

The Montessori Schools of Central Texas School Newsletter

September 2023

Dr. Jerry O'Donnell – Headmaster
Mrs. Jennifer Watson – Director



News from the Top

Help Me Do It Myself

by Ed Fidellow

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Upcoming Events September 2023

9/4	Labor Day School Closed
9/14	Fire Dept. Visit
9/19-9/20	Picture Days
9/21-9/22	Elem Field Trip Cameron Park Zoo
9/25-9/27	Hearing & Vision Screening

Friday Spirit Days!

Students should show their spirit by wearing their school t-shirt on Fridays. If you do not have one, please come by the office. The first shirt is complimentary.

New shirts will be arriving soon with our new logo.

The biggest challenge parents face is their children's drive for independence. A toddler or a preschooler's drive for independence is even fiercer than a teenager's. While a teenager may be looking to undo parental control, your preschooler is looking to share control. They are trying to become part of your world by taking responsibility for their own actions.

This drive for independence is slow and messy. Learning to walk – the first great independence is full of falls and scares (more for Mom than for baby). And it is a slow and unsteady success. Even when they accomplish vertical independence their rate of locomotion impels us to pick them up and carry them if we want to get anywhere now.

Learning to feed oneself is a second (and very messy) independence. Graduating from hands to utensils is a major success in coordination and development. Again, if we want to finish dinner before breakfast, we wind up feeding our child.

The third independence is the ability to communicate – to be able to share desires and wants. Ironically, after “Ma Ma” and “Da Da” often comes the independent word “No”.

The fourth independence is often the ability to dress oneself. It is often a laborious, time-consuming frustrating adventure trying not to get your head in your sleeve or putting your pants on backward. (“What do you mean I have my shoes on the wrong feet?” “These are the only feet I have.”) Stripes and polka dots are just fine together – blinding maybe – but fine. This is about independence, not aesthetics or style.

The fifth independence is usually potty training. Children have their own timetable and level of comfort with the process. We often think they are trained when we constantly ask them if they have to go potty. This independence is achieved for their convenience not for ours, even though it is our convenience that pushes the training. My wife always shared with anxious parents that she had never been to a wedding where the bride or groom walked down the aisle in Pampers.

Their independence is bought at the cost of our time. Their fight for independence is against our schedules, against our limited flexibility in our day. They don't mean to slow us down; they just want to do it themselves. They don't mean to make messes (which take time to clean up) they just want to do it themselves. How are they ever going to pour milk from the gallon jug unless they try (and try and try and try)?

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Infant I

We are excited to continue our new school year with your amazing children. Your little ones have done a great job separating from you and are beginning to attach to their teachers. Although there is some initial crying at arrival, all the children have begun settling in and are exploring their classroom, internalizing their new environment and routine.

During the month of September, we will continue to bond, and build trust and acceptance. Our focus will be on saying grace before meals, and working on our sign language for “more”, “eat”, and “milk”. We are hoping cooler temperatures are headed in our direction soon!

-- Mrs. Terri Wallace

Infant II

Thank you for all your support these past few weeks as we are all going through the adjustment period of the beginning of the school year together. We know it can be difficult to trust the process, but we can already see the children settling in and becoming more comfortable in their new environment and routine. With time, love, and patience they will begin to thrive.

During the month of September, we will begin talking about fall weather and the food, colors, and clothing that come with it. We'll be able to spend more time outside exploring nature and the changing season as it cools off and the children will enjoy making fall crafts.

As the children become more comfortable in their new environment, we'll introduce ways that they can be involved in caring for it. They'll learn about restoring their work when they're done with it, wiping the table after meals, and pushing in their chair when they get up from the table. We will also focus on basic mealtime skills such as praying, sitting correctly in the chair, and using utensils to eat.

During naptime, the children enjoy listening to Mozart, which fosters brain development and helps them sleep well. (And they do! They are tired from exploring and making new connections and learning new skills each day!)

--Mrs. Karla Torres

Toddler

The students are ready for cooler temperatures and so are we! Our September large group lessons will focus on the coming Fall season with discussion about apples, trees, and fruits in English and Spanish. The students will sort leaves by color, create dot paintings, learn to slice bananas, and practice caring for themselves by washing their hands and putting on their shoes.

Children at this age love practical life lessons as they want to imitate adult activities. Giving children the appropriate-sized tools to do these activities builds hand-eye coordination, gives them purpose and a sense of worth, builds fine and gross motor skills, and develops the pincher grasp, concentration, and coordination. Therefore, we will give lessons on watering plants, wiping the table, dusting furniture, and outdoor sweeping this month.

-- Mrs. Tammy Clausen

Primary I & II

Our students have begun settling into their new routine and September will be full of many new learning experiences for our Primary students. We will start the month learning the days of the week, reciting numbers 1-10 in Spanish, and listening to the story from Genesis 1 on "Creation." Also from Genesis, the students will hear the story of "Noah" and "The Ten Commandments."

Later on, during September and as Fall approaches, we will learn *los estaciones*, or the Spanish vocabulary associated with our annual seasons. We will have directional lessons to chart North, South, East, and West. The children will use their senses to differentiate between tastes, sounds, and smells.

