

Montessori Curriculum for Toddlers

“The education of a very small child does not aim at preparing him for school but for life.” - Dr. Maria Montessori

Curriculum Overview

Elements Montessori Toddler curriculum supports the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of each child. In the Elements Montessori toddler classroom, children are introduced to the Montessori program through a variety of hands-on activities in a prepared environment. This is the time when children use their bodies, senses, and emerging problem-solving skills to learn about and make sense of their world in the ways most meaningful and effective for them. Toddlers actively seek out information, they learn quickly and easily, and are especially interested in demonstrating independence. We allow them the freedom to learn as much as they can. The areas of our classroom are:

Practical Life

The practical life materials and exercises are designed to contribute to the development of both small and large motor skills and assist the child in becoming self-efficient and independent. Practical life activities encourage the child to take care of the environment with size-appropriate tools. The children care for the outside environment as well as the inside environment through dusting, crumbing, raking and wiping the tables. The toddler is also directed to take care of himself by washing hands, hanging up clothing, managing personal items toileting, Grace and courtesy. The toddler is encouraged to explore books and perform various jobs that ultimately increase his ability to concentrate and work independently while creating foundations for learning. Toddler is refining fine motor skills through practical life activities such as pouring, sorting, etc.

Sensorial

The toddler is able to discover and explore the world around her, through her five senses. This area consists of lessons and materials that are able to concentrate on the refinement of all her senses. The sensorial materials are designed to simplify learning and awareness of the environment by isolating difficulty; isolating the senses; encouraging mastery through repetition; possessing self-correction within the material; and presenting an attractive appearance to the child. By working with the sensorial materials, children develop the organization and patterning skills inherent in math and language concepts that build upon the sensory awareness stimulated by the sensorial materials.

Math

We believe that a child's mind is mathematical and based on the order and perceptual awareness found in the development of the senses. Elements Montessori classroom begins concretely and progresses towards the abstract. They are developed from simple to complex. The child who has experienced basic concepts involved with the practical life and sensorial materials progresses naturally to the beginning math

activities. The toddler uses hands-on materials for learning concrete math concepts. The toddler begins to understand number concepts, both quantity and symbol, and the meaning of zero.

Language

The most important language materials for a toddler are the materials and experiences in the child's environment. Reinforcing the importance of verbal communication, speaking clearly, and supporting the child's expanding vocabulary are a daily process in the toddler environment. For the toddler, written language is experienced through the adult's oral reading and story time. Language activities are developing at a rapid rate during the toddler years. Sandpaper letters help the child learn the phonetics of the alphabet. Naming cards, object matching, picture matching, story sequence and metal insets tracing introduce foundations for alphabet and writing skills. Stories, finger plays, singing, and spontaneous conversation time encourage both social and language skills.

Science

Science for the toddler means activities where the child can directly observe and manipulate physical properties. **These** activities vary with the seasons and include identifying living and non-living, plants and animals by matching pictures, looking at related books. When children can manipulate materials and equipment and discover on their own, they feel a great sense of mastery and positive satisfaction which helps build their self-concepts.

Culture

Cultural studies include geography and history. Lessons include, understanding the concept of a globe along with the respect for different cultures and people.

Art

The toddler is able to use various materials to express creativity and to enhance fine motor skills. The arts program seeks to foster creativity, problem solving and self-expression as it relates to each child's level of development. Lessons include drawing, painting, and collage making.

Music and Movement

The music curriculum combines individual and group work with lessons designed to appeal to a variety of learning styles. This directly relates to our mission of enhancing the Montessori philosophy with other innovative methods. The music curriculum also offers significant opportunities to build community through our numerous performances during field trips and special events. Music lessons include repetitive songs, echo songs and singing in unison. Gross motor skills are heightened in physical activities like rhythm/music movement and outdoor play. Rolling, jumping, bending, stretching.....movement is fun and exploration is exciting!