



MONTESSORI MATTERS



Community Montessori School

Week of May 22, 2009

A Note from Mrs. Ashby:

I just wanted to share this with you. These are good words with which to start your summer.
Take good care of your families and enjoy your time off!

"On Being Mom" by Anna Quindlen

If not for the photographs, I might have a hard time believing they ever existed. The pensive infant with the swipe of dark bangs and the black-button eyes of a Raggedy Andy doll. The placid baby with the yellow ringlets and the high piping voice. The sturdy toddler with the lower lip that curled into an apostrophe above her chin.

All my babies are gone now. I say this not in sorrow but in disbelief. I take great satisfaction in what I have today: three almost-adults, two taller than I am, one closing in fast. Three people who read the same books I do and have learned not to be afraid of disagreeing with me in their opinion of them, who sometimes tell vulgar jokes that make me laugh until I choke and cry, who need razor blades and shower gel and privacy, who want to keep their doors closed more than I like.

Who, miraculously, go to the bathroom, zip up their jackets and move food from plate to mouth all by themselves. Like the trick soap I bought for the bathroom with a rubber ducky at its center, the baby is buried deep within each, barely discernible except through the unreliable haze of the past.

Everything in all the books I once pored over is finished for me now. Penelope Leach, T. Berry Brazelton., Dr. Spock. The ones on sibling rivalry and sleeping through the night and early childhood education, all grown obsolete. Along with Goodnight Moon and Where the Wild Things Are, they are battered, spotted, well used. But I suspect that if you flipped the pages dust would rise like memories.

What those books taught me, finally, and what the women on the playground taught me, and the well-meaning relations -- what they taught me was that they couldn't really teach me very much at all. Raising children is presented at first as a true-false test, then becomes multiple choice, until finally, far along, you realize that it is an endless essay. No one knows anything. One child responds well to positive reinforcement, another can be managed only with a stern voice and a timeout. One boy is toilet trained at 3, his brother at 2. When my first child was born, parents were told to put baby to bed on his belly so that he would not choke on his own spit-up. By the time my last arrived, babies were put down on their backs because of research on sudden infant death syndrome.

To a new parent this ever-shifting certainty is terrifying, and then soothing. Eventually you must learn to trust yourself. Eventually the research will follow.

I remember 15 years ago poring over one of Dr. Brazelton's wonderful books on child development, in which he describes three different sorts of infants: average, quiet, and active. I was looking for a sub-quiet codicil for an 18-month-old who did not walk. Was there something wrong with his fat little legs? Was there something wrong with his tiny little mind? Was he developmentally delayed, physically challenged? Was I insane? Last year he went to China. Next year he goes to college. He can talk just fine. He can walk, too.

Every part of raising children is humbling, too. Believe me, mistakes were made. They have all been enshrined in the Remember-When-Mom-Did Hall of Fame. The outbursts, the temper tantrums, the bad language, mine, not theirs. The times the baby fell off the bed. The times I arrived late for preschool pickup. The nightmare sleepover. The horrible summer camp. The day when the youngest came barreling out of the classroom with a 98 on her geography test, and I responded, What did you get wrong? (She insisted I include that.) The time I ordered food at the McDonald's drive-through speaker and then drove away without picking it up from the window. (They all insisted I include that.) I did not allow them to watch the Simpsons for the first two seasons...What was I thinking?

But the biggest mistake I made is the one that most of us make while doing this. I did not live in the moment enough. This is particularly clear now that the moment is gone, captured only in photographs. There is one picture of the three of them sitting in the grass on a quilt in the shadow of the swing set on a summer day, ages 6, 4 and 1. And I wish I could remember what we ate, and what we talked about, and how they sounded, and how they looked when they slept that night. I wish I had not been in such a hurry to get on to the next thing: dinner, bath, book, bed. I wish I had treasured the doing a little more and the getting it done a little less.

Even today I'm not sure what worked and what didn't, what was me and what was simply life. When they were very small, I suppose I thought someday they would become who they were because of what I'd done. Now I suspect they simply grew into their true selves because they demanded in a thousand ways that I back off and let them be.

The books said to be relaxed and I was often tense, matter-of-fact and I was sometimes over the top. And look how it all turned out. I wound up with the three people I like best in the world, who have done more than anyone to excavate my essential humanity. That's what the books never told me. I was bound and determined to learn from the experts.

It just took me a while to figure out who the experts were.

