



So it is well to cultivate a friendly feeling towards error, to treat it as a companion inseparable from our lives, as something having a purpose, which it truly has.

~ Maria Montessori

Montessori Matters

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TO ERR IS HUMAN...

Primary teacher, Jeanie Fox explores the idea of developing a “friendliness with error” in our children and ourselves.

Sometimes we notice children in our classes who are hesitant to try new things or get easily discouraged when they are unable to do something “right” the first time they try to do it. We can understand this inclination as we can often feel the same way ourselves. In the Montessori classroom it is important to support the children, and ourselves, by cultivating friendliness with error. This goes beyond just the ability to cope with mistakes; instead, we want children to develop a level of comfort with their errors, learn from them, and move on. When we model a healthy attitude towards mistakes, the child learns that errors are a natural part of life and are not a sign of ultimate failure, but rather of courage. Mistakes help us to become better at what we do and more forgiving of who we are as imperfect people.

It is important that we as adults approach mistakes that our children make without judgment so they do not feel scolded, embarrassed or “bad” about the error. Before stepping in to fix it (or even offering our help) it is important to step back and see if the child can correct the mistake on his own. This helps the child to be less dependent on the adult for approval and more dependent on himself. Through self-correction, we can see a child grow into a confident and independent person who knows how to solve problems. She can learn that desired results come from concentrated effort and self-analysis and thus becomes an individual comfortable with her own process, mistakes and all.

But what do we do when a child is resistant to “messing up”? I read an article not too long ago in where a Montessori teacher described an incident when a child spilled a bucket of water and became very upset. The next day she (purposefully) spilled a bucket of water herself, so the child could see that “everyone makes mistakes”. After the “accident” she sort of laughed at herself and then set right to work cleaning up the spill with the help of that child. A few days later, that child came to her and said that he wasn't afraid to spill water at school anymore.

We do not always need to create situations like this one, but it does remind us that our reaction to mistakes has a big impact on children; they watch us to see how what we will do. We can support the child in being comfortable with error by not judging, correcting or jumping in to help when she makes a mistake. Instead, we can show her how to fix that mistake and move on. As adults we can also model to our children a healthy attitude when we make our own mistakes, by showing them that we are not frustrated or upset and that we are going to find a way to solve the problem together.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 16: Winter Break Begins
12:00 pm dismissal for all children

Dec 19 – 30: Winter Holiday
No School

Jan 3: Teacher Work Day
No School

Jan 4: School Resumes

Jan 13: Re-Enrollment Contracts
Go Out

Jan 16: Martin Luther King, Jr.
Holiday *No School*

Jan 18: Elementary Parent Visit
1:30-3:00 p.m.

Jan 19: P.M. Primary Parent Visit
1:30-2:45 p.m.

Jan 20: A.M. Primary Parent Visit
8:45 – 10:00 a.m.

Jan 31: Morning Coffee
8:45 – 10:00 a.m.

SO, WHAT DID YOU DO AT SCHOOL TODAY?

Come see for yourself! This January parents are invited for a very special classroom visit with their child. With separate dates for the Elementary (January 18), Afternoon Primary (January 19) and Morning Primary (January 20), parents have the opportunity to interact with their child as the class enjoys their daily work. More details to follow in the New Year, but be sure to save the date for this very special event.



Like MIT on Facebook!

Are you a Facebook user? If so, please “like” Montessori In Town. It is a great way to show your support and stay connected with us!

Montessori In Town Welcomes New Primary Guide

Montessori In Town is pleased to welcome our newest Primary Guide, Laura Morris, set to join MIT this January. Jeanie Fox will be leaving MIT upon the birth of her baby, and while she will be greatly missed we could not be happier to have Laura become a part of the MIT community.

Laura brings with her a wealth of Montessori experience, including the establishment of her own AMI Montessori School and pioneering one of the first All Day Primary programs in Atlanta. We know her talents will be an excellent fit at MIT and she will be a great resource to the families in her class as well as the entire school community.

All MIT families are invited to join us for a reception in Laura’s honor on Wednesday, December 7. The reception will be held in the Meeting Room from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and children that will be in Laura’s class are encouraged to attend. Families may park in the lower parking lot and use the N. Highland Avenue entrance.

