



Parent Handbook

2018–2019

Primary - 8th level

We are delighted that you will be with us this year! This Parent Handbook is designed to help you learn about the policies and procedures at Montessori Academy.

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Brentwood, TN 37027
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www.montessoriacad.org

Montessori Academy Administration

Head of School/Executive Director

Dr. Jim Bernstorf

Lower Elementary Director,

Mrs. Marynet King, M.A., AMS Certified

Primary Director,

Mrs. Tanelle Murphy, MAT, MACTE Certified

Infant/Toddler Director,

Mrs. Sara Aronson, AMS Certified

Board of Directors

The board is comprised of non-administration professionals and members of the administration.



Dual Accreditations

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

Not-For-Profit School

Montessori Academy is a not-for-profit school that practices a non-discriminatory policy and accepts all qualified students without regard to race, color and national origin.

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1. WELCOME FROM DR. BERNSTORF, HEAD OF SCHOOL

Welcome to the 2018 – 2019 school year at Montessori Academy! We are delighted that you have entrusted your children to us and to the Montessori Method of education. Even though the Montessori Method is about 100 years old, it has been fascinating to read more and more current research in brain science and psychology that supports what we have known all along from Dr. Montessori's extensive research.

Children are more engaged in their learning when allowed options and choice in the learning process. Freedom within a prepared environment allows the development of those crucial executive function skills of independence, intrinsic motivation, time management, and purposeful movement. The multi-aged classroom, is a social order that is like real life whether in the home or workplace, that allows children to develop social and interpersonal skills. In short, children have the opportunity to reach their full potential in a classroom that acknowledges their intrinsic differences, both in how they learn and process and how they deal with social issues within the school community. We believe that education is all about the process and not the specific knowledge. A memorized date and fact is temporary. Learning how to learn and loving learning is a life skill that can last forever!

Thank you for trusting us with the education of your child!

Jim Bernstorf Ed.D
Head of School
jbernstorf@montessoriacad.org

2. MISSION, VISION, AND PHILOSOPHY

2.1 Our Mission

Our mission is to be a vibrant Montessori community that engages children to thrive in our changing world.

2.2 Our Vision

Our vision is that each student will become an independent, confident, motivated learner, and responsible community member as a result of the dynamic partnership between students, parents, and teachers. This partnership, within the exceptional Montessori environment, enables each student to become a life-long learner, respects the individual strengths, needs, and abilities of the student, and is a model within the educational community.

- 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 are allowed to 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 Middle School.
- Life skills are taught at every level at Montessori Academy.
- Our "Treasure Chest of Life Skills Program (Lower Elementary – Middle School) concentrates 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 4,000 Montessori schools of 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 195 AMS accredited** schools in the nation at this time. In Tennessee, there are only three AMS accredited schools: Montessori Academy, our satellite school in Clarksville (Amare Montessori) and Lamplighter Montessori in Cordova, Tennessee.

3.2 Child-Care Licensing

Our Infant, 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

Infant: (3-18 months)

The Infant Program at Montessori Academy is a nurturing environment, structured to meet the developmental needs of the youngest of our children. In this carefully prepared environment, babies are provided with engaging learning materials in a peaceful yet stimulating setting. Children learn to use their large muscles for crawling, pulling up, and walking, and are exposed to many materials which will assist in the development of their intellect, fine motor control, problem solving, and social skills. The freedom to explore and make independent choices allows infants to build confidence. Each child becomes an active participant in his or her own educational experience from the very beginning, which sets the stage for a lifelong love of learning. Teachers create strong bonds of trust with the infants as they lovingly respond to the children's individual needs. Trust and parent-teacher partnerships allow infants the security to develop to their greatest potential while at school.

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 ...

- The child is completely toilet-trained and can use the restroom without teacher assistance.
- The child dresses and undresses him/herself.
- The child is able to take shoes off and put them back on all by him/herself.
- The child feeds him/herself.
- The child can watch short lessons and repeat work independently.
- The child can communicate at an age-appropriate level.
- The child can lie down quietly on his/her rest mat for rest without a book.

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 he/she pleases. If the student chooses the same work repeatedly throughout a week or two it is because he/she 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 Primary program. Our extensive (3-6) curriculum prepares our children for Lower Elementary.

3.3 Organizational Structure (continued)

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

When the Primary student meets the exit requirements and moves up to the classroom of (6-9) students, he/she discovers that the new classroom is beautifully arranged with more advanced materials. He/she is welcomed into a class of helpful students. 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. Students in 3rd-8th level take 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.

4. MONTESSORI ACADEMY COMMUNITY

4.1 Parent Responsibilities

- Be sure your child arrives on time each day.
 - Infant/Toddler/Primary: 8:15 a.m.
 - LE/UE/MS: 8:00 a.m.
- Build independence in your child through daily responsibilities at home.
- Communicate with teachers (i.e. going out of town, new baby, death or change in family, etc.).
- Read the Friday e-News and communication from the administration and teachers.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences and "All School Events" and become involved.
- 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 teacher or Director.
- Read Parent Handbook and return Acknowledgement Form (Appendix A2). (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/MS:** Meet with students regularly to discuss assignments, problems and review progress.
- **UE/MS:** Prepare daily/weekly and monthly assignments.

4.3 Student Responsibilities

- Arrive on time each day.
- 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/MS:** Help develop family and personal routine for a successful school week.
 - Be responsible for book bag (or back pack in UE/MS), 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 children'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. 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

No child shall be denied admission to Montessori Academy on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, or national origin.

