick-up/emergency contact list by emailing asitter@montessoriacad.org or by calling 833-3610.

After School Care closes daily at 5:30 p.m. (except for several half days), at which point After Care workers leave campus. If there is an emergency and you anticipate arriving after 5:30 p.m., please call/text Anna Sitter as soon as possible (615-491-0548). Habitual lateness will result in a call from the Head of School and the possible suspension of After School Care privileges.

There will be no tickets or drop in for afternoon or After School Care.

After School Care Pick Up Procedure:

- LE/UE – Students can be picked up in the After School Care Room in the Activity Building, Gym, or outside on the pavilion.
- Primary – Students remain in their classroom or on the playground (Room 9 students will be in the Kindergarten Enrichment Room, formerly Room 5). A sign on the classroom doors indicates the location of the students. "Red" signals the students are outside – please walk around back to the playground. "Green" signals students are inside – please press the intercom and a teacher will let you in the classroom.
- Toddler – Students are on either the back playground or the After School Care Rooms (First 2 classrooms on the left, in the Toddler Building).

8.10 Extra-Curricular Activities

A variety of Extra-Curricular Activities are offered for additional fees. A complete listing is included on the Montessori Academy website. Unless otherwise indicated by reduction of fees for certain months, club teachers generally make up the lessons at their convenience, rather than reduce the monthly fee.

To sign up for Extra-Curricular Activities:

1. Complete the enrollment form(s) via online registration – these can be found at www.montessoriacad.org : Academics > Extra Curricular Activities
2. Submit payment to the Administrative Office. Checks should be payable to the teacher. Payment options vary by instructor.
3. Additional extra-curricular activities may be added throughout in the year.
4. To drop an activity, written/electronic notice must be given to the instructor.

A.1 Acknowledgement of Policy Book – ALL Students



2021-2022

Acknowledgment of Montessori Academy's Policies & Procedures

Dear Parents,

We are delighted to have your family with us for the 2021-2022 school year!

Here is your newly revised **Community Guide**. Please take time to read through it carefully. Sign this form and return it to your child's room or the Administrative Office. By doing this, we are assured that you have indeed received this important communication from Montessori Academy. Thank you!

All Parent Response: *I have read and do understand all of the policies and procedures contained in the Community Guide and the Community Guide to Pandemic Protocols and I will abide by them.*

I also have received access to the following documents:

- Child Abuse and Neglect Information (MA website & Appendix 2 of Parent Handbook)
 - [Mandated Child Abuse Reporting Training](#)
 - [CDC Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention](#)
- Summary of Child Care Approval Requirements ([MA website](#))

Toddler & Primary Parents (specific to Department of Education): Daily Attendance - I acknowledge that upon arrival each day, my child is signed into the program by Montessori Academy staff personnel. Depending on chosen dismissal schedule, my child will be signed out of the program by MA Personnel or by an authorized pick up person.

Primary Parents: The Department of Education requires us to present a Personal Safety Curriculum to Primary Students every year. We have chosen [Second Step Child Protection Unit](#) as our curriculum. There are 6 themes that will be covered on a yearly basis. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Administrative Office.

Parent or Guardian Signature:

Date:

(1) Student's Name:

Room Number:

(2) Student's Name:

Room Number:

(3) Student's Name:

Room Number:

A.2 Child Abuse Information



Dear Parents –

Montessori Academy is required to present information concerning child abuse to parents each school year. Our teachers and staff are required by the Department of Education to report any suspected child abuse directly to the Department of Children’s Services. A complete copy of the DOE rules (including those concerning child abuse) is available in the Administrative Office.

Please visit: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/whatiscan.pdf> for the Child Welfare Information Gateway Publication on Child Abuse.

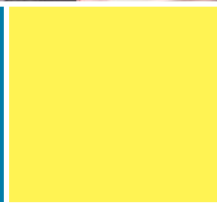
Additional Resources:

- [Mandated Child Abuse Reporting Training](#)
- [CDC Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention](#)



FACTSHEET

April 2019



What Is Child Abuse and Neglect? Recognizing the Signs and Symptoms

The first step in helping children who have been abused or neglected is learning to recognize the signs of maltreatment. The presence of a single sign does not necessarily mean that child maltreatment is occurring in a family, but a closer look at the situation may be warranted when these signs appear repeatedly or in combination. This factsheet is intended to help you better understand the Federal definition of child abuse and neglect; learn about the different types of abuse and neglect, including human trafficking; and recognize their signs and symptoms. It also includes additional resources with information on how to effectively identify and report maltreatment and refer children who have been maltreated.