We hope to see you there!

OPEN HOUSE FOR PROSPECTIVE PARENTS

How do families find out about Montessori education? Through current Montessori parents! Word of mouth advertising is our best tool in letting others know about Montessori In Town. With that in mind, please let your friends, neighbors and colleagues know about our upcoming Open House events. We’ll host prospective parents on Sunday, January 22 (2:00-4:00 p.m.) and Thursday, March 1 (6:30 - 8:00 p.m.). Interested guests can RSVP to Nikki at nikki@montessoriantown.com or 404-784-8031.

FALL FUNDRAISERS AT MONTESSORI IN TOWN

As the first semester is quickly coming to a close, it's time to highlight and review fundraising to date. All money raised through our various projects go directly to financial aid and educational opportunities for staff and faculty.

Fall Book Fair: Our fourth annual Book Fair, in conjunction with *Charis Books and More* in Little Five Points, was held in September. The Book Fair inaugurated our newly renovated Meeting Room, adjacent to Jeanie and Ashley's Primary classroom. We have not received the check from *Charis* to date, but 10% of sales will be returned to us. The estimated amount is close to \$100.00.

For Small Hands: Each October *Montessori Services* and its at-home companion catalog, *For Small Hands*, offers parents and schools a unique opportunity. Families may order from them and enjoy free shipping while 15% of all sales is credited to the school. *Montessori Services* offers many of the classroom materials that we use and replenish on a very regular basis, therefore the credit saves the school money that is freed up to directly support scholarship. Additionally, families can purchase many hard to find child-size tools and gifts for their children that support the Montessori experience at home. The amount of credit raised was \$130.00.

Apogee: This is the second year that MIT has been eligible to re-direct GA State Income Tax dollars that fund financial aid. Contributors receive a tax credit for the donated amount at the end of the calendar year. This has been a tremendous boon not only to our school, but many other private schools across Georgia. Through accreditation with GAC (Georgia Accrediting Commission), we were able to raise almost \$40,000.00 this year enabling more families to enjoy a Montessori educational experience. The State of Georgia set aside \$52 million for 2011 and it went fast! The cap was met by the first few days of November and there were numbers of families who were planning to make that contribution but were not able to do so before the money ran out. Do not worry as fundraising will begin again in January 2012 for the calendar year. What we have learned is the earlier the contribution is made, the most likely MIT will be able to benefit from the program.

Go to www.apogee123.org to find out more or follow the link from MIT's website.

Thank you to all who made contributions towards this Fall's fundraising efforts. Look for information on upcoming fundraiser efforts soon!

MONTESSORI IN TOWN HONORS GRANDPARENT & SPECIAL FRIENDS

On Tuesday, November 22 Montessori In Town hosted its 5th annual Grandparent and Special Friends Day. This tradition has become a cherished one to the children, their special visitors and MIT staff.

Guests were received in the fellowship hall at Druid Hills Baptist Church. Parent representatives from each class assembled a lovely brunch that was enjoyed on linen-covered tables set with cheerful seasonal flower centerpieces.

While all enjoyed the food and one another's good company, the guests were welcomed by Maureen Walter, Founder and Executive Director of the school. Michael Goodman, Business Director, shared the wonderful news of how, through working with Apogee, MIT's scholarship funds have tallied close to \$100,000.00 in two short years. Many grandparents and special friends had a hand in making this fund such a success.

The special guest speaker was Ms. Lilian Bryan who mesmerized the audience with words of support and appreciation to the guests in their special role with the children of our school. Ms. Bryan, a renowned international trainer of Montessori teachers, shared her love of children, both as an educator and grandmother, while weaving the thread of peaceful Montessori education throughout her talk.

Lilian's talk set just the right tone to step into the classrooms and spend the rest of the morning visiting in each host child's classroom. The day ended with guests receiving a lovingly made gift from their host child. Everyone was sent off with warm wishes for a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.

A special thank goes out to Montessori In Town parents who worked towards making this day such a success. Co-chairs Monique Richmond and Leigh Mallis, along with many parent volunteers, made this day a memorable one for all in attendance.