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 kindergarten year. Any questions about readiness for kindergarten should be directed to Tanelle Murphy, 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 Dr. Jim Bernstorf. (See the Discipline Procedures section of this Handbook for other dismissal circumstances.) The withdrawal policy is as follows:

To withdraw my child before July 1, of the current year, I must submit a letter to the applicable Director no later than June 30, of the current year, requesting to be released from the year's contract. This request must be accompanied by a termination fee of \$100. Records will be released after the termination fee has been paid.

To be released from this contract, if I move outside a 50-mile radius of Montessori Academy, I must give a full calendar month notice of intent to withdraw, or I will owe the tuition for the following month. For example, if on March 1 you notify the school in writing that the last day of attendance will be March 31, no tuition will be due beyond March. If notice is given on March 15 then the full tuition payment for April must be paid.

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. Files will be kept for 7 years after the student has left MA. Student accident reports, immunization forms, and standardized test scores for LE and UE/MS students 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 and the receipt will be attached to the return email. 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.

6.2 Tuition Discounts

- A 2% discount may be applied to yearly tuition (not After Care) if paid in full before August 1, 2018.
- 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 receive an additional \$50 per month discount.
- Discounts are available to families for all children registered for 3:00 dismissal or later and attending full time (5 days). Discounts are not available for Infant students.

***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

We encourage you to **use 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 will be considered at all times. 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 – sent from the school
2. All school email blast
3. News networks
4. Texting via channel 5
5. Phone Lists of Students & Parents & Parent approved secondary contacts

Location of Children: Keeping children here on this property is always 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 located in campus locations as follows:

1. Normal campus locations (classrooms and after care locations)
2. Normal “Safe Place” locations specified for each classroom
3. Gymnasium, Administration Building, Fine Arts Building
4. Campus property – Baseball Field, Big Rock (Not for snow – but perhaps for other emergencies)

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. 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 Bernstorff 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.

7.2.1 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 do sick children pose a risk of infection to other children, a sick child (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 he/she **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:** 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. The child may not return until he or she has been fever free for 24 hours without fever suppressants.
- **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 RATTLING COUGH:** The 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:** Occurring the night before or morning of attending school. The child may not return to school until 24 hours have passed since the last episode.
- **DIARRHEA:** Occurring the night before or morning of attending school. The child may not return to school until 24 hours have passed since the last episode.
- **CONTAGIOUS DISEASE:** 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.

7.2.1 Sickness Policy (continued)

- 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 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 course of 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 either parent, 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 contacts 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 top of 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/MS students, but will be kept and dispensed by the teacher.

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.

7.3 Attendance, Tardiness, and Absence Policy

7.3.1 Attendance Policy (LE/UE/MS)

Missing ten or more days of school, excused or unexcused, will require the completion of work missed during absence, and will make promotion to the next level unlikely.

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. 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.

Of course we understand that there are sometimes 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'll take the following steps:

*After 3 unexcused tardies, your child's teachers will speak to 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 don't 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.

7.3.2 Tardiness Policy (continued)

Primary

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 respective 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/MS

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-8th) - 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. After one week the incomplete work will result in an “I” on the report card.

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 would be locked and entry would not be possible until the lockdown is over.

7.4.1 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 Elementary child is dropped off **no later than 7:55 a.m.** in order to be ready to start the day promptly at 8:00 a.m.

Please note the following:

- If your child forgets something important (i.e. his/her lunchbox), please drop it off in the office.
- If your child has a doctor’s appointment, please send a note to the teachers, come to the office and sign him/her out.

Primary Arrival

Our classrooms open at 7:30 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. In order 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 in order 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.

The classroom **front doors will be locked at 8:15 a.m.** After the doors are locked, you must walk your child to the office, sign in, and then walk your child to the back door of the classroom. (See Tardy Policy 7.3.2.)

- Say good-bye to your child in the car because prolonged good-byes leave a child feeling insecure. Empower your child with a sweet, cheerful comment such as, "Have a great day!" If your child experiences separation anxiety, encourage him/her to bring a favorite book (include child's name) for the teacher to read to the class. Remember your child will be fine after you leave. You are welcome to call the office for reassurance.
- **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 is extremely difficult for teachers if a child has slept late. Montessori Academy is a school and not a daycare.
- Please leave all breakfast food in the car. Snack is served early.

7.4.2 Dismissal

12:00 Dismissal (Primary)

Students registered to attend until 12:00 p.m. will bring a lunch and eat with their friends. Primary parents come to the classroom front door and wait for a teacher to bring your child to you. Children need to be picked up promptly at 12:00 p.m. If you arrive after 12:10 p.m., you will need to have a \$4.00 "Late Fee Ticket".

3:00 Dismissal

Dismissal times are as follows:

- 2:45 – 3:00 p.m. TD & PR students **without** elementary siblings
- 3:00 – 3:10 p.m. TD & PR students **with** elementary siblings & **all** elementary students
 - The safety patrol or teacher will bring your child to you. Place car seats by the right rear door so the safety patrol can load your child from the curb without getting into traffic.
- 3:10 p.m. dismissal ends
- If you arrive between 3:10 p.m. and 3:30 p.m., a "Late Fee Ticket" is needed.
- After 3:30 p.m., an "After School Care Ticket" is needed.

Between 3:00 p.m. and 3:10 p.m. UE/MS students who are members of the Safety Patrol assist Primary and Lower Elementary students and parents during 3:00 p.m. dismissal. **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. Parents of Safety Patrol students should park in a parking space. (Safety Patrol students are on duty until 3:15 p.m.)

3:00 – 6:00 After School Care Dismissal

After School Care can be paid monthly or occasional After School Care tickets may be purchased in the office. The cost is \$15/day or 5 tickets at \$65 (Primary & Elementary/Middle School).

