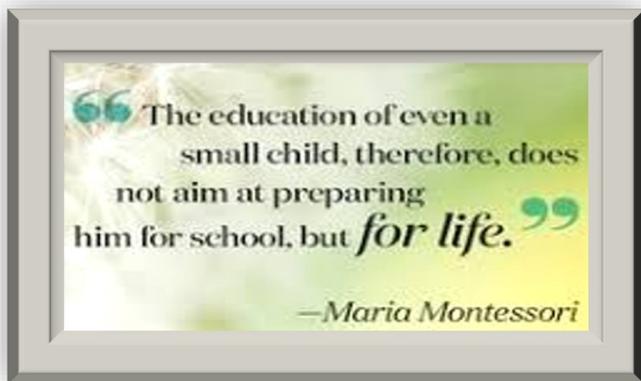


MONTESSORI PATHWAYS' NEWS

September

Notes from Ms. Alena
(Head of School)



In Montessori schools, we call September and October the normalization period for our students, especially for the new ones.

As a parent who is new to Montessori, you may be slightly alarmed when you first hear the term 'normal' or 'normalization'. In Montessori education, the term 'normalization' doesn't refer to your child being 'typical' or 'average.' Instead, the term is used to describe a unique process in child development, where children become contributing members of their community.

Normalization consists of a child's ability to concentrate and work freely in the Montessori environment, using the Montessori materials to fully engage their interests, and exercising self-discipline and peace.

There are four characteristics that are commonly associated with normalization:

1. **Love of work:** The ability to choose work freely and find joy in work.
2. **Concentration:** The ability to work continuously following a progressive interest.
3. **Self-discipline:** The ability to focus energies and mental capacities in the pursuit of self-mastery.
4. **Sociability:** The ability to help, respect and have sympathy for others.



Doctor Maria Montessori cited normalization as "The most important single result of our whole work." (The Absorbent Mind)

Children build the foundations of character and personality that are necessary for normalization by following a three-period work cycle, consisting of:

1. **Preparation for work:** Gathering the Montessori materials and preparing the mind.
2. **Work:** Focused concentration on the activity or material.
3. **Rest:** Deriving satisfaction from completion of work.

As children learn to effectively complete the work cycle, they progress through the three stages of normalization. Each stage builds on the one before it, as they slowly master the skills of concentration, love of work, self-discipline, and sociability.



Some parents may say, "My child doesn't need to work. Work is what adults do." E. M. Standing, who was Maria Montessori's assistant for 30 years, explains the child's work as "any activity which involves the child's whole personality and has at its unconscious aim the construction of personality. It is definitely a form of self-expression and brings the child a corresponding joy in the performance of it."

The child's work is qualitatively different from the adult's work. The child works to develop self. The work is about the journey, not the product. When a child finishes a painting, he'll most likely take it to the drying rack and forget about it. It's about the process not the product. After completing the Pink Tower, a young child will take it down and repeat it many times, each time finding the work as thrilling as the time before.

Adults work to change the environment. Children use the environment to change themselves.

International Peace Day

Once again, Montessori Pathways School was joining with people worldwide to celebrate the International Day of Peace on September 21st.



Montessori education, at its core, incorporates peace education across all areas of the curriculum. From the very beginning of her research and educational practice, Dr. Montessori sought ways to educate the 'whole child'. Every aspect of Montessori's work was geared toward helping children in order to help the world because she believed that children were the 'promise of the future.' Most of us would agree with that sentiment today, and thankfully, we have Dr. Montessori's guidance and time-honored traditions to know how we can work best with children to facilitate a more peaceful world.

And so, we celebrated both the International Day of Peace as well as the values of Montessori education this September 21st! We have been talking about what peace in our world looks like, what peace means for everyone, and what each of us can do to be peaceful and create a more harmonious world.

One of my favorite quotes from our students is "Peace means art for me" (Stella S., 2nd grade). She probably meant it literally. But it sounded so symbolic to me. Peace is an art that we all need to learn how to create, value, and enjoy.

We concluded our Peace Celebration with a poem "[If Peace is...](#)" by Elementary students and "[Light a Candle for Peace](#)" song that was continuously sung for 24 hours by Montessori Schools' children around the world beginning in New Zealand and finishing in the Hawaiian Islands



~Hardy Mums Sale Fundraiser~

On September 26, we spent another great time outside with our Elementary kids in the morning while they were unloading a huge truck filled with 213 beautiful mum plants that our families ordered in support of our school.

