

Eatonville Early Learning Center
560 Center St. E. / POB 1670
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Eatonville Early Learning Center

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Inside you'll find...

- ☆ **Our center's Philosophy of Discipline**
- ☆ **Common misconceptions about Montessori education**
- ☆ **A comparison of Traditional vs. Montessori education**
- ☆ **Our center's Philosophy for Children**

Philosophy of Discipline

I believe that all children deserve to learn and grow in an environment where they will feel safe and loved. Children will have these feelings if the discipline I use demonstrates respect and understanding for them as an individual who is still growing developmentally. With my knowledge of child development and through the use of guidance techniques I have learned I will treat each child as an individual worthy of respect and attention.

Demonstrating that I respect and care for a child through direct eye contact and by getting down to their level when talking to them will reassure them that I care and will listen to them. When a child is feeling sad, distraught or unhappy I will listen and reassure the child offering choices and comfort as long as needed for the child to feel comfortable and ready to face the next situation.

When a child demonstrates anger or aggression I will first need to decide what stage of developmental growth the child is in. If the child is very young and does not understand the consequences of the behavior I will explain that the behavior is unacceptable and redirect the child to another activity. I will try through observation to decide what caused the behavior and plan to intercede before it happens again. If a child is old enough to understand the consequences of the behavior I will ask the child to use words and tell me if he can, why he did what he did. I will listen and reflect the feelings back to the child. I will continue by telling the child that the behavior will not be tolerated because we are not allowed to hurt other people, animals or things. I will explain that if the angry or aggressive behavior continues I will not allow the child to play with others, instead the child will be asked to play alone until he decides he can play nicely with others.

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I will foster pro-social behavior by encouraging older children to talk about their needs and feelings to me as well as to their peers. I will teach them to work together to solve problems. I will also teach children to develop self-control by giving them the words needed to identify their feelings, needs and wants. I will offer them choices that will allow them to make appropriate choices to solve a problem.

I do not believe that children learn what is appropriate by putting them on time-out. Occasionally a child needs to calm down, when this happens I will tell the child that he can get up and we will discuss how to change the situation so that calm down time is not needed again. This gives the child the power to change the situation with my guidance.

Children are not bad. Behavior is bad. I do not want a child to believe that he or she is "bad." I will teach the child that the choice to behave appropriately is theirs to make. As the child matures he or she will be able to make the correct choice and identify with their feelings. I will make sure that all children know that all their feelings are okay to have.

North American Montessori Teachers' Association

Common Misconceptions about Montessori Education

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1. Montessori is just for preschool children.

While the majority of Montessori schools in the United States are preschools, Montessori programs exist at age levels from *birth to fourteen*.

2. Montessori is just for special learners—the gifted or the learning-disabled.

The methods used in Montessori schools are highly effective with both learning-disabled and gifted learners; the reason for their effectiveness, however, is that the learning environments have been designed to ensure success for *all* children.

3. Montessori schools are religious.

Many private American Montessori schools *do* have a religious orientation because it is such a common practice in America for private schools to have religious support. But Montessori *itself* is not religiously oriented and finds itself quite at home in public settings where religious instruction is inappropriate.

4. Montessori is only for the rich.

This misconception is due to the fact that the American Montessori movement that began in the 1950s was primarily a private preschool movement, supported by tuition. Now, however, Montessori education is available at approximately 200 public schools in the U.S. in addition to about 4,000 private schools.

5. Children in Montessori classrooms are relatively unsupervised and can "do whatever they want."

Montessori is based on the principle of free choice of *purposeful* activity. If the child is being destructive or is using *materials* in an aimless way, the teacher will intervene and gently re-direct the child either to more appropriate materials or to a more appropriate use of the material.

6. Montessori is a cult.

Montessori is part of the educational mainstream, as evidenced by growing numbers of *graduate-level programs* in Montessori education (such as those at Cleveland State University and New York University) and the increasing popularity of Montessori in the public schools.

7. Montessori classrooms are too structured.

Although the teacher is careful to make clear the specific purpose of each material and to present activities in a clear, step-by-step order, the child is free to choose from a vast array of activities and to discover new possibilities.