WHAT'S INSIDE

How is child abuse and neglect defined in Federal law?

What are the major types of child abuse and neglect?

Recognizing signs of abuse and neglect and when to report

Resources



**Child Welfare
Information Gateway**

Children's Bureau/ACYF/ACF/HHS
800.394.3366 | Email: info@childwelfare.gov | <https://www.childwelfare.gov>



**Children's
Bureau**

How Is Child Abuse and Neglect Defined in Federal Law?

Federal legislation lays the groundwork for State laws on child maltreatment by identifying a minimum set of actions or behaviors that define child abuse and neglect. The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), as amended and reauthorized by the CAPTA Reauthorization Act of 2010, defines child abuse and neglect as, at a minimum, “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation (including sexual abuse as determined under section 111), or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm” (42 U.S.C. 5101 note, § 3).

Additionally, it stipulates that “a child shall be considered a victim of ‘child abuse and neglect’ and of ‘sexual abuse’ if the child is identified, by a State or local agency employee of the State or locality involved, as being a victim of sex trafficking¹ (as defined in paragraph (10) of section 7102 of title 22) or a victim of severe forms of trafficking in persons described in paragraph (9)(A) of that section” (42 U.S.C. § 5106g(b)(2)).

Most Federal and State child protection laws primarily refer to cases of harm to a child caused by parents or other caregivers; they generally do not include harm caused by other people, such as acquaintances or strangers. Some State laws also include a child’s witnessing of domestic violence as a form of abuse or neglect.

For State-specific laws pertaining to child abuse and neglect, see Child Welfare Information Gateway’s State Statutes Search page at https://www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/state/.

¹ According to the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, sex trafficking is categorized as a “severe form of trafficking in persons” and is defined as a “situation in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.” As of May 2017, States are required to have provisions and procedures in place as part of their CAPTA State Plans that require “identification and assessment of all reports involving children known or suspected to be victims of sex trafficking and...training child protective services workers about identifying, assessing, and providing comprehensive services for children who are sex trafficking victims, including efforts to coordinate with State law enforcement, juvenile justice, and social service agencies such as runaway and homeless youth shelters...”

To view civil definitions that determine the grounds for intervention by State child protective agencies, visit Information Gateway’s *Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect* at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/define/>.

Child Maltreatment reports. These annual reports summarize annual child maltreatment and neglect statistics submitted by States to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System. They include information about victims, fatalities, perpetrators, services, and additional research. The reports are available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>.

Child Welfare Outcomes Report Data. This website provides information on the performance of States in seven outcome categories related to the safety, permanency, and well-being of children involved in the child welfare system. Data, which are made available on the website prior to the release of the annual report, include the number of child victims of maltreatment. To view the website, visit <https://cwoutcomes.acf.hhs.gov/cwodatasite/>.

What Are the Major Types of Child Abuse and Neglect?

Within the minimum standards set by CAPTA, each State is responsible for providing its own definitions of child abuse and neglect. Most States recognize four major types of maltreatment: physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. Additionally, many States identify abandonment, parental substance use, and human trafficking as abuse or neglect. While some of these types of maltreatment may be found separately, they can occur in combination. This section provides brief definitions for each of these types.

Physical abuse is a nonaccidental physical injury to a child caused by a parent, caregiver, or other person responsible for a child and can include punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, throwing, stabbing, choking, hitting (with a hand, stick, strap, or other object), burning, or otherwise causing physical harm.² Physical discipline, such as spanking or paddling, is not considered abuse as long as it is reasonable and causes no bodily injury to the child. Injuries from physical abuse could range from minor bruises to severe fractures or death.

