

MACDONALD MONTESSORI SCHOOL PROGRAM PLAN

MMS is a full day child care program, operating from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. MMS is open every week day except for the following holidays: the Friday before Labor Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day and July 4th.

MMS provides child care for the following age groups:

**Infant: 6 weeks to 15 months Toddler: 16
months to 33 months Preschool: 33
months up to Kindergarten School Age:
Kindergarten up to 10 years old.**

MMS is currently licensed to serve 24 infants, 34 toddlers, 85 preschoolers and 30 school age children.

While children are in our care we guarantee that they are under direct supervision at all times. The following ratios are upheld throughout the day:

**Infant: 1:4
Toddler: 1:7
Preschool: 1:10
Kindergarten/School Age: 1:15**

#

The curriculum at MMS is based on the Montessori philosophy which is both a method as well as a theory. It is made up of major areas of study which have their organization based on the sequence of the Montessori materials.

Practical Life: Care of self and the environment.

Sensorial: Exploration of the five senses.

Language: Reading readiness, phonetics, writing stories, reading,
Group time sharing.

Mathematics: Number, quantity, number systems, addition,
Subtraction, multiplication, division.

Natural Science: Biology, general science.

Social Science: World cultures, geography.

Art/Music: Exploration of art process and materials.

This program plan shall be evaluated annually in writing by a teacher qualified staff person.

#2

We have been reading about the Reggio Emilia preschools and infant-toddler centers since 1989. They were named by Newsweek to be "the best in the world" in 1990. We attended our first Reggio workshop in June of 1994. We invited Amelia Gambetti, U.S. liaison from the Reggio schools to visit MMS in the fall of 1994 and she returned many more times. Jennifer Azzariti, who worked with Amelia at the Model Early Learning Center in Washington D.C., has furthered the consultation with our center. Louise and Ashley Cadwell, St. Louis Collaborative and Mary Hartzell, Santa Monica Reggio-Inspired School have also been to our school to consult.

Our staff have attended workshops on Reggio in Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, St. Louis, Santa Monica, Columbus, Ohio, New Orleans, Hawaii and Reggio Emilia, Italy. We feel that the Reggio philosophy, which is described for you on the following pages, is the best compliment to our Montessori philosophy.

Montessori offers learning materials expressed in an orderly, sequential manner and Reggio offers creativity, the arts, music and drama. The combination offers an integrated approach to the whole child - your child.

Here is a list of what we feel are the ideas at the heart of the philosophy of Reggio Emilia-

Reggio Emilia Philosophy Offers -

***Image of the child**

Children are powerful and competent.
Children have rights not needs. They have a right to develop independence, creativity and the internal joy of external learning.

***Children's Relationships and Interaction**

Each child seen in relationship with other children, their family, teachers, and the environment of the school.

***Role of Parents**

Essential and active part of their children's learning environment.
Parents have a right to know and share in the life of their child during their time at school.

***Physical Environment**

Beautiful, colorful and encouraging learning, creativity and interaction alone or in groups.

***Curriculum and Time**

Emerging curriculum comes from the children and their interest - not always established in advance. Children's own sense of time and their own personal rhythm are considered in planning and implementing projects and activities.

***Cooperation**

Teachers who work in twos in a co-equal relationship engaged with the total staff in continuous discussion and interpretation of their work and that of the children.

***Careful, well-developed Structure of Organization**

Every detail of the children's lives discusses and organized with care to develop the multiple intelligences of children.

***Progettazione**

Teachers facilitate children's exploration of the children's ideas in short and long term projects. Ideas originate in the continuum of experience of children and teachers and their practice of co-constructing knowledge together.

***Atelierista (teacher) and Altelier (studio)**

Children's expressions through many media is not a separate part of curriculum but is inseparable from the whole cognitive/symbolic expression of learning. A teacher who is trained in visual arts works closely with other teachers. An art room or studio is set aside for everyone's use.

***Documentation**

Transcription of children's remarks, discussions and photographs of their activity and representations of their thinking and learning are displayed for the parents to share in the preschool life of their children.

#3

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF OUR PROGRAM

To provide an environment that promotes the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of each child enrolled at MMS.

To provide a loving, caring atmosphere where physical and emotional affection is fully given and in which children feel secure and develop a positive self-concept.

To meet each child's physical needs while encouraging independence in self care and care of their environment.

To provide a program and environment that encourages curiosity, in which the child can discover, explore, be challenged and problem solve.

