



Diamante Montessori School
Enriching the Person Within Your Child

NOVEMBER 2016

Alice's Corner

Diamante is beginning its 14th successful year teaching children in Glen Ellyn! We are so proud to have staff that has been with us since the beginning of our school. Liz Thorwall and Teese Leadaman have been with me since the start and Jeri Shaw has been involved for many years as a Board Member supporting our school and now as our Office Manager. It's important to have people that work well together and understand Montessori Philosophy. We love to see the growth in the children in our school and will continue to nurture and watch them grow.

This school year is off to a great start. We appreciate everyone who came to conferences. We've enjoyed class picnics and a very well attended curriculum night. We'd like to use this newsletter to provide important information on how to implement Montessori into your home life at each age level. We hope to talk about topics like discipline and sibling rivalry in our upcoming newsletters.

There are many benefits to using Montessori principals at home. Some of these are.....

- encourages self-discipline
- develops child's competence and confidence
- fosters independence
- prepares children academically for life-long learning



- creates enthusiasm and love for learning
- teaches self-respect and respect for others
- promotes social responsibility
- encourages independent thinking and problem-solving
- fosters spiritual awareness
- nourishes empathic, sensitive and compassionate individuals

Children love being involved in all aspects of family life. Including children and giving them purposeful helpful things to do at home will develop many of these benefits. Each class will make suggestion on how to implement Montessori in your child's life at home.

The Holidays will be upon us soon so all classes will make a Harvest Feast. The children will be working on a Holiday Performance and the two 3-6 year old classes will be performing a play in the evening. Check our calendar and plan to attend.

Alice

Pre-Primary Class

When we look at the works available to the students in the classroom we are encouraged by the independence and confidence they instill in the children. These concepts can be encouraged at home also.

When the students arrive in the classroom they have a place to hang their backpack and coat and a place to put their shoes. It's at their level so hooks are easily reachable. It would be helpful if they have a place at home to put their things as they come in the door. If everything is reachable to them they can be responsible for finding and putting on their coat and shoes and carrying their backpack into the car when leaving the house.

We have many water activities in our classroom and with them a lot of spills. The students know to get a blue towel for

anything that needs cleaning up. They don't need to come and ask the adults what they should do-they know what to do and they just take care of it. At home a stack of "clean up" towels and a bucket to put used towels into inside the pantry or a cabinet will encourage children to take care of a spill on their own-they are very good at this job! In turn being able to do this independently encourages problem solving and confidence in children-an *I can do it* attitude.

The students have been so excited about their job assignment in the classroom. They each have a partner and together they do jobs including loading and emptying the dishwasher, loading the washing machine, folding towels, sweeping the stairs, mopping the stairs, vacuuming, taking care of the fish, the rugs, the chairs, the name cards. They love this responsibility and again it helps develop independence and confidence. At home having a job helps foster a sense of belonging to the family and having a part in taking care of the family's environment. As you assign jobs to young children at home please remember that to a child the process of doing the job is what is important to them not the outcome. As they get older what the finished job looks like will become more important.



Our students love to cook and set up snack for their peers. They are very good at pouring, measuring, cutting and love using real tools. They can be great helpers in the kitchen at home if they are shown how to use tools safely. Cooking also provides an opportunity for math and reading skills to get practiced. Our class will be making soup for our Thanksgiving Feast which will involve them peeling and cutting vegetables.

Every day creates opportunities for children to learn new life skills and an opportunity for adults to teach a new skill or encourage the repetition of a learned skill. Then as we do in the classroom, enjoy hearing "I did it!" along with seeing a face that is truly happy.

Liz, Estrella & Joan



Toddler Class

It's hard to believe that Halloween has passed and the holidays are right around the corner. All of the children know the daily routine, and even though there are still a few tears, they keep moving through the routine with tears and all.

We have become real "Community".

Parents are asking quite a bit what they can do with their children at home.

We always give the same answer...



and it is simply to allow your child to be involved and to help. This doesn't mean give them chores or specific jobs. This means make them a part of the family life. This also means allow them to care for themselves, dressing, choosing their clothes, preparing a meal or a healthy snack, cleaning up after themselves (everything), serving themselves at meals, using real dishes, watering plants, helping sort laundry, help with the family pet (and of course, be kind and gentle), and most certainly work on those manners.

These are all things we do on a daily basis in our classroom. This teaches confidence, independence, and respect. When we, as adults do all of these things for children, such as putting on their shoes, we are telling them they are not capable. They are so excited when they have accomplished it themselves.

All of these things as we call "Practical life" are most beneficial especially academically. Setting the table, for example, involves counting and repeating this, and having to remember at each meal what items that are needed. If a child is cutting fruit, we are working on cutting the slice in half. We discuss where the food comes from. Being a part of this typically helps picky eaters. They really enjoyed the apple tasting. We talked about sweet and sour and the different colors of the apples. There are a couple of children in our class who would not eat the skin of the apple, and one day it was suggested to her that she eat all of the apple skins on her plate. She took one bite and she ate them all. She also took a small bite of a clementine after she said she didn't like it. After being part of the preparation for so long, who wouldn't be curious?