Neglect is the failure of a parent or other caregiver to provide for a child's basic needs. Neglect generally includes the following categories:

- Physical (e.g., failure to provide necessary food or shelter, lack of appropriate supervision)
- Medical (e.g., failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment, withholding medically indicated treatment from children with life-threatening conditions)³
- Educational (e.g., failure to educate a child or attend to special education needs)
- Emotional (e.g., inattention to a child's emotional needs, failure to provide psychological care, permitting a child to use alcohol or other drugs)

Sometimes cultural values, the standards of care in the community, and poverty may contribute to what is perceived as maltreatment, indicating the family may need information or assistance. It is important to note that living in poverty is not considered child abuse or neglect. However, a family's failure to use available information and resources to care for their child may put the child's health or safety at risk, and child welfare intervention could be required. In addition, many States provide an exception

² Nonaccidental injury that is inflicted by someone other than a parent, guardian, relative, or other caregiver (i.e., a stranger) is considered a criminal act that is not addressed by child protective services.

³ Although it can apply to children of any age, withholding of medically indicated treatment is a form of medical neglect that is defined by CAPTA as "the failure to respond to...life-threatening conditions by providing treatment (including appropriate nutrition, hydration, and medication) which, in the treating physician's or physicians' reasonable medical judgment, will be most likely to be effective in ameliorating or correcting all such conditions..." CAPTA does note a few exceptions, including infants who are "chronically and irreversibly comatose," situations when providing treatment would not save the infant's life but merely prolong dying, or when "the provision of such treatment would be virtually futile in terms of the survival of the infant and the treatment itself under such circumstances would be inhumane."

to the definition of neglect for parents who choose not to seek medical care for their children due to religious beliefs.⁴

Sexual abuse includes activities by a parent or other caregiver such as fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials. Sexual abuse is defined by CAPTA as "the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct; or the rape, and in cases of caretaker or interfamilial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children"(42 U.S.C. § 5106g(a)(4)).

Emotional abuse (or psychological abuse) is a pattern of behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-worth. This may include constant criticism, threats, or rejection as well as withholding love, support, or guidance. Emotional abuse is often difficult to prove, and, therefore, child protective services may not be able to intervene without evidence of harm or mental injury to the child (Prevent Child Abuse America, 2016).

Abandonment is considered in many States as a form of neglect. In general, a child is considered to be abandoned when the parent's identity or whereabouts are unknown, the child has been left alone in circumstances where the child suffers serious harm, the child has been deserted with no regard for his or her health or safety, or the parent has failed to maintain contact with the child or provide reasonable support for a specified period of time. Some States have enacted laws—often called safe haven laws—that provide safe places for parents to relinquish newborn infants. Information Gateway produced a publication as part of its State Statutes series that summarizes such laws. *Infant Safe Haven Laws* is available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/safehaven/>.

⁴ The CAPTA amendments of 1996 (42 U.S.C. § 5106i) added new provisions specifying that nothing in the act be construed as establishing a Federal requirement that a parent or legal guardian provide any medical service or treatment that is against the religious beliefs of the parent or legal guardian.

Parental substance use is included in the definition of child abuse or neglect in many States. Related circumstances that are considered abuse or neglect in some States include the following:

- Exposing a child to harm prenatally due to the mother's use of legal or illegal drugs or other substances
- Manufacturing methamphetamine in the presence of a child
- Selling, distributing, or giving illegal drugs or alcohol to a child
- Using a controlled substance that impairs the caregiver's ability to adequately care for the child

For more information about this issue, see Information Gateway's *Parental Drug Use as Child Abuse* at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/drugexposed/>.

Human trafficking is considered a form of modern slavery and includes both sex trafficking and labor trafficking. Sex trafficking is recruiting, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining someone for a commercial sex act, such as prostitution, pornography, or stripping. Labor trafficking is forced labor, including drug dealing, begging, or working long hours for little pay (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2018). Although human trafficking includes victims of any sex, age, race/ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, children involved in child welfare, including children who are in out-of-home care, are especially vulnerable (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2018).

For more information, see Information Gateway's webpage on human trafficking at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/trafficking/> and the State statutes on the definitions of human trafficking at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/definitions-trafficking/>.

Recognizing Signs of Abuse and Neglect and When to Report

It is important to recognize high-risk situations and the signs and symptoms of maltreatment. If you suspect a child is being harmed, reporting your suspicions may protect him or her and help the family receive assistance. Any concerned person can report suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Reporting your concerns is not making an accusation; rather, it is a request for an investigation and assessment to determine if help is needed.