SPRING CMS 2009 SCHOOL CALENDAR

May	25	Monday	No School—Memorial Day
	29	Friday	Last day of school—No Extended Day All Primary Level students leave at 11:35 dismissal 6 th Grade Graduation—1:30 p.m.
June	1	Monday	6 th Grade Year End Trip Primary & Junior Level Guides In-Service Day
	2	Tuesday	Primary & Junior Level Guides In-Service Day

Important Dates of Next School Year 2009-2010

August

16	Sunday	Parent Meeting: 6:00 pm Classroom Meetings 7:00 pm Whole School Meeting in Jock's Gym
18	Tues	First Day of School for Lower and Upper Elementary students First Graders leave at 11:30 am August 18-21
24-28	Mon-Fri	Orientation for new Primary Level Students 8:45 am – 10:45 am

September

1	Tuesday	School starts for all Primary Level students 8:15 am – 11:35 am No Extended Day Sessions this week
7	Monday	No School-Labor Day
11	Friday	Fun Fair 5 p.m.—8 p.m.
14	Monday	First Full Day for Extended Day Students

Celebration For Education Friday, November 6

Spring Break Friday, March 26– Friday, April 2, 2010

PRIMARY LEVEL – Franklin, Hughes, Somsel:

Franklin: Our class is enjoying our last days of study with flowers, birds, and Europe. Our Extended Days enjoyed trips to Shakertown and Valley View Ferry. Our guinea pig, Chile, needs a summer home and our fish need someone who could give them a good spring caring-for. Call me if you want to do either.

Hughes: Does anyone have expertise with fish tanks? Mine is in desperate need of attention!! The children are studying insects. The extended day went to Shakertown this week and are going to my farm this week. Wonderful fun!!

Somsel: The children are enjoying the end of the year—scrubbing, polishing, sand paper letter games, memory game of numbers, maps, land forms, language cards, geometric cabinet, etc. The extended day children had a very informative and relaxing trip to Shakertown. A special thank you to all the parents for getting your children to school in a timely manner, your attendance at study groups, and your support of Montessori education. Have a wonderful summer—swim and be outside!

REMINDER ELEMENTARY FAMILIES:

There will not be Pizza or Fazoli's the last week of school. Many thanks to our 6th years for running the pizza program so successfully and to Deborah Todd for overseeing both the pizza and Fazoli's programs!!

LOWER ELEMENTARY - Gray & Mason

Classrooms are abuzz with preparation for our Ancient Civilization Presentations. We are looking forward to next Wednesday, May 27th which will begin promptly at 1:45 p.m.

UPPER ELEMENTARY - Simpson & Spitz

We have worked really hard these past weeks to prepare for our Ancient Civilization Fair and our play production. Both events were a success!!

SCHOOL BAND – Hickner:

We will play a school assembly before the end of the year for the students. Please bring your band instruments if you are performing in this assembly with Mr. Hickner.

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM - 333-0020

We will have Afterschool on the last day of school.
Thank you for another wonderful year!

Please make the following corrections to your Parent Handbook:

New phone numbers:

Curry, Joshua and Caroline

Kristan Curry (No land line) cell: 806-2108

New address:

Dabbelt, Alan

Jeff Dabbelt & Gretchen Ely

282 Lafayette Pkwy. 40503

Williams, Ashton

New address for Dad:

Williams, Mark

4832 Coral Creek Circle 40515

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1) College social work student seeking summer nanny position

3 summers of nanny experience with various children, ages infant-10

1 year of experience at YMCA childcare center

Available July – August 2009

Contact Audrey Henderson: audrey_henderson@taylor.edu

**Audrey is the sister of Ava Hurley's babysitter. If you would like more information, please call

Chloe Hurley (Ava's mom) at 983-0481

2) FOR SALE: 6 Piece wooden girl's bedroom set

Set Includes: bureau, dresser with mirror, dresser with bookshelf & nightstand. (No headboard)

\$180.00

Call for more information: Marilyn Spitz 269-4881

3) Does anyone have a slightly used recent model laptop computer that you could donate to school which will be used in the office starting this summer? If you do, please call the office at 277-4805.



The MMSK Building, 5/19/2009

It has been an exciting year for the Capital Campaign.... In case you haven't heard.... We have broken ground! That still seems unbelievable to me – to be at the point where we are able to see the vision that we started with 5 years ago begin to take shape on the land. I have been amazed by the construction progress for MMSK. I drive by on almost a daily basis and stop to take pictures. Mrs. Ashby and I still jump up and down when we see the work going on. However, I know that we still have a ways to go in order to complete our plan for our whole campus to be on the Stone Road property. Here is the reality of it... when we raise an additional \$3 million we will be able to begin the next and final phase, the CMS portion.

For our little school, I know we have accomplished amazing things – with the \$1.955 million we have raised we have been able to purchase the land on Stone Road and build MMSK. In 2004, when we kicked-off the Bridge to the Future Campaign, it was the first Capital Campaign CMS had ever done, pretty amazing when you realize we began in 1970. The key to our success to date has come mainly from the support of our families, past and present, that have contributed to the Capital Campaign. We have 100% participation from our Board and Staff and approximately 65% of our families pledging their support. Our goal is to have 100% participation from our families. It is crucial when we head out into the community, approaching foundations and corporations, that we can say we have a strong percentage of our families committed to our cause. We know what a trying economic time this is for so many people, what we ask is that you search your heart and see what feels right for your family to be able to do at this time. Letters of Intent are available in the school office and on the CMS website at www.cmsmontessori.org. Thank you to the parents, grandparents and alumni that have helped us reach our first goal. Now that construction has begun, let's keep it rolling so we can get CMS on the land as soon as possible!