After School Care closes daily at 6:00 p.m. (with the exception of several half days), at which point After Care workers leave campus. If there is an emergency and you anticipate arriving after 6:00 p.m., please call/text Kelly Ott (920-691-6122) as soon as possible. Habitual lateness will result in a call from the Head of School and the possible suspension of After School Care 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.

When school is a half day;

Infant/Toddler students are dismissed at 11:00 a.m.

Primary/LE/UE/MS students are dismissed at 11:15. 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 my 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

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)

- Drive slowly at all times 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 (except during After School Care).
- 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/MS: 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.

We offer a riser meeting and parent visit during the fall in LE/UE/MS, giving parents the opportunity to view the next level classrooms. Fall room placement is made in late spring/early summer. For students transitioning mid-year (Infant/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 Discipline Procedures

Ground Rules (PR/LE/UE/MS)

Classroom ground rules are presented to students as guidelines necessary to develop and maintain the kind of community that reflects harmony and respect for the environment, one's peers and oneself. Each rule represents a goal to be achieved individually and collectively.

1. We speak kindly to others.
2. We walk softly and slowly.
3. We talk quietly.
4. We do our own work.
5. We put our work away carefully.
6. We ask for a presentation of new work.
7. We may do any work which has been presented.
8. We respect the personal space of others.

Disciplinary Procedures – (Primary)

Teachers use many strategies in the classroom to help children succeed in our environment. These strategies include redirection, removal of child from a situation he/she cannot handle, encouragement to make more appropriate choices, conflict resolution, and helping the child choose work.

If behavior issues arise in the classroom, the teacher will consult with an administrator about the difficulties experienced. The teacher may take the child to discuss the problem and possible solutions with an administrator. We do our best to build up the child's self-confidence so that he/she can handle the situation better the next time. Usually we will not send a note home with a child on the child's first visit with an administrator, but will do so if the problem cannot be resolved without the parent's help.

If more help is needed, the teacher will communicate with the parents and arrange a parent conference. A follow up conference will be scheduled to review if behavior has improved.

If the inappropriate behavior does not improve and all the above procedures have been utilized without success, the parent will be asked to withdraw the child and to find a place in which the child's needs will be better met. This is a "no fault" policy and there will be release from the enrollment contract without penalty.

Disciplinary Policies (LE/UE/MS)

Our teachers work very hard to create peaceful, well-run classroom where children can thrive and grow academically, socially and spiritually. We use Positive Discipline to help the students become successful, productive members of our community. We use the ground rules to help guide the students into behavior that is appropriate for our society here at Montessori Academy. If a student is having trouble following the ground rules, and the teacher's intervention is not sufficient to change the student's behavior, the Director will be consulted and the following steps will be taken to help redirect the child's behavior.

Because we are a school that promotes peace, inappropriate behavior including any of the following: disruptive or rude behavior, aggression whether physical or verbal, abuse or bullying of any kind that violates the rights of others, will have the following consequences:

First offense; student is brought by the teacher to the office for a conference with the Director. A plan is worked out to help the student change his/her behavior. Student writes an *Incident Report in office and brings it back the following day with a parent signature in order to re-enter the class. Often this is sufficient to change the student's behavior.

If a second offense occurs, the child is brought to the office and stays in "in school suspension" in the office for the rest of the school day and may only return to the classroom after the parents have come in to meet with the teacher(s) and the Director to determine a plan of action. The child writes during his/her in-school suspension, his/her account of what happened and how he/she will handle it better the next time. The Incident Report (which he/she brings back with a parent signature) is needed to re-enter class. A Follow-up Parent Conference is scheduled to ensure continued progress (1-2 weeks).

If a third Offense occurs, a parent is called to take the student home after he/she meets with the Director and the teacher. Team Action Plan is reviewed. Out of School Suspension (number of days determined by Head of School) + Signed Incident Report to be re-admitted to class. Follow-up Parent Conference(s) to ensure continued progress (1-2 weeks). Dismissal from school if inappropriate behavior continues.

- ❖ **PLEASE NOTE: If a student physically injures another child or teacher, even if it is the first offence**, the consequences will be as follows depending on the severity of the injury; immediate in-school suspension, immediate 1-3 day out-of-school suspension, or immediate expulsion from school.
- ❖ **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 of 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.
- ❖ ***Incident Report** – Letter written by the student describing the inappropriate or disruptive behavior and his/her plans for improved behavior in the future. Letter should contain an apology to the appropriate persons involved in the incident and the parent's signature for the student to be re-admitted to class. [A copy of suggested format will be discussed with the student.]

Montessori Academy reserves the right...

Montessori Academy reserves the right to skip all of the above steps and to suspend, dismiss, or ask for the immediate withdrawal of any student at any time, in the sole discretion of the Head of School, if that student's work, progress, conduct or influence (on or off campus), falls below acceptable educational or social standards. Each student's enrollment is subject to the rules and policies adopted or amended by the Head of School.

7.7.1 Office Hours and Website

Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday when the school is open. For more information about our school, please see our website at www.montessoriacad.org.

7.7.2 Online School Directory

For our online school directory, please go to our website and click on “ParentWeb”. 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.

7.7.3 Tools for Communicating with Parents

All classrooms have an email address to communicate more effectively with parents. 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 he/she is free. Please do not text or call the teachers’ cell phones during the school day. **If it is urgent**, call the office and we will contact the teacher.