The kids were so organized, demonstrating simply amazing teamwork, so it took only about 20 minutes to "create" a beautiful garden next to our school.



One of the best parts of the day was seeing so many parents with their kids, who were helping to choose the color of the mums and load the ordered plants into their cars.

The kids are very eager to be a part of school events because they bring to the kids the important feeling of community.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our **Fall Mums Sale Fundraiser** and those who included their surrounding community to help our school to raise a fund. We were able to collect **\$1,753.00** and are going to use this fund to replace the old materials and add some new ones to our Montessori environment.



Thank you, Countryside Garden Center for providing such beautiful mums for our school's fundraiser every year!

COMING SCHOOL'S EVENTS

in October

- ◆ **October 9 (M) – No School (Indigenous People's Day; former Columbus Day)**
- ◆ **October 11 (W) at 9:00—11:00am – Picture Day.**
- ◆ **October 12 (Th) at 6:00pm– Elementary Parent Curriculum Night.**

Current **Kindergarten parents** are also invited to attend and learn about our elementary program to aid in making their decision in the future. Please RSVP by October 2nd.

- ◆ **October 27 (F) - Primary Parent / Teacher Conference Day (East and South Rooms; in-person)**
 - * **No School** for all Primary students **on Conference Day, October 27.**
 - * The link to schedule your 15-min conference with your teachers will be sent to you on Monday, October 2nd.
- ◆ **October 31 (M) – Costume Halloween Party at Montessori Pathways**

To learn more about our school's life [Follow us on Facebook](#)

CELEBRATING HALLOWEEN AT MONTESSORI PATHWAYS

The children are invited to come to school dressed in a Halloween costume on October 31st. Each classroom will have a simple celebration which will allow time for each child to show off their costume and tell a little bit about who or what their costume represents. Afterward, each class will participate in Halloween activities and have a holiday snack.

If this day is not your child's day of attendance, you are welcome to bring your child for morning celebration at 9:30am and pick up your child right after celebration, at 11:45am.

Parents will receive a detailed email from their teachers about Halloween celebration in each class and link to sign up for volunteering opportunity soon.

Costume Guidelines:

We highly encourage you to choose an age-appropriate costume with your child. As a Montessori school, we aim to operate within our philosophy of providing the children with real experiences that are beautiful and natural and encourage you to choose a costume that is based upon a person, thing or animal.

Some costume ideas include animals, community helpers, athletes and storybook characters. The most important feature of your child's costume should be comfort. Please make sure they can still independently use the bathroom and can sit and move with ease.

Please note the following guidelines for costumes:

- ~ No scary or offensive costumes
- ~ No mask or headwear that covers full face
- ~ No weapons or "fighting" props (swords, light sabers, pistols, knives, etc.)
- ~ Please do not send any costume accessories that may be lost or damaged.

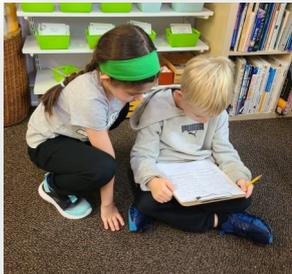


NEWS FROM THE ELEMENTARY CLASS

Ms. Bridget



September in the elementary class has been a bit different this year with the addition of Ms. Maryam and Ms Amy, our helpers and guides. What an excellent start we had, making new friends, discovering our classroom and our new roles as we have all grown over the summer.



Finally, there are even smaller groups or 1 on 1 lessons that are more ability based. These are Reading, which is in book club format, Language (Grammar) and Math.

Many students have been working hard and are now on the 2nd plan, which has review work as well as some new lessons. The class is productive and all are content.



The class groupings are fluid so at any time, groups can change. It depends on how quickly and accurately students work.

In the Montessori elementary class, there are large group lessons which usually deal with cultural events such as Peace Day or dates that have significance like the Autumnal Equinox. It could also be a discussion about rules and procedures, how to be a good listener or even strategies to calm down after a very active game. The whole class is involved and usually takes place during our morning meeting, also called line time.

We have been enjoying our Specials classes—Game Day, Spanish, PE Day, Nature Fridays and Art with the amazing Ms. Suzy!



