

10 Benefits of a Montessori Preschool

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Only you can know what kind of preschool is right for your child. The good news is the Montessori Method offers research and evidence supporting their techniques. Read on to discover 10 benefits of their educational philosophy.

1. Focuses on Key Developmental Stages

A Montessori curriculum focuses on key developmental milestones in children between the ages of three and five-years-old. For example, younger children focus on honing large muscle and language skills while the four-year-olds work on reading.

2. Encourages Cooperative Play

Because the teacher does not “run” the classroom, students guide the activities they do. This encourages children to share and work cooperatively to explore the various stations in the Montessori classroom. Children in Montessori classrooms, by the very nature of the environment, learn to respect one another and build a sense of community.

3. Learning Is Child-Centered

Montessori preschool students enjoy a classroom and curriculum designed around their specific needs and abilities that allows them to explore and learn at their own pace and on their own terms. Everything in the classroom is within reach of the child, and furniture is sized for children to sit comfortably. In addition, older children in the class work with the younger ones, so mentoring comes as much from peers as it does from the adult teachers in the classroom.

4. Children Naturally Learn Self-Discipline

While the Montessori Method allows children to choose the activities they want to work on each day, and how long they will work at a specific task, there are specific “ground rules” for the class that are consistently enforced by the teacher and other students. This environment naturally teaches children self-discipline, and it refines important skills like concentration, self-control and motivation.

5. Classroom Environment Teaches Order

All objects and activities have precise locations on the shelves of a Montessori classroom. When children are finished with an activity, they place items back into their appropriate places. This sense of order helps facilitate the learning process, teaches self-discipline, and caters to a young child’s innate need for an orderly environment.

6. Teachers Facilitate the Learning Experience

Teachers in the Montessori classroom are “guides” that facilitate the learning experience, rather than determine what it will look like. Teachers ensure the ground rules are followed and encourage students to perform tasks at their own pace.

7. Learning Method Inspires Creativity

Since children are allowed to choose their activities and work at them on their own terms, creativity in the classroom is encouraged. Children work at tasks for the joy of the work, rather than the end result, which allows them to focus more on process than result – a natural path to creativity.

8. May be More Effective in Developing Certain Skills

Research conducted by Dr. Angeline Lillard, a professor of psychology from the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, examined the abilities of children who have been taught in a Montessori school. Published in 2006 in the journal *Science*, the research studied Montessori students in Wisconsin and found that five-year-olds in Montessori classrooms had higher math and reading skills than their counterparts in public schools. In addition, the study compared 12-year-old Montessori and non-Montessori students. While math and reading skills appeared to be more on par with this age group, social development appeared to be higher in the Montessori students.

9. System is Highly Individualized to Each Student

Students in the Montessori program are allowed to explore activities and concepts at their own pace. This naturally encourages children to try more challenging areas, which accelerates their learning experience. Learning occurs at a comfortable pace for each student, rather than inflicting the same rate on every student in a classroom.

10. Curriculum Focused on Hands-On Learning

One of the greatest benefits of the Montessori Method, particularly during the early learning experience, is the focus on hands-on learning. The emphasis is on concrete, rather than abstract learning, as students work on activities that teach language, math, culture and practical life lessons. Teachers encourage students to concentrate on tasks, and they discourage students from interrupting one another, allowing students to focus on activities until they are properly mastered.

There are many potential benefits of a Montessori preschool for children just starting out in the education process. These important early years prepare a student for the learning experience that is to come, whether they continue with the Montessori Method or move to a public classroom environment in the future.