Some people (typically certain types of professionals, such as teachers or physicians) are required by State laws to report child maltreatment under specific circumstances. Some States require all adults to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect. Individuals required to report maltreatment are called mandatory reporters. Information Gateway's *Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect* discusses the laws that designate groups of professionals or individuals as mandatory reporters. It is available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/statutes/manda/?hasBeenRedirected=1>.

For information about where and how to file a report, contact your local child protective services agency or police department. Childhelp's National Child Abuse Hotline (800.4.A.CHILD) and its website (<https://www.childhelp.org/hotline/>) offer crisis intervention, information, resources, and referrals to support services and provide assistance in more than 170 languages.

For information on what happens when suspected abuse or neglect is reported, read Information Gateway's *How the Child Welfare System Works* at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/cpswork/>.

A child may directly disclose to you that he or she has experienced abuse or neglect. Childhelp's *Handling Child Abuse Disclosures* defines direct and indirect disclosure and provides tips for supporting the child. It is available at <https://www.childhelp.org/story-resource-center/handling-child-abuse-disclosures/>.

While it's important to know the signs of physical, mental, and emotional abuse and neglect, which are provided later in this factsheet, the following signs of general maltreatment also can help determine whether a child needs help:

- Child
 - Shows sudden changes in behavior or school performance
 - Has not received help for physical or medical problems brought to the parents' attention
 - Has learning problems (or difficulty concentrating) that cannot be attributed to specific physical or psychological causes
 - Is always watchful, as though preparing for something bad to happen
 - Lacks adult supervision
 - Is overly compliant, passive, or withdrawn
 - Comes to school or other activities early, stays late, and does not want to go home
 - Is reluctant to be around a particular person
 - Discloses maltreatment
- Parent
 - Denies the existence of—or blames the child for—the child's problems in school or at home
 - Asks teachers or other caregivers to use harsh physical discipline if the child misbehaves
 - Sees the child as entirely bad, worthless, or burdensome
 - Demands a level of physical or academic performance the child cannot achieve
 - Looks primarily to the child for care, attention, and satisfaction of the parent's emotional needs
 - Shows little concern for the child

- Parent and child
 - Touch or look at each other rarely
 - Consider their relationship entirely negative
 - State consistently they do not like each other

The preceding list is not a comprehensive list of the signs of maltreatment. It is important to pay attention to other behaviors that may seem unusual or concerning. Additionally, the presence of these signs does not necessarily mean that a child is being maltreated; there may be other causes. They are, however, indicators that others should be concerned about the child's welfare, particularly when multiple signs are present or they occur repeatedly.

For information about risk factors for maltreatment as well as the perpetrators, see the webpage *Risk Factors That Contribute to Child Abuse and Neglect*, which is available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/can/factors/>, and the webpage *Perpetrators of Child Abuse & Neglect*, which is available at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/can/perpetrators/>.

Signs of Physical Abuse

A child who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of physical abuse:

- Has unexplained injuries, such as burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, or black eyes
- Has fading bruises or other noticeable marks after an absence from school
- Seems scared, anxious, depressed, withdrawn, or aggressive
- Seems frightened of his or her parents and protests or cries when it is time to go home
- Shrinks at the approach of adults
- Shows changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Reports injury by a parent or another adult caregiver
- Abuses animals or pets

Consider the possibility of physical abuse when a parent or other adult caregiver exhibits the following (Prevent Child Abuse America, 2018):

- Offers conflicting, unconvincing, or no explanation for the child's injury or provides an explanation that is not consistent with the injury
- Shows little concern for the child
- Sees the child as entirely bad, burdensome, or worthless
- Uses harsh physical discipline with the child
- Has a history of abusing animals or pets

Signs of Neglect

A child who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of neglect (Tracy, 2018a):

- Is frequently absent from school
- Begs or steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical care (including immunizations), dental care, or glasses
- Is consistently dirty and has severe body odor
- Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs
- States that there is no one at home to provide care

Consider the possibility of neglect when a parent or other caregiver exhibits the following (Tracy, 2018b):