Other lessons that the students experience are small group lessons. These are arranged either by lower elementary (1st -3rd grades) or upper elementary (4th-6th grades). Geometry, Physical Science, Life Sciences (Botany, Zoology and Physiology), Writing, History, and Geography are examples of these. They are given as whole group regardless of ability in order to encourage group work where one might be closer to mastery than another.



ELEMENTARY CLASS PHOTO GALLERY



NEWS FROM THE SOUTH ROOM

Ms. Kathy, Ms. Urana



September is such a busy month! This month we focused on friends' community and peace, independence and self-care routines, Grace and courtesy, apples, the change of seasons and the materials themselves. So much to learn in so little time!

The skills related to self-care are vital for each child to learn. **Encourage** your child to dress and undress independently daily. It is frustrating for the child to struggle with a simple task, pulling up pants, putting on shoes, socks, and putting a jacket or coat on. At school, after a few presentations, the children hang coats on hangers and are asked to zip by themselves. Set your child up for success!

Begin small, with one item at a time until they can fully dress independently. Allow more time so there is no rush and don't worry about backward shirts or pants, teachers will be excited to see the child becoming independent. We show the children how to lay their coat on the floor, spread the sleeves out, put the tag or hood by their toes, insert arms into sleeves and flip the coat over their head. It is a very effective way to put a coat on. Once the child has mastered these simple tasks they are empowered and have more time for all the other things in the classroom.

Lessons on Grace and Courtesy are most important to a harmonious classroom. In the first week's news we mentioned lessons on: How to ask for help, wait, and watch another work. These lessons are ongoing. At school the children are asked to walk over to and wait for a teacher silently while the teacher gives another a lesson or is tending to someone's needs. The children are shown how to watch silently with their hands at their sides or wait with no words while a teacher is presenting a lesson to another child. We role play this over and over.



Often the child who watches the presentation given to another child while waiting, will then be able to choose, replicate and master the material on their own. As a parent you should encourage your child to wait patiently and silently while you finish a task. We ask you to reinforce this important skill at home as well.

We also covered how to greet another person and introduce yourself. These lessons build self-confidence and a sense of security in knowing what to do. They were very cute in the first weeks introducing themselves to one another.

We prepared for International Day of Peace by talking about what Peace means to everyone. The suggestions ranged anywhere from being silent, picking up trash, hugs, planting flowers etc. We made pinwheels for peace, doves, and peace

signs. On the 21 we came together as a school and the Elementary students read a poem and we all sang "Light a Candle for Peace" by Shelley Murley.



In September the focus was on apples. We sang songs about apples and the parts of an apple. (Flesh, skin, stems and leaves, stems, and leaves.... To the tune of "Head and shoulders, knees and toes".) We all enjoyed apple tasting and graphing each child's favorite apple by its color. Thank you to the Bates and Luse families for searching for and donating the amazing apples.



Apple themed works are everywhere on the art shelves, practical life, math, and science shelves. A few of the favorites are making parts of the apple with paper, sorting apples by type and matching an actual apple to the picture cards and of course apple counting.



As fall begins, we discussed the change of seasons, and read a few books. We are on the lookout for large, rounded Oak leaves, if you come across one, please send it in.

SOUTH ROOM PHOTO GALLERY



NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM

Ms. Masha, Ms. Carole



September has been a month full of celebrations, adjustment to routine, progress, and apples! We are happy to report that East Room friends have continued to have a smooth transition with no tears once they're on the playground or in the class in the mornings! Throughout the past month, many new friendships have been formed, and we are seeing more and more of our students choosing to work together or reach out to a classmate when they need help.



Early fall is the time for all things apples! We have spent the past month taking a deep dive into apples from various angles. We have explored the parts of an apple by cutting one open during Line Time, which prompted some students to create "Parts of an Apple" books, while others traced, cut, glued, and labeled the cross section of an apple. We read all about the life cycle of an apple before some students created their own "Lifecycle of an Apple" books, and many were surprised to learn that it takes several years before an apple tree actually grows apples.



Apples have also made their way into our math area as many friends practiced counting apples, and our art area, where children had the chance to make a mosaic apple. Of course, we can't forget the classic activity of cutting apples in our Practical Life area. And a month long exploration of apples wouldn't be complete without the chance to taste some apples! We had seven distinct varieties to explore and try. Our students noticed that, despite the different sizes and colorings of each apple, they all have the same spherical shape and the same parts such as skin and flesh. After a reminder of the four types of tastes we can experience, we set off to tasting each apple, noting the different tastes and seeing how many friends enjoyed each variety. The Pink Lady apples were the winners of tasting activity.