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

7.7.4 Communication Events

- **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, and current classroom events.
- Weekly take-home folders (sent home on Fridays)
- Weekly e-News sent via e-mail every Friday
- Classroom Newsletters (e-mailed to parents)
- Report cards: Toddler/Primary; three/year, Kindergarten/LE/UE/MS; every 9 weeks
- **Open House Days** (Infants/Toddlers only participate in the Grandparents and Special Friends Open House) Parents may visit the classroom between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. 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:
 - ✓ Please enter the room quietly to experience the wonder and peace of a Montessori environment.
 - ✓ Please 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 Parent 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

7.8 Classroom Observations

Please invest an hour 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.
- Please 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.

7.9 Time Management/Homework Policy

Time Management (LE/UE/MS)

All of our classrooms have a minimum two hour uninterrupted work time each morning. We feel strongly that if a student works hard during his work time at school that he/she should not have to spend the entire evening working on homework. Just like adults, students need time with their families in the evening in order 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 his day. He/she chooses 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 is able to mentally plan his day is also able to survey and reflect on how much he/she is accomplishing. 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 he/she 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: Daily homework includes: (1) 30-45 minutes of shared and independent reading, (2) memorization of math facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication tables), (3) spelling practice. An established, designated daily reading time is critical to your child's academic progress. Your child should read a book on his/her reading level. Books that parents read to their children should be several grade levels above his/her reading level in order to build excitement, vocabulary and imagination. Find time each week for silent reading as a family with each member reading something in the same room.

UE/MS: There may be limited routine homework assignments involving additional practice with reading, spelling, writing, and library research. The Montessori 2 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.

7.10 Field Trips (Kindergarten-8th level)

7.10.1 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. The part that relates to our students on field trips states that any child four through eight years of age **and** measuring less than four feet nine inches (4' 9") must be in a "belt positioning booster seat system" and in the rear seat if the vehicle has a rear seat. That would mean a 4' 9" child younger than nine would not have to be in a booster seat and a child older than eight but shorter than 4' 9" would not have to be in a booster seat. Students not required by law to be in a booster seat must still be secured with a safety belt.

7.10.2 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.

7.11 Former Student Visits

Former students are welcome to visit Montessori Academy at the end of the school day (i.e. during dismissal). Visitors must check in at the office. Visits are not permitted during the school day.

7.12 Snow Day Policy

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

- Parent Alert Text Message
- Email from Montessori Academy
- TV channels: 2, 4, 5

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 have to close early, we will announce the closing time via email/text, and the TV stations listed above.

7.13 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, etc.) at your discretion. However, please do not post pictures of children of other families to any of these websites without the parent's permission.

7.14 Religion and Montessori Academy

Montessori Academy was founded by Eileen Bernstorf in 1985 and its roots go back to 1967. The school has always had a very diverse student and family body based on race, ethnicity, and religion. This has not been an accident but has been intentional. The Bernstorf family has a long Christian heritage, but has chosen to build and develop a school that is focused on the Montessori Method and not on color of skin or religious affiliation. That is not in any way to diminish the value of those things in the lives of the families who are a part of our school community. Instead it values those things enough to not let them become divisive issues that stand in the way of educating children within an authentic Montessori framework.

While the underlying values of the school come from a Judeo-Christian world view, it is the policy of Montessori Academy to not make accommodations for any specific religion or manifestation of that religion on campus by students or faculty during the school day. That includes dress, observances, or special days that are specific for any religion. We value those religious and cultural values that bring meaning to people's lives, but the campus of Montessori Academy will continue to be a place where our focus is on educating children; not on being a battleground where the cultural conflicts present in the United States and the world are fought out.

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.

8.2 Lunch and Snack

8.2.1 Lunch

A MA issued lunch box is required to be used daily. It is given to each new student when the initial registration fee is paid. (New lunchboxes are available in the office for \$12.) We encourage the use of labeled plastic 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 his/her lunch box with a permanent marker. Please send **any necessary utensils**.

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

PR: Please send two cloth napkins and a small plastic cup daily. Water is provided for lunch. A small bottle of milk (unflavored) may be sent in the lunchbox.

8.2.1 Lunch (continued)

LE/UE/MS students should bring drinks from home each day for lunch - a small bottle of milk (unflavored), 100% juice or water. All drinks should be healthy which means: non-carbonated, non-caffeinated, low in sugar, and with no artificial dyes. Sports drinks are not permitted. Please remember to include proper utensils: spoons, forks, or knives and two cloth napkins.

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. Meat, casseroles, soups, rice and vegetables can be sent in a small thermos (if your child is able to open it).

Please refer to the following lunch suggestions:

Protein: cheese; sliced or cubed, luncheon meats, tuna, peanut butter
Bread: whole grain bread, muffins, bagels, pita, and tortillas
Veggies: carrot strips, celery, green peppers, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, cauliflower, broccoli
Fruit: apple, orange (peeled & sectioned), banana, peach, pear, raisins or other dried fruit
Dessert: nut breads, small bags of "trail mix," or **healthy cookies** such as oatmeal-raisin or similar low-sugar, unfrosted cookies

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, Frito's, Cheetos's, chips, similar high-calorie low-nutrition foods

Only UE/MS students may bring food to school that needs to be warmed in the microwave.

8.2.2 Toddler/Primary Snack

Each family provides snack for the entire classroom one or two weeks during the school year and in turn your child gets to enjoy nutritious snacks all year. The Snack Coordinator for your child's room will let you know which week has been assigned to you. Please send an extra snack in the red Montessori Academy snack bag if your child stays for After School Care.

8.2.3 Elementary Snack

Most classrooms do allow students to bring a healthy snack in his or her lunchbox each day to be eaten during the morning. The teachers will advise you concerning their room's policy. Lower Elementary – Middle School students eat lunch at 11:00 a.m.

