

Montessori for You

"The Child is both a hope and promise for mankind." ~ Dr. Maria Montessori



Dear Parents,

What an amazing start to school we had! One of our new parents commented on how calm everything seemed to be, and we agree. Although there are some tears during transition, for the most part the children settled right into their new routines. Walking through the classrooms and observing their interactions and activities is impressive. It is heartwarming to see how "at home" they all appear to be, how the environment engages them, and how they are already members of their new classroom communities.

Our recent tradition of celebrating the United Nations International Peace Day was a joy to behold and a testament to our role models; our returning students and our staff. All of our children, yes, even our toddlers and Extended Day visitors, came together on the playground as a community to sing songs of peace, recite a peace poem and add their beautifully hand painted rocks to our growing Peace River in the front of the school. Our toddlers scrubbed those rocks with a passion. When questioned about the day and what peace meant to them, the children responded enthusiastically with the words, "sharing", "being respectful", "helping people", "being a good friend", "using kind words", "keeping our hands on our own bodies". Although celebrated internationally every September, Montessori schools teach, model, and celebrate peace each and every day. Peace is part of Westmont's curriculum and it is our vision to "educate the human potential" by educating the heart and mind.

You may be aware of the recent announcement by Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, about his latest philanthropic gesture to donate funds to launch free Montessori like schools for low income families whose children would otherwise be unable to avail of such a start. What a gift! As a Montessori graduate, Mr. Bezos recognizes the benefits of a strong early education. Throughout his career it has oft been noted that his Montessori foundation supported his success in life. He, among other notable success stories in the world of business, music, medicine, entertainment, and literature, equate their life's path with the opportunities afforded them by their Montessori education to be independent thinkers, responsible citizens, and passionate learners.

In a rapidly changing and challenging world, Mr. Bezos's announcement is important for today's children, tomorrow's world, and for Montessori schools which can sometimes be the best kept secret in town. Dr. Maria Montessori recognized the importance of education and character building and how closely they are connected. She developed her pedagogy based on her observations of how children learn best, and how it is equally important to address their executive functioning skills as much as their academic skills. We are proud to continue her path and to support tomorrow's leaders and peacekeepers.

Thank you for choosing Westmont and a Montessori foundation for your children!

Colette