They pour their own water into a glass, and they are really remembering "Yes, please and no thank you, and thank you" when something is given to them.

When they serve themselves, they have to use tongs, and we tell them how many they can take. This is why we have different types of transferring with tongs work on our shelf, and this is something that is very important for them to do at home. Always start them with a small amount of food, even if they say they want a lot. We tell them

CONGRATULATIONS!

To **Jake and Chase** on the birth of their new baby brother, **Sam!**
Congrats to mom & dad - **Brittney & Ryan**

Hudson just announced the birth of his new brother, **Hunter**. Congrats to mom & dad - **Melyssa & Jason**

that they can get more when they finish. During snack, we are working on eating what is on your plate, and they do finish. If there is too much on the plate, this is just setting the child up for failure. At home, as they do at school, they must clean up after themselves. This does not only mean after a meal. This means, coats and shoes in the proper place, picking up their clothing, and most definitely the toys must be put away, and not when they are finished playing, but before they can take anything else out. At school, they need to put their work away before they can take something else out.

At home, one of the things mentioned that is very beneficial is laundry. The whole process of sorting and matching and of course counting comes into play and colors. With all of these practical activities, the language is so important. Children are still learning words and meaning. Just because a child has a large vocabulary, they may have no idea of the meaning of the words.

Tracy and Teese

Keeping Busy...



Enrichment

The Enrichment class has gotten off to a very busy start. These students, many of whom have been in Montessori since they were toddlers, have developed through their Montessori experience a strong sense of order in their work, independence in completing works, responsibility, an extended concentration span which they need to be able to complete long works.

One of the goals for the enrichment students is working on time management. A group presentation is given along with an assignment, which is then put on a shelf. The students are responsible for completing the assignment while also doing the fun games and works in the room. Currently the assignments relate to our study of North America and the United States including its history. Some of the projects include completing a map of North America, coloring flags of various countries, decoding a picture sentence, unscrambling the words to a sentence and writing it. As they complete an assignment they mark it off a check off paper in their North America folder. When all the assignments have been checked off their folder goes home. The look of pride and excitement on the students'

faces as they complete a folder is priceless!

Our first field trip of the year was to Cantigny in Winfield where we hiked and hunted for things that were pictured on a card each student had. The students were great observers finding and hearing many things during our hike. The highlight was to be able to climb on a tank.

Practicing math problems, color word recognition works, doing sound works, writing stories and reading books also fill our days. As the students have completed various works, we have observed that their cutting, writing and reading skills are improving. They are taking pride in their work and they love to share completed works with their peers!

Our class looked at the book, *Look What I Did With A Leaf*, then went outside and collected leaves of various sizes, shapes and colors. Using the collected leaves which have been pressed, the students will come up with their own leaf creations and glue them onto a piece of paper to take home. The ideas they already have come up with will be fun to see created on paper.

The class enjoyed a "Mexican" Halloween lunch since we have been talking about North America and Mexico. They are looking forward to preparing a Harvest Feast for a Thanksgiving lunch. They still enjoy practicing their practical life skills and the refinement of those skills is very evident.

Liz & Teese



Calendar

Nov. 3 - In School Performance - "The Bubble Guy". For Preprimary and Enrichment

Nov. 21-25 - No School - Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 5 - Holiday Play AM Preprimary Class - at St. Mark's 7pm

Dec. 6 - Holiday Play PM Preprimary Class - at St. Mark's 7pm

Dec. 7 - 3 Day Toddler Class Holiday Program - 9:15 in the classroom

Dec. 9 - 2 Day Toddler Class Holiday Program - 9:15 in the classroom

Dec. 14 - Enrichment Holiday Program - 1pm in the classroom

Dec. 19 - Jan. 2 - No School - Holiday Break

Jan. 3 - First day back from break

Jan 16 - No School - Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday

Quotes of the Month

"I love my mom so much and Miss Tracy, too!" - from **Chase** in the toddler class.

From the Enrichment class when the bell rang - "Awww - do we have to stop?"

Diamante Staff

Alice Lewaniak
Head Directress & Toddler Directress

Liz Thorwall
AM Pre-Primary Co-Directress & Enrichment Directress

Estrella Lottich
AM Pre-Primary Co-Directress & PM Pre-Primary Directress

Tracy Armstrong - Toddler Intern

Teese Leadaman
Toddler Class Assistant & Enrichment Assistant

Joan Curtis
PM Pre-Primary Class Assistant

Jeri Shaw
Office Manager & Enrichment Lunch Buddy

Tom Lewaniak
Business Manager

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Diamante Montessori is a not-for-profit organization..