- Appears to be indifferent to the child
- Seems apathetic or depressed
- Behaves irrationally or in a bizarre manner
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs

Signs of Sexual Abuse

A child who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of sexual abuse (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology, 2014; Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network [RAINN], 2018a):

- Has difficulty walking or sitting
- Experiences bleeding, bruising, or swelling in their private parts
- Suddenly refuses to go to school

- Reports nightmares or bedwetting
- Experiences a sudden change in appetite
- Demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior
- Becomes pregnant or contracts a sexually transmitted disease, particularly if under age 14
- Runs away
- Reports sexual abuse by a parent or another adult caregiver
- Attaches very quickly to strangers or new adults in their environment

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when a parent or other caregiver exhibits the following (RAINN, 2018b):

- Tries to be the child's friend rather than assume an adult role
- Makes up excuses to be alone with the child
- Talks with the child about the adult's personal problems or relationships

Signs of Emotional Maltreatment

A child who exhibits the following signs may be a victim of emotional maltreatment (Prevent Child Abuse America, 2016):

- Shows extremes in behavior, such as being overly compliant or demanding, extremely passive, or aggressive
- Is either inappropriately adult (e.g., parenting other children) or inappropriately infantile (e.g., frequently rocking or head-banging)
- Is delayed in physical or emotional development
- Shows signs of depression or suicidal thoughts
- Reports an inability to develop emotional bonds with others

Consider the possibility of emotional maltreatment when the parent or other adult caregiver exhibits the following (Prevent Child Abuse America, 2016):

- Constantly blames, belittles, or berates the child
- Describes the child negatively
- Overtly rejects the child

The Impact of Childhood Trauma on Well-Being

Child abuse and neglect can have lifelong implications for victims, including on their well-being. While the physical wounds may heal, there are many long-term consequences of experiencing the trauma of abuse or neglect. A child or youth's ability to cope and thrive after trauma is called "resilience." With help, many of these children can work through and overcome their past experiences.

Children who are maltreated may be at risk of experiencing cognitive delays and emotional difficulties, among other issues, which can affect many aspects of their lives, including their academic outcomes and social skills development (Bick & Nelson, 2016). Experiencing childhood maltreatment also is a risk factor for depression, anxiety, and other psychiatric disorders (Fuller-Thomson, Baird, Dhrodia, & Brennenstuhl, 2016). For more information on the lasting effects of child abuse and neglect, read *Long-Term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect* at https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.

Resources

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network's factsheet *What Is Child Traumatic Stress?* (<https://www.nctsn.org/resources/what-child-traumatic-stress>) defines child traumatic stress and provides an overview of trauma, trauma signs and symptoms, and how trauma can impact children. Find more resources that strive to raise the standard of care and improve access to services for traumatized children, their families, and communities on the National Child Traumatic Stress Network at <http://www.nctsn.org/>.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) web section, *Child Abuse and Neglect: Consequences*, provides information on the prevalence, effects, and physical and mental consequences of child abuse

and neglect as well as additional resources and a comprehensive reference list. You can visit it at <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/consequences.html>.

Stop It Now! is a website that provides parents and other adults with resources to help prevent child sexual abuse. The site offers direct help to those with questions or concerns about child abuse, prevention advocacy, prevention education, and technical assistance and training. The website is available at <http://www.stopitnow.org/>.

The American Academy of Pediatrics' The Resilience Project gives pediatricians and other health-care providers the resources they need to more effectively identify, treat, and refer children and youth who have been maltreated as well as promotes the importance of resilience in how a child deals with traumatic stress. The webpage is available at <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/resilience/Pages/Resilience-Project.aspx>.

Information Gateway has produced webpages and publications about child abuse and neglect:

- The Child Abuse and Neglect webpage (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/can/>) provides information on identifying abuse, statistics, risk and protective factors, and more.
- The Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect webpage (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/reporting/>) provides information about mandatory reporting and how to report suspected maltreatment.
- Information Gateway also has several publications that cover understanding and preventing maltreatment:
 - *Child Maltreatment: Past, Present, and Future:* <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue-briefs/cm-prevention/>
 - *Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect:* <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/preventingcan/>
 - *Understanding the Effects of Maltreatment on Brain Development* <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue-briefs/brain-development/>

The **CDC** produced *Understanding Child Maltreatment* (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/understanding-cm-factsheet.pdf>), which defines the many types of maltreatment and the CDC's approach to prevention.