To surround them with adults who are joyful, enthusiastic and spontaneous and who are stable, secure, professional and committed to the well being of the children.

To provide a healthful and safe environment where children can live and grow.

To provide an environment and program where everyone's rights (children and adults) are protected and insured and encourages self-confidence and a sense of responsibility.

To provide an environment and program in which respect for themselves, for each other, for adults and for materials and property is fostered and insured.

To provide a rich environment that accepts children as they are and encourages the total development of children and fosters their individual needs, interests and talents.

To be supportive of parents and families, encouraging involvement, open and honest communication and feedback.

#4

STAFF ENCOURAGE INDEPENDENCE IN CHILDREN AS THEY ARE READY

For example:

Infants: safe places for independent play.

Older infants: finger feeding self.

Toddlers: washing hands, selecting own toys.

Threes and fours: dressing, picking up toys.

Fives: setting table, cleaning, acquiring self-help skills.

School-agers: performing responsible jobs, participating in community activities.

#5

**STAFF EXPECTATIONS OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL BEHAVIOR ARE
DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE**

For example:

Infants interact (look, touch gently, vocalize) freely with one another as staff observes, alert to respond and model safe interaction when necessary.

Two pieces of the same equipment are available so toddlers are not forced to share too often.

Preschoolers are encouraged to cooperate in small groups.

School-agers have opportunities to participate in-group games or to work or play alone.

Adults discuss alternative solutions with children 2 years and older.

#6

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT ARE AVAILABLE

Infants/Younger Toddlers:

Simple lightweight, open-ended, easily washable toys, such as, containers, balls, pop-beads, nesting cups.
Rattles, squeak toys, action/reaction toys.
Cuddly toys.
Toys to mouth, such as, teethers, rings.
Pictures of real objects.
Crawling area with sturdy, stable furniture to pull up self.

Toddlers:

Push and pull toys.
Stacking toys, large wooden spools/beads/cubes.
Sturdy picture books, music.
Pounding bench, simple puzzles.
Play telephone, dolls, pretend toys.
Large paper, crayons.
Sturdy furniture to hold on to while walking.
Sand and water toys.

Preschoolers:

Active play equipment for climbing and balancing.
Unit blocks and accessories.
Puzzles, manipulative toys.
Picture books and records, musical instruments.
Art materials, such as, finger and tempera paints, crayons, scissors and paste.
Dramatic play materials, such as, dolls, dress-up clothes and props, child-sized furniture and puppets.
Sand and water toys.

School-agers:

Active play equipment and materials, such as, bats and balls for organized games.
Construction materials for woodworking, unit blocks, accessories for blocks, such as, figures, signs, cars, trees.
Materials for hobby and art and science projects.
Materials for dramatics, cooking.
Books, records, musical instruments.
Board and card games.
Complex manipulative toys (connecting or interlocking toys), jigsaw puzzles.

#7

**STAFF PROVIDE A VARIETY OF DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE HANDS-ON
ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING GOALS:
FOSTERING POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT**

Infants/Younger Toddlers:

Hold and touch, make frequent eye contact and communicate with babies, especially during care giving.

Talk and sing to babies.

Allow infants to achieve mastery of their bodies through self-initiated motor behavior such as rolling, sitting.

Allow toddlers to feed themselves and encourage their development of self-help skills when ready.

Encourage and support each toddler's developmental achievements such as pulling up self, walking and climbing.

Listen and respond to toddlers emerging language.

Toddlers/Preschoolers:

Allow time for children to talk about what they see, do and like.

Use children's names frequently in songs, games.

Display children's work and photos of children.

Encourage children to draw pictures, tell stories about self and family.

Provide many opportunities for children to initiate activity, develop and demonstrate control of their bodies and self-help skills.

School-agers:

Provide opportunities to express growing independence/self-reliance, such as, the ability to make choices, initiate own activities.

Allow opportunities to work or play alone.

Provide ways to ensure privacy.

Plan cooperative rather than competitive activities.

Recognize preference for self-selected peer groups.

#8

DEVELOP SOCIAL SKILLS

Infants/Younger Toddlers:

Hold, pat and touch babies.

Talk to, sing to and play with babies on a one-to-one basis.

Respond to and expand on cues coming from child.

Interpret infants' action to other children to help them get along in the group ("Mary had it first.")

Older Toddlers/Preschoolers:

Assist toddlers in social interaction.

