

Lifetime Montessori Frequently Asked Questions:

What is the daily schedule for the Primary and Toddler programs?

The primary programs start at either 8:30 or 8:45 am; depending on which classroom you are in. The toddlers begin at 9 am. Once your child enters their room they will begin a work cycle. The Primary children work from either 8:30 to 11:30, or 8:45 to 11:45. Then the children will eat lunch together and have playground time for a half hour. Children who go home early will be picked up at either 12:30 or 12:45 while the rest of the children head into the classroom. Some children will nap in a separated area off each classroom; the rest will continue working and receiving advanced lessons until 2:30 or 2:45. Then your child will head out front to be picked up by you! The toddler program varies only in that an added playtime and a lengthy snack making and eating time break up their morning work schedule! Also, all toddlers who do not go home will nap in the afternoon.

How do we drop off and pick up our child?

We are trying to stagger drop off times so that our driveway does not get clogged! You will be asked to drop off your child during a 15-minute window (i.e. 8:30-8:45 or 8:45 to 9:00). There will be many teachers waiting out front to help your child out of the car. As you pull up to the school you will pull as far forward as possible, a teacher will hand you a sign in sheet while greeting and unbuckling your child from their seat. We encourage a brief, cheerful goodbye as the child gets out of the car. You will drive on out of the parking lot and the children then walk through the front doors of the school where they are guided to their classroom to begin their day. The toddlers will be dropped off starting at 9 am and those parents will have the choice of walking their children in or driving through the drop off.

The children will be picked up in the same manner. Children will be walked to the front of the building with their teacher and will wait for their parent to arrive. The teacher will then walk the child to the car and buckle them in while you sign them out for the day.

Do you offer day care before and after school?

Yes, we do offer care starting at 7:30 am until your child's school day starts. We will also offer care after school until 5:30 pm. Day care costs \$5 an hour, but if you schedule your child's care a month in advance, then we offer a 10% discount.

Will you offer a summer program?

Yes. We know that families are very busy and working each summer, so we will offer a summer program to whoever needs one. Our program will have some Montessori related activities, but will be more of a camp-like atmosphere!

Are there any discounts related to the programs?

If you are in the military you can receive a 5% discount off tuition. If you have more than one child in the school then each additional child after the first can receive a 5% discount off tuition. You will also receive a 5% discount for paying the year's tuition in advance. If you plan ahead for day care each month then you can receive a 10% discount. Unfortunately these discounts cannot be used in conjunction with each other.

What activities will you offer our child each day?

The activities that children do in the classroom are called "work". We try to develop a positive association between school, learning and work for the children. We also want to show the children that we respect and appreciate their efforts in creating themselves as a person in their community. It is the teacher's job to incorporate "extracurricular" activities into the classroom. We have music, art, science (zoology, botany etc.), geography and more. We hope to survey families attending day care to find out what activities they may want their child to be involved in after school. Hopefully we can offer extra science classes, soccer, art etc. The summer program will include many outside activities to entertain the children!

What are your discipline tactics?

We at Santaluz Montessori do not believe in "time-outs". We offer the children consistent natural consequences to their actions. We believe that children can understand logic and that we can explain what the needs of the children and the environment are. We would only remove a child from a situation if aggression occurred. If a child bites another, we send them home immediately. Other than that, if one child strikes another, we simply state "I'm worried you might hurt one of my friends right now, you may not be with us until you feel you can control your actions". We then also do a lot of role modeling to show children how one would use words to express themselves instead of their body.

Why is the Primary Program a 3-year program?

Every year is an important year for the child. The first year is one in which they are familiarizing themselves with the classroom, learning how to care for the self and the environment. The children begin to learn to focus and to concentrate. As the child looks around in their new environment they notice older children working on fascinating materials. The Montessori method has found that the younger children in the classroom respond faster when emulating the older children. The second year is just as important. An ease and comfort of the environment allows your child to jump right into choosing work – no adjustment time is wasted. Your child now has concentration and can learn how to teach themselves anything they show interest in. The child notices the older children using materials just out of their reach, giving the child motivation to practice their lessons further. The third year is the most important year. Not only is the child more capable of learning even greater riches through the now very familiar materials, they are now at the top of the class. The child can truly feel confident, secure and independent with high self-esteem. The child now shares work and lessons with the smaller children in the class, solidifying the knowledge of all that they have learned in the past years. And then those new, young children look up to your now older child and the cycle starts again.

How well do kids transition to 1st grade?

We, luckily, have been in contact with many parents over the years that have had children leave our Montessori kindergarten classes and enter first grade. All parents have admitted that though there was a short adjustment period, their children did indeed transition smoothly into first grade. Parents who left early, to attend kindergarten in other schools, discovered that the children were not as challenged in other kindergarten programs. Children going to first grade seem to have more access to challenging materials and instruction than kindergarteners.

Who was Dr. Montessori?

Dr. Montessori was born in Chiaravalle, Italy in 1870. She was the first female physician in Italy upon her graduation from medical school in 1896. In 1906 Dr. Montessori gave up both her university chair and her medical practice to work with sixty children in the San Lorenzo district of Rome. This became the first *Casa dei Bambini*, or "Children's House." This is where she developed the Montessori method of education, based upon her scientific observations of these children's ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings, as well as their tireless interest in manipulating their environment. Every piece of equipment, every exercise, every method Dr. Montessori developed was based on what she observed children to do "naturally," by themselves, unassisted by adults.

What is AMI?

Dr. Montessori opened the Montessori Training Centre in Laren, Netherlands, in 1938, and founded a series of teacher training courses in India in 1939. This training center is called *Association Montessori Internationale* and continues to train Teachers around the world today. One of their many objectives is: "Spreading and upholding the pedagogical principles and practice formulated by Dr Maria Montessori, which ensure the independence of the child's personality through successive stages of growth until he reaches full normal development by means of his own activity". As Montessori was never copyrighted there are many variations on the Montessori Method out there, a few having very little to do with the Montessori theory or materials. It is the duty of parents to explore the different schools out there and find the right Montessori for their child!