



Care of the Environment

*"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."
~Maria Montessori*

Each classroom at The Montessori School has been prepared with great love and care. These Prepared Environments are a place of beauty, peace and simplicity; and they are designed to serve and respect the developmental needs of each child. The environments entice and invite the individual through the beauty of natural light, a variety of plants, carefully placed artifacts and purposeful materials. The eye is able to rest on each object and delight in its beauty.

When one enters a carefully prepared Montessori environment, it becomes a sensorial experience. Rather than distracting or over-stimulating the senses, the design of the environment allows one to slowly absorb the space – it washes over the senses with a peaceful feeling of comfort and joy. When children step into a Montessori classroom, they are able to notice the many details that have been prepared just for them! And the message this sends them is, "This space has been designed with a deep respect for your needs because YOU are important."

In the Toddler and Primary classrooms, the Practical Life materials help the children to learn how to care for themselves and the environment. Children receive lessons such as food preparation, scrubbing, polishing, dusting, and sweeping. Practicing and refining these real life skills allows children to feel capable, empowered, independent, confident, and purposeful. And it is with a deep love and purpose that they then use these skills to care for their beautiful environment. Often, the children feel a sense of responsibility around caring for and maintaining their classroom that they love so dearly. Responsibility comes by way of respect and trust.

Each day, the Toddler children help to wash their classroom laundry. A team of small feet take a big walk down the hall and through the gym--the children help to put the cloths and aprons into the washing machine. Participating in this activity allows them to understand the importance of community involvement and shared responsibility. This same message and value is practiced in the Primary classrooms as the children care for their environment at the end of every day. Each child is responsible for a particular job such as sweeping, cleaning the chalkboard, sharpening the pencils, or straightening the shelves. The pride and ownership that comes from these meaningful activities stems from a love for the space and a deep desire to care for it. With everyone contributing to the good of the whole, the children feel the gift of an intentional community.

In celebration of community, what joy we have to look forward to next week! Your children will be extra busy preparing their environments for the Holiday Sing-a-Longs. You will be guests in their beautiful classrooms, and they will welcome you in with such pride! Enjoy and celebrate!

Ashley and the Toddler/Primary Team