Create space and time for small groups of children to build blocks together or enjoy dramatic play.

Provide opportunities for sharing, caring and helping, such as, making cards for a sick child or caring for pets.

School-agers:

Arrange planned and spontaneous activities in team sports, group games, interest clubs, board and card games.

Allow time to sit and talk with a friend or adult.

Focus on activities rather than outcomes (scores, winners).

#9

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO THINK, REASON, QUESTION AND EXPERIMENT

Infants/Younger Toddlers:

Provide an appropriately challenging, safe environment for infants and toddlers to explore and manipulate.

Provide light colorful objects for babies to look at which they can reach for and grasp.

Play naming and hiding games, such as, peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake.

Provide simple toys that respond to infants' initiations so they may pay attention to cause and effect.

Provide large containers full of objects for toddlers to carry, dump and refill.

Help toddlers developing awareness by reflecting their experiences ("You're pointing to the street, is it because you hear the garbage truck?").

Provide opportunities for making choices without interfering with selections.

Avoid interruptions of children's activities.

Older Toddlers/Preschoolers:

Plan activities for labeling, classifying, sorting objects by shape, color and size.

Discuss daily and weekly routines in terms of time concepts, seasons of the year.

Extend children's thinking and learning during activities by adding new materials, asking open-ended questions, offering ideas or suggestions, joining in their play and providing assistance in solving problems.

Observe natural events, such as, seeds, growing, life cycles of pets.

Create opportunities to use numbers, counting objects.

Take walks around the building or neighborhood.

Plan trips to provide new learning experiences for preschoolers.

Encourage water and sand play.

School-agers:

Provide activities such as cooking, moneymaking projects, gardening, science experiments, trips in the community, interacting with visitors, multicultural experiences, computer projects.

Provide opportunities to complete homework if desired, including peer or adult tutoring for children who request assistance.

#10

ENCOURAGE LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Infants/Younger Toddlers:

Engage in many one-to-one, face-to-face interactions with infants.

Look at simple books and pictures.

Talk in a pleasant, calm voice using simple language and frequent eye contact while being responsive to the infant's cues.

Verbally label objects and events within the infant's experience.

Respond to sounds infants make, occasionally imitating infant's vocalization.

Describe children's and adult's actions and the events that occur in the child's environment. Respond to toddlers' attempts at language in supportive ways, such as, expanding their utterances and answering their questions, engaging in meaningful conversations about everyday experiences.

Older Toddlers/Preschoolers:

Read books and poems, tell stories about experiences, talk about pictures, write down experience stories children dictate.

Provide time for conversation, ask child questions that require more than a one-word answer.

Answer child's questions.

Add more information to what a child says.

Label things in room, use written words with pictures and spoken language, provide a print-rich environment.

Use flannel board, puppets, songs, finger plays.

Encourage children's emerging interest in writing (scribbling, drawing, copying and inventing own spelling).

School-agers:

Provide opportunities to read books.

Write and produce plays, publish newspapers, write stories.

Share experiences with friends or adults.

Use audio-visual equipment such as tape recorders.

Make own filmstrips.

#11

ENHANCE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Infants/Younger Toddlers:

Allow infants' self-initiated motor development such as rolling, sitting, walking at their own pace.

Provide open carpeted space as well as hard surfaces such as wood floors for crawling.

Provide low sturdy furniture for child to pull up self or hold on to while walking.

Provide accessible outdoor activities for infants.

Provide simple objects infants may reach for and grasp.

Allow non-mobile infants to move and breathe comfortably, lying freely on their backs while looking about, kicking, reaching, practicing eye-hand coordination.

Allow mobile infants to move about freely, play with and explore a safe environment.

Provide time, space and objects (ramps, platforms, low steps) for toddlers' active play such as sitting, walking, climbing, jumping.

Provide toddlers objects for carrying, such as baskets, large empty plastic bottles, balls.

Provide toddlers simple puzzles, nesting toys, stacking toys, pop-bead, balls.

Older Toddlers/Preschoolers:

Provide time and space for active play such as jumping, running, balancing, climbing, riding tricycles.

Provide creative movement activity using obstacle course or activity, songs and records.

Provide fine-motor activities such as stacking rings, pop-beads, pegboards and puzzles for toddlers; add lacing and wood working for preschoolers.

School-agers:

Provide opportunities to get physical exercise, use variety of outdoor equipment.

