



A FEW BASICS TO GET YOU STARTED

Intro to the Montessori Method

The Montessori method nurtures the **whole child**. It promotes the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of each child.

We recognize that **children are unique individuals** and we celebrate their uniqueness. With the support and guidance of our teachers, each child progresses at his or her own pace.

Our classrooms have **developmentally appropriate** activities and expectations.

Teachers **observe** each student so they can modify the lessons and materials to best suit interests and growth. When students are working independently, teachers only intervene when it is necessary and beneficial. They do their best to anticipate the needs of each student so that the new subject or skill is available when the student is ready to experience it. This is called "following the child."

A **carefully prepared environment** is a cornerstone of the method. You'll notice that our classrooms are comforting, organized, full of natural light, plants, and engaging materials—inspiring children to learn.

Students work with **carefully chosen materials** that support the current developmental stage. Natural materials are preferred, and materials are arranged attractively on the shelves in baskets, trays, boxes and more. Each learning activity is known as "work", and is designed to teach a specific concept. Concrete experiences are always offered to children first. Once they have a firm grasp on the concept, abstract thinking is presented.

We understand the importance of **grace and courtesy** and strive to model good manners. We always treat children with respect and dignity, use calm voices, and handle objects with care. We understand that students are observing us even when we are not aware of it.

As Montessori educators, we believe that each child is on the way to developing **self-discipline**. When a child exhibits inappropriate behavior we first examine the reasons why. "Are they hungry, tired, overstimulated or testing boundaries?" We then contemplate whether a change in the prepared environment would help, or if we need to teach certain problem-solving skills to prevent another occurrence. We help children understand appropriate behavior in a social context, and always in a gentle yet firm manner.

Students enjoy **freedom of movement** in their classrooms, working in a variety of sitting or standing positions rather than being constrained to desks. We aim to teach our students to respect their bodies, control of their movements, and respect others working around them.



Lessons are presented in an intentional manner. For example, for ages 3-6, we captivate their attention by making slow and deliberate movements, only talking when necessary. This allows children to focus on our actions, helping them remember details that may be forgotten if we were speaking at the same time.

We are advocates for **peace** and believe that education can change the world for the better. The work we do as educators, guiding children toward self-reliance and compassion, is incredibly important. How our children are treated now will impact our entire civilization when they are grown up and making decisions that affect others.

To learn more, visit the helpful links on the Why Black Mountain Montessori? page of our website.