8. Montessori is against fantasy; therefore, it stifles creativity.

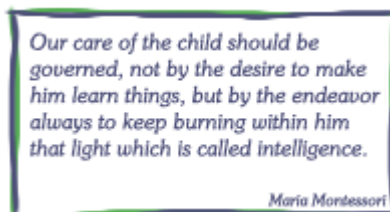
The fact is that the freedom of the *prepared environment* encourages creative approaches to problem-solving. And while teacher-directed fantasy is discouraged, fantasy play initiated by the child is viewed as healthy and purposeful. In addition, art and music activities are integral parts of the Montessori classroom.

9. Montessori classrooms push children too far too fast.

Central to the Montessori philosophy is the idea of allowing each child to develop at his or her own, individual pace. The "miracle" stories of Montessori children far ahead of traditional expectations for their age level reflect not artificial acceleration but the possibilities open when children are allowed to learn at their own pace in a scientifically prepared environment.

10. Montessori is out of date.

While appropriate changes have been made to the original Montessori curriculum (including the introduction of computers and modifications to the Practical Life exercises to keep them culturally relevant), the basic pedagogy has not changed much since *Dr. Montessori's* lifetime. Contemporary *research* and *evaluation*, however, seem to be confirming Montessori's insight



Comparison of Traditional Education with Montessori

<i>Traditional</i>	<i>Montessori</i>
Children grouped chronologically, one age per class	Age span of three years in a class
Heavy emphasis on grades and marks	Self-development as prime motivation
Much information dispensed by lecture	Children in direct contact with content-mathematics materials, sensory materials, maps, etc...
Teacher corrects pupil's errors	Many materials self correcting
Class, as a group, studies one subject at a time	Children study in various subjects individually or in small groups in different parts of the room
Schedule of classes each 45 or 50 minutes in length	Children follow "inner teacher"; long block of time allows concentration
Relatively frequent interruptions: bells, teacher intervention	Relatively few interruptions
Class seated at desks much of the time in rows	Students work at tables, on the floor; freedom of movement
Postponement of 3-R's until first grade	Many fundamentals of "tool subjects" mastered before the age of six
Basal readers	Greater flexibility in reading

Our Philosophy for children

We believe that each child is a unique individual. We also know that children develop in different areas at different times, and grow and change at varying rates. We understand that children move into new stages of growth and development only when they are “ready” which means that they have mastered a necessary previous stage. For this reason our program is designed to meet each child at his/her own development level and allows each child to proceed at his/her own rate. You will find our program provides many opportunities for children to practice and repeat successful activities as well as face new challenges.

Pre-Elementary Curriculum (ages 3-6 years)

The development of self is the task of the young child. Exploration through the senses is the pathway. Preparing and enriching the environment is the task of the guide (parent or teacher). Perfection of self is the child’s goal and can only be accomplished at the child’s individual pace.

Social Skills

- Self- control
- Cooperation
- Positive interpersonal relationships
- Respect for self and environment
- Positive self-esteem

Practical Life

- Care of Person
- Care of the environment
- Grace and courtesy

Language

- Verbal self-expression
- Cultural literacy
- Classifying and sequencing
- Knowledge of phonetic sounds and blends
- Word building, vocabulary
- Reading
- Writing

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Cultural Subjects- Land and water formations, social understanding of cultural differences and likeness of people, organized by continents.

- History;-timelines
- Geography;

Science

- Living/non-living, plant/animal, simple earth elements

Sensorial

- Visual, auditory, olfactory, kinesthetic, gustatory, stereo Gnostic and tactile discrimination
 - a) Patterning
 - b) Indirect preparation for math and language
 - c) Geometric shapes

Mathematics

- One to one correspondence
- Quantities of numbers
- Association of symbols to quantity
- Place value
- Concept of basic operations

Enrichments

- Foreign language: Spanish
- Music, musical appreciation, movement and rhythm
- Art; appreciation of the masters exposure to various media, creativity and self expression

Physical education

- Large motor development
- Eye-hand coordination

Physical

- Large motor; climbing, hopping, running, jumping, balancing
- Small motor; puzzles, play-dough, cutting, manipulative

Creative academics

- Arts and crafts
- Free choice activities
- Teacher guided learning activities
- Varied language experiences

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- Field trips

Cognitive

- Problem solving
- Choices

We believe in growth of the whole child involving the following developmental areas.

- Social/Emotional
- Sharing
- Taking turns
- Concern for others
- Appropriate expression
- Making new friends
- Accepting differences