

JUNE - TRANSITIONS AND TRADITIONS

The month of June is traditionally a very eventful time. There are weddings, commencements, graduations, vacations and holiday plans. Children are beginning their summer holidays and schedules shift and change to accommodate the needs of the family.

Our Dragonfly Class, which includes both transitional kindergarten students as well as kindergarten scholars, is busy preparing for their commencement program and spring performance.

The date is Friday, June 16th, at 10:00 a.m., here at our school. We are looking forward to honoring these wonderful children and to celebrating together.



The months of July and August are a continuation of the Montessori curriculum but, with some enjoyable additions to enhance the fun of summer.

Please watch for the fun-filled events calendar that shows the theme and special event for each week.

The third-year (kindergarten) scholars will don their red caps and gowns and be honored with a commencement ceremony and presentation of diplomas. They will be supported by their transitional kindergarten classmates.

The next part of the program will be a lively presentation of 'Dragonflies on Safari'. The students chose their program, songs and parts they will perform.

Immediately following the musical program, there will be a reception with cake and lemonade to honor all of the children of the class.

On Wednesday, June 14th, the Dragonfly Class will present their programs for the



entire student body, during their dress rehearsal.

One of the most gratifying aspects of our work with the children is to have our graduates return to let us know how they are doing and to keep us up-to-date on how their life is moving forward.

It is touching to hear their memories of their days at Village Montessori Academy.

The summer program includes LEGO classes, for all the children.

The classes offer a great opportunity for children to expand their critical thinking and problem solving skills. This helps them learn to move towards abstraction

by using concrete materials. They enjoy working in collaboration with their peers.

It is great fun for the children, as well as for the teachers!



June Special Events

- Wednesday, June 14th, Dragonfly Class Dress Rehearsal
- Friday, June 16th Dragonfly Class Commencement and Spring Performance
- Sunday, June 18th Father's Day



THE LADYBUG CLASSROOM



The Ladybugs have shown wonderful progress and are happily working with admirable enthusiasm.

They are a cohesive group and are very kind to one another. You see the older members of the classroom readily help the smaller, younger ones with such kindness. It is touching to see how respectful and protective they are of the little ones.



As the children mature, they become better able to work in harmony with their peers. They actually learn better together. You see this collaborative learning in the many games with the Golden Bead Materials, as the children work to understand the hierarchy of numbers, place value and the four operations of +, -, x and ÷.

The younger children are more likely to work individually but in close proximity to their friends.



It is very gratifying to see the progress the children are making and to reflect back on the earlier days of the various children in the class. To see the accomplishments, the independence and the joy the children show each day is wonderful.

We are all enjoying the warmer, sunnier days as summer approaches. The light is so lovely streaming in through the windows and illuminating the children's work. It is warm and the air is sweetly scented from the flowers around the school.

We have a lovely variety of live plants in the classroom. The children enjoy watering them, cleaning their leaves and learning the names of the plants and the types of leaves they have. This work helps them with the Botany Cabinet and the related materials.

We thank the many parents who kindly send fresh flowers for the children to arrange. This work also allows the children to learn new language and to understand the parts of the flower, the leaf and the plant.

THE BUMBLEBEE CLASSROOM



"Busy As A Bee" is an accurate description of the children in the Bumblebee Classroom. They are a wonderfully organized hive of

little children, all busy with purposeful work and progressing beautifully.

Father's Day, on Sunday, June 18th, is a great time to show our fathers our love and appreciation.



The children are preparing a special gift to present to their beloved fathers.

Summer Preparations

Although our weather is in a period of fluctuation, warmer days are just around the corner. This is a time when the mornings can be cool and overcast

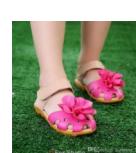
and then warm up as the day progresses. Layered clothing is ideal so that the children can adjust their outerwear to the day's changing temperatures.



As a reminder, we do not permit children to bring any lotions or sunscreens to school in their lunch boxes or personal bags. You are welcome to apply sun screen or lotion on your child at home, prior to coming to school.

Sunglasses, unless physician prescribed, are not permitted due to safety. However, if you wish to send a soft hat, visor or cap for your child, you are welcome to do so.

Sandals for the children need to have 'closed toes' to protect their little toes



and toe nails. 'Flip-flops' or shoes without a back, are not appropriate for active play. 'Crocs' plastic shoes are not very stable for children who play, climb and run actively. If your child wears them, they must have the back strap up and around the ankle.

Your child's safety and comfort are a genuine concern for us.

Geography

Among the favorite activities of the children, in the Sensorial area of the environment, are the Puzzle Maps. These maps are wooden puzzles that delineate the continents, the countries and states of our world.





THE BUTTERFLY CLASSROOM



June promises to be a fun-filled and eventful month. The children have been very busy

and are looking forward to preparing a gift for their daddies for Father's Day, on June 18th.

Tuesday, June 20th, marks the Summer Solstice, the official first day of summer. We are discussing the movements of the Earth that cause the change of seasons. The children are very eager to learn and show enthusiasm in lessons that introduce the sun, moon, planets and their relationship to the Earth.

On August 21st, there will be a rare

total Solar Eclipse, visible from the United States. The children will learn about this event.



The work the children do in class gives them an opportunity to learn a wide range of vocabulary. This assists their comprehension as well as their ability to express themselves articulately.