Please send an extra snack if your child stays for After School Care.

8.3.1 Primary

Please help your child learn to dress him/herself at home so he/she can do it at school as well. Primary students should dress themselves.

- Primary children will wear Dennis Uniform polos, t-shirts, or dresses with the MA logo daily, with the exception of specified out of uniform days. Any pants, shorts, or skirts may be worn, but all should be easy for the child to manage independently in the restroom. Non-uniform shirts may be layered under the MA shirts during colder weather. Cardigans may also be worn over logo tops.
- **Please label all items brought to school.**
- **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.
- **Super-hero clothes/shoes or clothes with drawings of popular characters are not to be worn.** Children dressed inappropriately will be asked to change into their change of clothes. If there are none, extras will be used.
- “Light up” shoes may not be worn.
- Children may not bring/wear jewelry, lip gloss or perfume to school. (Lip balm may be sent in the lunchbox in the child’s lips are chapped.)
- All students’ hair should be neat, clean, and conservatively styled.
- Please do not bring the following to school: blankets, 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.
- No head coverings may be worn during the school day.

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.
- Primary children should bring extra pants, underwear, and socks. Classrooms will have extra uniform shirts. It's very important that these are washed and returned the next morning.
- As the weather changes, please send a new set of clothes.

8.3.2 Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary/Middle School

Our students wear uniform dress from Lower Elementary through Middle School. Items may be purchased from the Dennis Uniform store in Nashville or through their website (www.dennisuniform.com). The white shirts are actually gray shirts dyed white, so please do not bleach them or they will turn gray. Contact Anna Sitter with uniform questions: asitter@montessoriacad.org.

Every Day Dress Code: On most school days, (non-dress uniform days), the students may wear clothing listed in the “Every Day Dress Code Selections” on the Dennis website. Please note that if a child arrives “out of dress code”, we will call you and have you bring the proper clothing for your child to wear.

- Each student must purchase a navy fleece jacket from Dennis to wear on cool days in the classroom.
- Coats and jackets do not have to be from Dennis; however, they may not be worn inside the classroom.
- Socks and leggings– navy/black/white only
- Long sleeve tee shirts may be worn under MA short sleeve polo shirts – navy/black/white only
- For modesty, leggings or bike shorts (navy/black/white) should be worn under skirts and jumpers.
- Shirttails must remain tucked in and a navy/black/khaki belt must be worn with slacks or shorts.
- Please note that...NOT all half days are “Out of Uniform Days”. Please check the Online Calendar.

Dress Uniform: Each student should have a required “Dress Uniform” for the special days listed below.

Dress Uniform Required on the Following Days

1. Photo Days
2. Musical Performances
3. Grandparents & Special Friends Day
4. Off campus field trips (unless otherwise noted)
5. Recognition Day Ceremonies

Girl’s & Boy’s Required Dress Uniform:

- NAVY pants/ NAVY skirt or NAVY jumper (jumper must be purchased from Dennis Uniform)
- White button down MA Oxford shirt (from Dennis Uniform)
- **Black dress shoes**
- Navy tie for boys
- White knee socks with jumpers and skirts

Used Uniform Sale; for your convenience, Montessori Academy holds a fall and spring sale each year.

Care and Share Closet; in the Elementary Entryway is for you to use. Place your child’s clean outgrown garments in the closet and take out items that your child can wear.

Special Notes:

Jewelry: Wearing jewelry is discouraged for safety reasons and the possibility of it getting lost or broken. Heavy jewelry or dangling earrings should not be worn. Boys may not wear earrings.

Hair: All students’ hair should be neat, clean, and conservatively styled. Hair color must be his or her natural color, or a color that naturally occurs in nature. Boy’s hair may not touch the top of the collar in the back, and must not cover the eyes in front (no spike hair style, Mohawks or any other hairstyle that calls attention to the child).

Special Dress Days: (See online calendar for specific dates)

LE/UE/MS Spring Dance

Casual/Special Dress Days... Acceptable Attire

- Slacks or Capri pants appropriately sized
- Shorts no shorter than 4" above the knee
- Shirts without writing
- Nice blue jeans

Casual Special Dress Days...Unacceptable Attire

- Sleeveless/spaghetti strap tops
- Jeans with holes or frays
- Shirts with writing or logos (except MA logo)
- Blouses that show abdomen or back
- Tops and slacks so tight that undergarments are visible

Items that may not be brought/worn to school or After Care:

- Boots, high-heeled (over ½") shoes, cleats, open-toed shoes/sandals, light-up shoes
- Pants or slacks with holes, fraying or pants worn below the waist
- Shoes with built-in roller skates, roller blades or roller skates of any kind, or skateboards
- "Hoodies" or hooded sweatshirts of any kind
- No head coverings may be worn during the school day.
- Trading cards and other related items, games, and toys
- CD players, radios, hand-held and/or lap-top computers, hand-held video games, any electronic device or gadgets, iPods, Ipads, or cameras

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- 40 minutes. During rest time, all children are expected to lie on a mat and rest quietly with no books, toys, or other distractions. Children are not required to sleep (though most do), but we do require that all children be able to rest quietly. 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.

8.4 Independence in the Restroom – Primary Students

We do expect all of 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.

If a student has **3 bathroom accidents at school within a two week period**, we will ask that you keep the child home until your child has three consecutive days at home with no accidents before returning to school. This will help your child's attention to be focused on being toilet trained. Please make sure that you are letting your child follow his/her natural urges to go to the restroom, and stay positive! Pushing and/or punishments will not help your child be successful and will most likely cause further regression. Rewards have no positive effect long-term, as the child won't get a treat every time he or she uses the restroom. If your child has accidents at home, make cleaning up and changing clothes part of his or her responsibilities. If you need more advice in this area, please contact your child's teachers or the Primary Director. We appreciate your understanding and partnership in helping your child be independent in the restroom.