The morning work cycle this month has seen a lot of action in our Practical Life area, as we have re-introduced apple cutting, carrot peeling and cutting, and baking. From getting their aprons to washing each dish after use, our students are working hard to remember the sequence of these complex activities. Sequencing is not only important for future language and story-telling skills, it is also imperative for developing the logical and mathematical mind that is ready to identify patterns, make predictions, and understand mathematical relationships. At the same time, the gross and fine motor skills needed to complete these tasks are getting their hand ready for writing! So when you see that bag of cut apples coming home, know that your child has spent time developing their whole body and mind while preparing them. And know that they're just as capable of helping prepare a snack or a meal in the home and reaping the same benefits, while spending time with you in the kitchen!



On the other side of the class, we have seen more and more the beauty of children inspiring each other with their works. Nothing can ever make an activity as interesting and fascinating as the fact that another person is currently using it! And nothing is as motivating to our oldest students as when a group of younger friends surround their work space to see what it is that they're working on. They often take a moment to explain the activity with much pride, solidifying their own knowledge. With this drive, we have had an explosion of interest in maps and fractions this month.

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NEWS FROM THE EAST ROOM (CONTINUED)

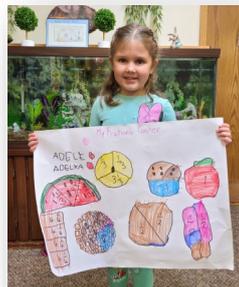


Ms. Masha, Ms. Carole

Child after child has started to explore the World Map, some even re-creating a three-period lesson to a younger friend to teach continent names. Our Pre-K and Kindergarten students have also been exploring different art mediums while working with the more complex continent maps.



Meanwhile, just one poster of fractions sent an endless interest in the activity throughout the class, with some making their own versions of the poster while others simply practiced with the material. Remember that not all learning that happens in the class with have a tangible outcome to take home!



Each morning wraps up with Line Time, and our class has started to not only understand the steps needed for this transition (turning on our walking song, putting works away, and coming to the line), but also help each other get to where they need to be. Much less reminders are coming from the adults as the children start to take ownership of their environment! Aside from our discussion of apples during Line Time, we have also focused on peace and understanding what peace is in preparation for the Peace Day celebration. We practiced making peace with our bodies – sitting calmly and creating silence – and sharing what peace means to us. Our returning friends had a lot of great ideas, and our newer students quickly caught on to the idea of what peace can look like in our class and in our community!



As our students have become more comfortable with each other, we have had more opportunities for group discussions, whether we talk about upcoming weekend plans or sharing a fact about our “animal of the day”. Being able to listen to each other and speak in turns is certainly not easy at this age, but we are making great progress. Having a back and forth discussion with your child about a specific topic such as an animal, their hobby, or the day’s schedule is a great skill to practice in the home as well.

The late summer weather gave our students the opportunity to focus on only navigating their shoes at the start of the school year, but as weather has cooled, we have the added complexity of sweaters, jackets, and hangers. And yes, we are navigating these as independently as possible, which may be more independently than you may think!



Each of our students is able to get their shoes on and off independently now – please allow them the grace to do so in the home as well. Extra practice will provide that much more confidence in their ability to do so! Any jackets that zip, snap, or button are laid out on the floor by the child, and they place the hanger on top, making sure it gets into the arm holes before folding over the left and right sides. And each of them work to close the jacket with as little help as necessary to get it zipped, snapped, or buttoned, before they hang it up in the closet.

They are delighted when they get it all on their own and even more so when they can help a friend! Even our young friends are well on their way to getting the hang of their zippers. This is a skill they will be using daily as we head to colder weather – if your child is still working on mastering their zipper, allow them the extra chance to try on their own at home, whether you’re heading out or not! A chance to practice zippers is just as enticing as a chance to play with blocks or Lego for our students.



EAST ROOM PHOTO GALLERY



KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-K EXTENDED DAY PHOTO GALLERY



Ms. Kathy, Ms. Masha



MORE WONDERFUL MOMENTS AT PATHWAYS IN SEPTEMBER



The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.
-Maria Montessori