Our geography focus will be on an introduction to our expansive universe, naming the continents, and a study of land, air, and water. Cooking lessons are always a favorite activity for the students, and we plan to end the month by making delicious applesauce!

-- Mrs. Carmen Alvarado, Ms. Gwen Copeland, & Mrs. Veronica Prudencio

Lower Elementary – Mrs. Walker

The school year is off to a great start! The students are settling in and getting right to work. In September we will continue to learn about North America and introduce landforms in Geography. Students will begin to explore the laws of the universe and learn how the laws of gravity influence the world around them. They will also compare living and non-living things and begin classifying vertebrates and invertebrates. For our Bible discussion, we will cover how to talk to God and learn the Ten Commandments.

We will have our first field trip in September to the Cameron Park Zoo in Waco- how exciting! The students are enjoying their Physical Education with Mr. O'Donnell.

-- Mrs. Monica Walker

Upper Elementary – Mrs. Abraham

This month for Physical Science, we will study the laws of the universe, how gravity and air affect falling objects, and perform experiments to see if objects of differing weights fall at different rates of speed. In Geography, the students will research North America, learning the countries, capitals, and landforms. For History, we will learn about pictographic stones, number and written language histories, and create our own alphabet. We proudly teach civics and will start our study by defining good citizenship and the significance of the pledge of allegiance to our country's flag. For Botany and Zoology, we will classify vertebrates and invertebrates, as well as, living and non-living things. Lastly, our Geometry lessons will be on quadrilaterals, and the study of lines and figures.

Elementary students will be taking a field trip to the Cameron Park Zoo in Waco this month. Please remember to send students in their school T-shirt for field trip days.

-- Mrs. Dolline Abraham



Happy
Birthday



▪ Cori Batten	Toddler	September 4 th	2 Years
▪ George Knaus	Primary 2	September 5 th	5 Years
▪ Jadd Rawdah	Upper Elem	September 5 th	10 Years
▪ Levi Newberry	Toddler	September 6 th	3 Years
▪ Titus Jiang	Primary 2	September 6 th	4 Years
▪ Killian Evans	Lower Elem	September 9 th	6 Years
▪ Sofie Larraga	Upper Elem	September 10 th	8 Years
▪ Triniti Harper	Primary 1	September 11 th	4 Years
▪ Braden Easley	Lower Elem	September 11 th	6 Years
▪ Aniyah Jones	Lower Elem	September 15 th	7 Years
▪ Elsa Schoenborn	Primary 1	September 17 th	5 Years
▪ Madelyn Jiang	Primary 1	September 19 th	6 Years
▪ Ayana Malik	Primary 1	September 21 st	4 Years
▪ Thomas Brooks	Infant 1	September 23 rd	1 Year

(Article continued from page 1)

“The child’s conquests of independence are the basic steps in what is called his *natural development*.”
- Maria Montessori

The challenge of childhood independence is that it is never perfect. They can’t sweep a floor as well or as quickly or as thoroughly as the adult. But how will they ever learn unless they try? “I will just wait until they are older” is a proven recipe for unmotivated, incompetent, uninvolved teenagers who then resent the end of a ten or fifteen year ride of being served with no responsibility attached.

“Help me do it myself” is the foundation of adult responsibility born into our children long before they can do it by themselves. “Help me do it myself” is the great gift parents give their children. It is not only the accomplishment of the task that affects the children – giving rise to feelings of competence but it is the feeling of confidence that comes because they know that we believe in them. When we tell our children that they can achieve anything they set their hearts and minds to – they believe us because we have been their cheerleaders for independence and success.

Notes from Mrs. Watson:

Lifetouch Preschool Portraits will be here on campus to take pictures of the toddler, primary and elementary students on September 19th (Elementary & Toddler) & 20th (Primary). **Please send your child to school in the outfit that you would like them to wear for their picture!** (You may send a change of clothes if you would like them to change afterwards.) We will offer sibling pictures. If the siblings are scheduled on different days, just tell your child’s teacher which day is preferred to be photographed. Once the pictures are complete, Lifetouch will send proofs home with the ordering details. There is no obligation to purchase any pictures.

September 25th-27th, children aged 4 by September 1, 2023, will undergo required hearing and vision screens. As a parent, you do not need to do anything other than have your child present for those three days. These tests are important to help determine if your child’s vision and hearing falls within the normal range for their age and if further diagnostic testing is needed by a health care professional. You will receive the results once these tests have been completed.

The most common misconception is that young children see at the desired 20/20 range; however eyes are not fully developed until the age of 8, typically. At age 4, children pass with 20/40 vision, unless there is a two-line difference between each eye. At age 5 and above, the state considers passing at the 20/30 line.

Also, I have found in the past that the few children who have failed the initial hearing test, will pass with a re-screen a couple weeks later because they were congested which affected their ability to hear during the first screen.

In my experience, these tests have proven beneficial because children will often over-compensate to see, which can mask vision problems. Catching hearing and vision problems early can have a positive impact on your child’s health and general ability to thrive.

****If your child wears glasses, please ensure that they bring them!**

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