8.5 Enrichments

8.5.1 Physical Education (K – 8th)

Gym Shoes (All K – 8th Level Students): Students must have appropriate shoes to wear on PE days.

K – 8th...All Kindergarten through Middle School 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 or three 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.

Physical Education Class Guidelines;

- If a student breaks a piece of equipment because of misuse or abuse, he/she will replace it.
- All disciplinary policies are also in effect during PE times. We expect our students to be well behaved in PE.
- A child who does not follow the rules, is rude to the teacher or refuses to participate in PE will be required to run laps or be sent back to his/her classroom.
- If a student is sent back to the classroom more than twice, a note will be sent home for the parent to sign and return before the student will be allowed to return to PE.

8.5.2 Spanish

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

8.5.3 Art

All K – 8th, 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.

8.5.4 Music

Students at Montessori Academy experience music in every level. Our toddlers have a music time each day in their classrooms taught by their teachers. In our Primary classrooms, our music specialist visits once per week with different instruments and exciting lessons to share with the children. 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/Middle School, students have general music and a choice of further studies in choral music, strings, or band with highly qualified specialists.

8.6 After School Care

After School Care is offered for all levels daily from 3:10-6:00 pm. Parents have the option of paying for an entire month, or using tickets for occasional care. Please contact Kelly Ott with any questions or concerns regarding After School Care: kott@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 6:00 p.m. (with the exception of several half days), at which point After Care workers leave campus. If there is an emergency and you anticipate arriving after 6:00 p.m., please call/text Kelly Ott as soon as possible (920-691-6122). Habitual lateness will result in a call from the Head of School and the possible suspension of After School Care privileges.

Occasional Care:

- ASC tickets are less expensive if purchased in quantities so you may want to purchase some to have on hand for emergencies. All unused tickets are-refundable.
- Tape a ticket to your child's lunchbox the day that your child will need After School Care.
- A "late fee ticket" is also available if you arrive between 3:10 p.m. and 3:30 p.m.
- Without a pre-purchased ticket, the billed fee is **\$20 per day**. If a parent is continually billed (more than 5 times), After School Care privileges will be suspended.
- If you are caught unexpectedly requiring After School Care, simply call the office by 3:00 p.m. and bring a ticket at pickup.

After School Care Pick Up Procedure:

- **LE/UE/MS** – Students can be picked up in the After 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.

8.7 Extra-Curricular Activities

A variety of Extra-Curricular Activities are offered for additional fees, beginning the first week of September. 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. **Students not picked up at the end of the activity will automatically be sent to After School Care**, and the parent will be billed if the student is not enrolled in the After School Care program.

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.
3. Additional extra-curricular activities may be added later in the year.
4. In order to drop an activity, written/electronic notice must be given to the instructor.

8.8 Electronic Device Policy

UE/MS 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 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.**

8.10 Use of Computers

Computers are available for 3rd level and Upper Elementary/Middle School students to use in the classrooms. The Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy outlines expectations and guidelines and is included in the Appendix of this Handbook. Students in 3rd level and up must have a signed agreement on file prior to using school computers. Refusal to abide by the rules will result in loss of computer use privileges.



3rd – 8th Level Computer Usage Agreement

School computers are an important part of the teaching and learning process. They are used for research on the internet, report writing and production (Word, and PowerPoint), and as a part of the practice and learning process in math and science. This computer policy is put in place to protect the computer systems, the functionality of the classrooms, and to maintain a classroom environment that is both productive and healthy. Net Nanny is maintained on all student computers to block unhealthy sites on the internet but it should be understood that no program can be 100% perfect in that area. Students must comply with the following policies:

Students must log into computers with their own user name and password and log off when they step away from the computer.

Students are to access computer programs or areas of the internet only with the direct permission of the teacher.

No computer settings are to be changed by students including screen savers, desktops, menu bars, etc.

Students are not to interfere with other students working on a computer or tamper with their files.

Students are only to use computers or print material that is directly school related.

If a computer is not working properly or files are not printing, the teacher should be asked for help.

If a student does not abide by these policies, he/she will temporarily lose the privilege of using computers at school. If a student continually has problems with proper computer usage with the resulting loss of computer privilege then this will necessarily negatively impact the learning process and the resulting grades.

I agree to the above listed policies for computer usage:

Student / Date

Parent/Guardian / Date

Revised 7/27/2017



2018-2019

Acknowledgment of Montessori Academy's Policies & Procedures

Dear Parents,

We are delighted to have your family with us for the 2018-2019 school year!

Here is your newly revised **Parent Handbook**. 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 "Montessori Academy Parent Handbook" and I will abide by them. I also have received access to the following documents:*

- *Child Abuse and Neglect Information (MA website & Appendix 4 of Parent Handbook)*
 - *The following "Reporting Child Abuse Training Module" provides additional information:*
<https://www.sworps.tennessee.edu/children/jtf/resources.html>
- *Summary of Child Care Approval Requirements (MA website)*
- *Personal Safety Curriculum (Appendix 3 of Parent Handbook)*

(Parent or Guardian Signature)

Date

(Parent or Guardian Signature)

Date

(Student's Name)

Room Number



Personal Safety Curriculum

Dear Parents –

The Department of Education now requires us to present a Personal Safety Curriculum to **Primary Students** every year. Each six weeks your child's teachers will read two books related to personal safety. These books are all age appropriate. Below is a list of books we will use – the books will be rotated through the Primary classrooms, so this may not necessarily be the order they are read. If you would like to view the curriculum, please stop by the Administrative Office.