Prevent Child Abuse America is a national organization dedicated to providing information on child maltreatment and its prevention. You can visit its website at <http://preventchildabuse.org/>.

A list of organizations focused on child maltreatment prevention is available on Information Gateway's National Child Abuse Prevention Partner Organizations page at https://www.childwelfare.gov/organizations/?CWIGFunctionsaction=rols:main.dsplList&rolType=Custom&RS_ID=%2021.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau





Community Guide to
Phasing Out of Pandemic Protocols
Revised February 24, 2022

A Letter to Our Community

Dear Montessori Academy Community,

Effective February 28 2022, Montessori Academy will be introducing phases to safely and thoughtfully revise our pandemic protocols. After consultation with our medical team and a great deal of work, we are happy and relieved to be able to present to you this next stage of lessening restrictions. We have seen numbers of cases drop dramatically and based on this trend, expect to continue to see COVID positive cases drop. We have created a phase out system to systematically reduce restrictions while monitoring the results.

The teachers and staff are immensely grateful for all the support the families have given us during this unprecedented and unpredictable time. Because you stuck with us, we are still here. We got through this together. We may have more bumps in the road ahead, but now know that we are a strong community willing to work through hard stuff. What an amazing lesson for our children.

We are very excited to welcome parents back on campus and resume our community events. ***We have missed you!***

Our doors are open,
Ms. Emily
Head of School
Montessori Academy

Overview of Our Four Phase Approach

Please also read the details on the following pages. Notable changes include: positive cases in one cohort no longer impact the mask-wearing of another, a Test-To-Stay option in Phase 2, and a 5 day quarantine option for all levels.

Phase 1 February 28, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Campus events may be held, including performances, conferences, and outdoor festivals• Masks optional across campus (see details)• Contact tracing continues• Updated quarantine/isolation policy provides shortened option for younger students• Health monitoring and illness policy• Cohorting
Phase 2 March 7, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all of the above <i>and</i>• Test-to-stay policy for close contacts of a positive case
Phase 3 March 28, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MA shifts away from contact tracing• reimplement Phase 2 policies if an outbreak occurs (3 or more cases in an exposed group, or identified by the TDOH)
Phase 4 TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'endemicity'• guidelines given by CDC or Tennessee Department of Health more closely resemble those for the flu.

We have learned that guidance, circumstances, and protocols constantly shift. We ask for your understanding that these phases may be modified to meet the needs of the community, utilizing the recommendations of governing bodies, the CDC, and/or health department.

Quarantining for Close Contacts

FULLY VACCINATED STUDENTS AND STAFF

Fully vaccinated is defined as: received a booster, completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna within the last 6 months, or completed J & J within the last 2 months. The policies under this section also apply to individuals who have had COVID within the last 90 days.

Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine if asymptomatic.

They should:

- Monitor for symptoms, isolate, and test if any symptoms arise regardless of vaccination status or prior covid.
- Wear a mask around others for 10 days if **possible** (those with mask exemptions or in toddler may continue to attend)
- Test on day 5 recommended

UNVACCINATED/PARTIALLY VACCINATED STUDENTS AND STAFF

This category includes individuals who are: unvaccinated, completed the Pfizer or Moderna course over 6 months ago and are not boosted, or completed the J&J course more than 2 months ago and are not boosted.

The CDC and Health Department now recommend unvaccinated/partially vaccinated individuals quarantine for 5 days after being identified as a close contact, followed by an additional 5 days of mask wearing.

They should:

- quarantine for 5 days after the last date of exposure, followed by 5 days of mask wearing for those who are able.
- test on day 5 recommended for all, **required** for toddlers-P2/mask-exempt students.

PHASE 2 TEST-TO-STAY POLICY

Beginning March 7, 2022 MA will implement a test-to-stay policy for all levels. Students identified as close contacts who would otherwise be asked to quarantine, may opt to 'test-to-stay' instead. Students choosing to quarantine will have their absences excused.