For example, in learning about the earth and the solar system, they will be

given the vocabulary for the planets, the moon, the sun, the movements of the earth (rotation, orbit, tilting on the axis). They learn the vocabulary for the geography related to the continents, the oceans, the countries and the geographic land and water forms.



During June and in the coming weeks, we will be learning about the Earth's rain forests and the oceans.



THE DRAGONFLY CLASS



The children in the Dragonfly Class are experiencing a time of transition. They are feeling the mixed emotions of excitement to move ahead and the nostalgia of remembering the fun they have had together.

Most of the children have been together for two or three years, have established friendships and have shared memories. We have watched as the children assumed leadership roles and took on responsibilities with quiet dignity. We have watched them support each other and generously share their skills and knowledge.

Music

The daily Montessori work continues without interruption. One of the most enjoyable elements of the class is the continual music that can be heard throughout the day. The Montessori bell materials and the piano are played by children as other children work with their maps, math, language, art, etc.

There are times when a child will begin to sing and others will join in, without any disruption to the children. It is as natural as any other activity in the class.



Language Arts

In literature, the children are reading the works of Beatrix Potter, the author and illustrator of the Peter Rabbit books. The children are delighted by the stories of her life in the Lake District of England and the many stories she wrote for children.



They are eager to compose and illustrate their own original stories. We love to read the stories they write and to see their art.

Sensorial Exploration

In the Sensorial area of the classroom, the children are expanding their understanding of geometric shapes, types of angles, lines, properties of circles and triangles. The Montessori materials offer an extensive range of materials to permit the children to explore and investigate. Art lends itself to the work in geometry and is satisfying to the children.

One related activity, done in a Montessori Children's House, is called the Definition Exercises. For example, the child may have lessons and materials on the definition of types of triangles or quadrilaterals. The definition exercises are done for geometry, geography, botany and biology.

Definition exercises allow the child the opportunity to learn the way subjects are classified and defined. At first the definitions are given verbally and later in printed form.

The curriculum is ever-expanding, enriching and enjoyable to teach as well as to learn. There is a true interrelationship between the areas of exploration.

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AIDING CONCENTRATION

The Need For Concentration

One of the most important aspects of the directress' responsibilities is to provide an environment in which concentration is possible. To this end the directress takes great care in ensuring an orderly, complete environment. "Every thing has its place and everything is in its place."

Every movement, shown to the child by the directress, is done with care, a refinement of movement and gentleness. The directress' voice, movements and actions are all gentle and calm.

For a young child, the speed and agility we have in performing actions like tying shoes, opening containers, buttoning, etc., can look like 'slight of hands' or magic. It is so easy for us to do these tasks. For the young child, the directress slows the action down, isolates particular elements to show the child and offers the opportunity to repeat the activity as often as is necessary for the child to attain mastery.

Driven to Distraction

Eliminating any unnecessary distractions from the environment is a help in providing an atmosphere conducive to concentration. This means we use a low voice in the classroom. We close doors very gently. We do not call across the room to one another. We carry and place objects gently. We act as the role models for the children.

Within the prepared environment of the classroom, we have noticed that there are many unnecessary elements, brought in by the children, that lead to distraction.

Shoes that light up, and offer a 'light-show', are great fun but a great distraction. You have to stomp on the floor to produce the best show, This is not helpful to a child trying to master things like mathematics, language arts, etc. The same can be said for shoes that play music, beep or squeak. The novelty is lost when it interferes with the child's opportunity to concentrate.

Jewelry

Jewelry is lovely but, at school, necklaces and bracelets are often in the child's mouth, can catch on play equipment, and are real distractions. They are lovely to wear at home and to special events.

If you choose to send your child to school with jewelry, the directress will remove it and place it in an envelope and keep it safe in the office for you until the end of the day.

Watches are a great gift to offer a child who has really learned to tell time. In Montessori, we know the child is ready to tell time when he is able to work successfully with the Board of Powers (the bead chains for squaring and cubing the numbers from one to ten.) When the child can do the five chain, and can count by five's, he is ready for learning to tell time.

Offering a watch to the child when he's attained a sophisticated skill, like telling time, is a great way to acknowledge his newly acquired proficiency. Prior to this, the watch with all its gadgets and cartoon characters, is an unnecessary distraction.

In more recent years there has been a proliferation of **electronic devices** that mesmerize the child - not to mention the adults.

These devices are fun and attractive and offer instant gratification to the user. The child gets continual feed-back from this impersonal device. More and more we see children using them in restaurants, in their cars and even in a stroller.

The problem is that the device is quite limited in the benefit it offers to a young child. We are now aware that they are not a good substitute for the transmission of a skills, culture and learning when compared to human to human transmission or to the physical efforts of a child.

For example, when a child is able to grasp, feel, weigh, and experience a solid geometric form, the experience is a far cry from a simple drawing of a shape. When a child in Montessori works with the red and blue number rods, he feels the weight and length of rods that vary from ten centimeters to one meter. He uses his senses to actually experience the concept — to compare, arrange and rearrange the rods, for as long as he wishes, until an internal need is satisfied.

There are no 'bells and whistles' to interfere with his experience as with an electronic device.

We ask for your understanding and your support to maintain an environment in which all of the children are able to concentrate, to work and to learn in peace. It is for the good of all of the children that we ask this.