1st 6 Weeks:

Strangers by Dorothy Chlad

You're Ok (A Children's Guide to Helping Friends) by Jean B. Holler

2nd 6 Weeks:

Matches, Lighters, and Firecrackers Are Not Toys by Dorothy Chlad

We're Responsible (A Children's Guide to Fire Safety) by Sandra J. Williams

3rd 6 Weeks:

Poisons Make You Sick by Dorothy Chlad

Be Healthy, Be Wise (A Children's Guide to Health Awareness) by Dr. Michael J. Rostafinski

4th Six Weeks:

They're Only Words (A Children's Guide to Words that Hurt) by Deborah J. Testi

What's the Difference (A Children's Guide to Cultural Diversity) by Jean B. Holler

5th Six Weeks:

Bicycles are Fun to Ride by Dorothy Chlad

When I Ride in a Car by Dorothy Chlad

6th 6 Weeks:

We're Street Smart by Frank MacHovec

We Must Say "No!" by Marjorie E. Castro and Rhett Leary

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Administrative Office.



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.

Child Abuse and Neglect Statistics

How Are We Really Doing?

The question of how many children are abused and neglected each year in the United States is seemingly simple, but it does not have an easy answer. Because several national and state agencies collect and analyze different data using different methods, the statistics vary. In addition, not every suspicion or situation of abuse or neglect is reported to child protection services (CPS) agencies. As a result, the number of reports likely under represents the number of children who actually suffer from abuse or neglect.

One of the most reliable and extensive information sources is the yearly Child Maltreatment Report by the Children's Bureau, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Children, Youth and Families. This yearly report is based on data collected by the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) from state CPS agencies. American Humane has provided significant technical assistance and expertise to NCANDS as a project subcontractor to Walter R. McDonald and Associates since the project began in 1990. According to NCANDS whose latest statistics are for 2005 an estimated 3.3 million referrals of child abuse or neglect were received by public social service or CPS agencies. Of these referrals, 899,000 children were confirmed to be victims of abuse or neglect (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2007). That means about 12 out of every 1,000 children up to age 18 in the United States were found to be victims of maltreatment in 2005 (USDHHS, 2007).

Where Do We Get Our Information?

Reports of suspected child maltreatment come from multiple sources. In 2005, over one-half of reports (61.7 percent) were from professionals who are considered "mandated reporters" (USDHHS, 2007). Mandated reporters are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect. The most common mandated reporter referral sources in 2005 were social services personnel, legal professionals, law enforcement, criminal justice personnel and medical and mental health professionals (USDHHS, 2007).

Types of Maltreatment Children Suffer

Maltreatment can take many forms, and some children can suffer from more than one type. Since 1999, the majority of children confirmed to be victims of child maltreatment experienced neglect. The following are the percentages of children who experienced maltreatment in 2005 (USDHHS, 2007):

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------|
| Neglect | 62.8% |
| Physical abuse | 16.6% |
| Sexual abuse | 9.3% |
| Emotional/psychological abuse | 7.1% |
| Medical neglect | 2.0% |
| Other | 14.3% |

The 'Other' category listed above includes abandonment, threats to harm the child, congenital drug addiction and other situations that are not counted as specific categories in NCANDS. The percentages here add up to more than 100 percent because some children were victims of more than one type of maltreatment.

Demographics of Child Victims

Boys and girls are equally likely to suffer maltreatment. In 2005, 47.3 percent of child victims were male, and 50.7 percent were female. Victimization rates were highest among the youngest population of children, birth to 3 years, at a rate of 16.5 per 1,000 children (USDHHS, 2007).

In 2005, 49.7 percent of children who were maltreated were white, 23.1 percent were African American, and 17.4 percent were Hispanic. American Indians and Alaska Natives accounted for 1.2 percent of victims, and Asian-Pacific Islanders accounted for less than 1 percent of victims (USDHHS, 2007).

Approximately 10 percent of the children in this country have a disability or chronic illness. The incidence of abuse and neglect among these children is twice as high as it is among average children (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2006).

Child victims who were reported with disabilities accounted for almost 8 percent of all victims of child abuse and neglect in the 39 states that reported this type of data (USDHHS, 2007). For NCANDS' purposes, children with the following disabilities were considered disabled: mental retardation, emotional disturbances, visual impairment, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, behavioral problems or other medical problems. It is believed that while children with disabilities are maltreated more frequently, these cases are less likely to be reported for several reasons. Most CPS agencies' data collection on maltreatment cases does not involve questions regarding a child's disability. Children with disabilities are less likely to be believed or viewed as credible when they attempt to report.

Parental Substance Abuse Can Lead to Child Abuse and Neglect

The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University estimates in a 2005 report that substance abuse is a factor in at least 70 percent of all reported cases of child maltreatment. Adults with substance use disorders are 2.7 times more likely to report abusive behavior and 4.2 times more likely to report neglectful behavior toward their children. Maltreated children of substance abusing parents are more likely to have poorer physical, intellectual, social and emotional outcomes and are at greater risk of developing substance abuse problems themselves (USDHHS, 2003).

Too Often Children Need to Be Removed From Their Homes

One of the major reasons children enter foster care is abuse and neglect associated with parental alcohol or drug abuse (USDHHS, 1999). As of September 30, 2004, 517,000 children lived in foster homes because they could not safely remain in their own homes. In 2005, one-fifth (21.7 percent) of victims or 317,000 children were removed from their homes as a result of child maltreatment investigations. Some children spend weeks or months in care, and others live in care for an entire year or longer (USDHHS, 2007).