Students testing to stay will:

- Wear a mask if possible through the recommended 10 day period.
- Monitor for symptoms, and isolate if any arise, regardless of vaccination or prior COVID status.
- Test on days 3 and 5 prior to arriving at school, follow isolation guidance if positive.

Contact Tracing



PHASES 1 + 2

The CDC defines a close contact as "someone who was less than 6 feet away from infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. An infected person can spread SARS-CoV-2 starting from 2 days before they have any symptoms.

- Exception: In the K-12 indoor classroom setting or a structured outdoor setting where mask use can be observed (i.e., holding class outdoors with educator supervision), the close contact definition excludes students who were between 3 to 6 feet of an infected student (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff, or other adults in the indoor classroom setting."

PHASE 3

Montessori Academy will refer positive cases to the Tennessee Department of Health to conduct individual contact tracing (TDOH will make the decision about the level they need to contact trace). MA will notify the exposed cohort of a positive case at the group level only. Students may choose to quarantine with their absences excused. Students contacted by TDOH are required to follow their guidance.


Symptomatic students will be sent home, asked to isolate and test. If three or more students from an exposed cohort test positive within 14 days, or the Tennessee Department of Health deems it an outbreak, Phase 2 policies will be re-implemented for the cohort and/or the community.

Isolating

Regardless of vaccination status, a COVID positive individual "must isolate for a minimum of 5 days after onset and may be released after they are without fever for 24 hours (without medication) and show improvement in symptoms. Cases without symptoms should isolate through 5 days after their specimen collection date. Regardless of symptoms, cases should wear a mask* when around others for 10 days following the onset/specimen collection." (TN Department of Health).

*Students who are able will be required to wear a mask. Toddler students/mask exempt students will not be required to wear a mask upon their return. Rapid testing on day 5 is recommended for all, **required** for toddler-P2/mask exempt students.*

If still symptomatic or testing positive on day 5, cases remain isolated through day 10.



Our Roles

PARENTS

Parents are responsible for:

- Communicating test results and symptoms with their level directors.
- Reading e-mails and notifications from the school
- Being mindful of the health and well-being of the entire community.

Please note: When alerting the school, please include the last date of the exposure, who is experiencing symptoms, and when a positive test was taken. The more information we have, the clearer the timeline and guidance we are able to give you. We may ask follow-up questions to help us clarify timelines and exposures.

MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Montessori Academy is responsible for:

- Collecting and updating Covid-related data while maintaining discretion
- Alerting identified close contacts and working with the public health department.
- Communicating current protocols and procedures when applicable
- Working to ensure the health and wellness of all community members

Please make sure your e-mail and phone numbers are updated in our systems. We will send both e-mails and text alerts in the event of exposure and/or classroom closure..

What do masks mean for my child?

The following guidelines apply only for an exposed cohort.

TODDLER

Masks will not be required for toddlers. If your child is over 2 and you would like for the teachers to help your child practice wearing one, we are happy to do that. Our guidance will be positive and personal.

PRIMARY

Masks will be worn indoors during morning work cycle, but are not required while children work outside or while eating. Morning work cycle is typically 3 hours, with the option to work outside.

Masks do not need to be worn outdoors while playing.

Lunch will be outside, unmasked, whenever possible.

Children will not wear masks while napping, as this is a hazard.

Kindergartners will wear masks to specials when they are indoors.

Reminders about masks will be kind and private.

LE/UE/MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL

Students will wear their masks indoors.

Students can remove their mask when:

- Using the restroom
- Eating snack indoors or outdoors
- Sitting in the peace area (that is solitary)
- Working/studying/playing outdoors

Eating outside is preferred when weather permits. Working outdoors will be available whenever deemed safe by the teachers.

Reminders about masks will be kind and private.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES OR MEDICAL NEEDS

Montessori Academy recognizes that wearing a mask may present challenges for students with certain disabilities or medical conditions. Please contact your teachers and/ or level director about accommodations. A letter from a medical professional or occupational therapist is required.




Illness Policy

SYMPTOMS YOUR CHILD WILL BE SENT HOME WITH:

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Infected people have had a wide range of symptoms reported – from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea



When a child becomes ill at school, they will be removed from the classroom/cohort

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

If your child has 'hard symptoms' of fever, fatigue, or worsening cough, they should be tested for COVID-19. A child may return with a negative test and 24 hours symptom free.