Statistics Over Time

The number of children who are abused and neglected has fluctuated over time. There has been a general increase in the number of abuse and neglect substantiations.

| | |
|------|---------|
| 1999 | 829,000 |
| 2000 | 881,000 |
| 2001 | 903,000 |
| 2002 | 896,000 |
| 2003 | 906,000 |
| 2004 | 872,000 |
| 2005 | 899,000 |

It is difficult to determine if the shifts in the numbers of children being reported is due to the actual change in abuse and neglect each year or if the fluctuations are a result of improved data collecting in these areas. NCANDS reports that the increase in 2005's data could be a result of the additional reporting of both Puerto Rico and Alaska, which were not included in *Child Maltreatment* in previous years.

Who Are the Perpetrators?

Perpetrators of child abuse or neglect are most often the child's own parents. According to NCANDS, in 2005, 79.4 percent of perpetrators were parents and 6.8 percent were other relatives. The largest remaining categories of perpetrators were the unmarried partner of a child's parent (3.8 percent) and other perpetrators (4.1 percent). In 3.6 percent of child maltreatment cases the perpetrators were missing or unknown. In under 1 percent of child maltreatment cases the perpetrator was a foster parent, residential facility staff, the child's daycare provider, a legal guardian, friends or neighbors, or other professionals (USDHHS, 2007).

Approximately 40 percent of child victims were maltreated by their mothers acting alone; another 18.3 percent were maltreated by their fathers acting alone; 17.3 percent were abused by both parents (USDHHS, 2007).

Children Die Every Day From Abuse or Neglect

In 2005, an estimated 1,460 children died as a result of abuse or neglect (USDHHS, 2007). The majority almost 76.6 percent of these children were 3 years of age or younger. Most child fatalities (76.6 percent) happened at the hands of parents (USDHHS, 2007). Not all fatalities were the result of the physical trauma of abuse. Neglect accounted for almost half (32.2 percent) of all fatality cases.

Many Child Victims Are Unknown to CPS Agencies

According to the federally funded Third National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect (1996), almost three times as many children are maltreated as are reported to CPS agencies. This study involved 5,700 community professionals who came in contact with children. The study offered insight into when and why these professionals reported suspected abuse or neglect in greater detail than can be derived through NCANDS data.

What Can You Do?

Thousands of children throughout America suffer abuse and neglect each day. This has harmful consequences on the physical and emotional development and well-being of children. State CPS agencies identify and help many of these children and their families, yet many cases of abuse or neglect are never reported, and not all states provide detailed case-level data to NCANDS. American Humane encourages all community members to become actively involved in the lives of the children within their communities.

American Humane's Front Porch Project® is a national initiative built on the belief that people who are concerned about children's well-being should be empowered to act. The program teaches community members how to intervene appropriately when necessary and encourages them to share their knowledge with other community members. It strengthens communities through relationship building between community members, building on the strengths and assets within at-risk families, and by creating a partnership between participants and government agencies.

You have the power to create positive change in your community by stopping the abuse and neglect that occurs in your own neighborhood. If you suspect child abuse or neglect is occurring, please report it to your local CPS agency or to the police if the child is in immediate danger. The longer the abuse continues the more damage it will ultimately cause the child(ren). (See American Humane's Fact Sheet, *Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect*). As nationwide data from sources like NCANDS become more detailed and available, they can help professionals and others understand the problem of child maltreatment more completely. Yet, data alone cannot solve the problem of child abuse and neglect in America.

What Is NCANDS?

NCANDS, the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, is the primary source of national information on abused and neglected children known to public child protective services agencies. American Humane has provided technical assistance to this project since its beginning in 1990. NCANDS reports that *Child Maltreatment 2005* appears to have a large increase in overall data due to the fact that this edition is the first to include Alaska and Puerto Rico. For a copy of this report, contact the Child Welfare Information Gateway at (800) 394-3366 or <http://www.childwelfare.gov/>. The publication is also available at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb>.

References

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Highly recommended for all parents:

Jane Nelson's *Positive Discipline* is an amazing and eye opening book! Jane will revolutionize your thoughts on parenting. We highly recommend that all parents purchase a *Positive Discipline* book from either amazon.com or from the Administrative Office.

| Author | Title |
|--|---|
| Montessori, Maria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>From Childhood to Adolescence</i> • <i>The Absorbent Mind</i> • <i>The Secret of Childhood</i> • <i>To Educate the Human Potential</i> • <i>The Discovery of the Child</i> |
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| Kindlon, Dan | <i>Too Much of a Good Thing: Raising Children of Character in an Indulgent Age</i> |
| Kohn, Alfie | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No Contest: The Case Against Competition</i> • <i>Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community</i> • <i>Punished by Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise & Bribes</i> |
| Levine, Mel | <i>The Myth of Laziness</i> |
| Lillard, Angeline | <i>The Science behind the Genius</i> |
| Nelson, Jane, Glenn, H. Stephen | <i>Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World: Seven Building Blocks for Developing Capable Young People</i> |
| Nissenburg, Sandra K., Bogle, Margaret L., Wright, Audrey C. | <i>Quick Meals for Healthy Kids and Busy Parents: Wholesome Family Recipes in 30 Minutes or Less</i> |
| Rosemond, John | <i>Parent Power: A Commonsense Approach to Parenting</i> |
| Stein, David B | <i>Unraveling the ADD/ADHD Fiasco (Successful Parenting Without Drugs)</i> |