A child with 'soft symptoms' may return when symptom free for 24 hours.

If you suspect that your child's congestion or cough is due to seasonal allergies or a cold, a doctor's note confirming this must be submitted. Teachers will err on the side of caution when implementing the illness policy and communicate with parents/guardians about requirements for return to school.

If symptoms arise in an exposed student, the student will be sent home for testing or a doctor's note regardless of vaccination status or prior covid.

Further Information



VENTILATION AND AIR PURIFICATION

We acknowledge that airborne transmission is being recognized as the main way the virus spreads. We have put into place several measures to help ensure air inside is filtered and fresh, by installing air filtration systems, having screen doors attached so outside doors can be ajar, and allowing class to be held outdoors. We have purchased Medify Air MA-112 V2.0 Super CADR 950 H13 True HEPA Air Purifiers for every room.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Our classrooms will be cleaned throughout the day by staff and our cleaning crew. Teachers are using BioEsque disinfectant on non-porous surfaces and materials.

GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES

Proper handwashing is already a part of the Montessori curriculum, as is how to blow one's nose and cover your cough. Teachers will continue to give these lessons of grace and courtesy.

SUPPORT FOR QUARANTINED STUDENTS

Teachers will work with parents/guardians to support students at home due to quarantine. However, our focus is on in-person instruction, and teachers will not be available for full-time virtual learning.





Resources

CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

<https://www.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/>

AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

<https://amshq.org/COVID19>

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (UPDATED QUARANTINE AND ISOLATION GUIDELINES)

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/Isolation-QuarantineRelease.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions

IF THE SCHOOL OR CLASSROOM CLOSES TEMPORARILY, WILL I GET A REIMBURSEMENT OF TUITION?

There will be no reimbursement of tuition fees due to COVID closures. Teachers and staff will continue to work to support families and offer the best education services we can under these challenging circumstances. Essentially, continued tuition is necessary to ensure that Montessori Academy remains an educational option once the pandemic is over.

HELP! I WAS EXPOSED! WHAT DO I DO?

If you are unsure what to do, please reach out to a member of the administration. We can help guide you. We will ask clarifying questions to work on a quarantine timeline or identify potential close contacts. We are here for you!

ARE YOU REQUIRING VACCINATION?

We are not requiring vaccination for COVID-19.

DOES LEARNING REALLY HAPPEN OUTSIDE?

Montessori focuses on the whole child, and right now children are in need of social interaction with other children. This helps their mental and emotional health. Learning is improved when a child's emotional well-being is taken care of. At the beginning of the year, we anticipate children will want to be social, interact with friends they have not seen in many months, and just have joyful experiences. We expect academic learning to take place as it always does: in a well prepared learning environment that meets the child's needs. We are preparing our outdoor learning environment to meet the needs of the children at all developmental levels. We are at a huge advantage because our large, roomy campus allows for freedom of movement, time outside, time for children to be social, and time for children to focus.

Frequently Asked Questions Continued

WHAT HAPPENS IF A CHILD ARRIVES WITHOUT A MASK?

If a child required to wear a mask arrives at school without a mask a teacher will kindly offer one and request they wear it according to the guidelines

WHAT MASKS ARE OKAY TO WEAR?

Masks should completely cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly. Masks should be breathable but should not have a vent. For some people and situations, a mask with a clear panel may be preferred. Face shields are not a replacement for a mask.

IF AN UNMASKED COVID POSITIVE STUDENT COMES TO SCHOOL, AND MY OLDER CHILD IS MASKED BUT IS CONSIDERED A "CLOSE CONTACT" OF THE UNMASKED SICK CHILD, MY CHILD CAN STILL BE SENT HOME?

Yes. According to our medical advisory team, it takes the masking of both the positive child and the other child. So yes, if a COVID positive student is unmasked, then anyone within 3-6 feet for a total of 15 minutes is considered a close contact. This is especially challenging in a Montessori classroom where children have freedom of movement.

WHY DO THE PROTOCOLS KEEP CHANGING?

As public health experts' understanding of coronavirus grows, we must pivot and be flexible. The specific circumstances of our community and state are also constantly changing, requiring adaptability from us.



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