Encourage participation in-group games, individual and team sports.

Provide fine motor activities and hobbies, such as sewing, macrame, pottery, leatherwork, carpentry.

#12

ENCOURAGE AND DEMONSTRATE SOUND HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITIONAL PRACTICES

All Ages:

**Cook and serve a variety of nutritious foods.
Discuss good nutrition.
Do activities to develop safety awareness in the program, home and community.
Encourage health practices such as washing hands, brushing teeth, getting regular exercise and enough rest.
Talk about visiting a doctor, dentist.
For infants/toddlers: describe routine health activities as they are implemented.
For school-agers: include discussion of life skills.**

#13

ENCOURAGE CREATIVE EXPRESSION AND APPRECIATION FOR THE ARTS

Infants/Younger Toddlers:

**Use occasional music for movement, singing or listening.
Sing to babies, appreciate infants' vocalization and sounds.
Display interesting things to look at.**

**PROVIDE TIME AND SPACE FOR MOVEMENT AND PLAY.
ENCOURAGE SCRIBBLING WITH CRAYONS.**

Older Toddlers/Preschoolers:

**Do creative art activities such as, brush painting, drawing, collage and play dough.
Provide time and space for dancing movement activities, creative dramatics.
Do musical activities such as singing, listening to records, playing instruments.
Most art activities are offered as an exploratory process rather than to produce a product.
Adult-made models, patterns and pre-drawn form are used infrequently.**

School-agers:

**Provide planned and spontaneous activities in arts and crafts such as, mural and easel painting, ceramics, carpentry, weaving.
Encourage dancing, creative dramatics, record playing, singing, playing instruments.**

#14

RESPECT CULTURAL DIVERSITY

All Ages:

Provide materials, images and experiences that reflect diverse cultures that children may not likely see, as well as those that represent their family life and cultural group.

Initiate discussions and hands-on activities to build appreciation for differences and counter biases.

Talk positively about each child's physical characteristics, family and cultural heritage.

Avoid stereotyping of any group through materials, object, language.

Cook and serve foods from children's various contemporary cultures.

Celebrate holidays of various cultures reflected in the group.

Read books, display pictures of various cultures.

Invite parents and other visitors to share arts, crafts, music, dress, and stories of various cultures.

Take trips to museums, cultural resources of community.

Infuse all curriculum topics with diverse cultural perspectives, avoiding a "tourist" approach.

#15

ROUTINE TASKS SUCH AS DIAPERING, TOILETING, EATING, DRESSING AND SLEEPING ARE HANDLED IN A RELAXED AND INDIVIDUAL MANNER.

Routine tasks are used as opportunities for pleasant conversation and playful interaction to bring about children's learning.

Self-help skills are encouraged as children are ready.

Routines are tailored to children's needs and rhythms as much as possible.

Respecting infants' individual sleeping schedules, providing alternatives to preschoolers who are early risers, providing school-agers with a place to rest if they choose, respecting school-agers' increasing interest in personal grooming.

Modifications are made in the environment and staffing patterns for children with special needs. Staff make appropriate professional referrals where necessary.

When disabled, developmentally delayed, or emotionally disturbed children are served, staff are aware of the identified diagnosed special needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans.

Individual education plans (IEPs) as required by P.L.94-142 and/or P.L.99-457 are developed and implemented in a developmentally appropriate manner. Therapy is developed appropriately and incorporated within classroom activities as much as possible, rather than removing the child from the classroom. Parents are involved in development and use of individual education plans. Staff address the needs of parents of children with special needs.

#16

THE DAILY SCHEDULE PROVIDES A BALANCE OF ACTIVITIES IN CONSIDERATION OF THE CHILD'S TOTAL DAILY EXPERIENCE (WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE PROGRAM) WITH ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING DIMENSIONS OF SCHEDULING.

All age groups play outdoors daily, weather permitting.
The schedule provides for alternating periods of quiet and active play.
A balance of large muscle and small muscle activity is provided.
More than one option for group activity (individual, small group or large group) is available to children most of the day. Infants and toddlers are not expected to function as a large group.
A balance of child-initiated and staff-initiated activity is provided.
The amount of time spent in staff-initiated, large group activity is limited.

#17

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT ARE AVAILABLE TO INFANTS, TODDLERS, PRESCHOOLERS AND SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN. MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT THAT PROJECT HETEROGENEOUS RACIAL, SEXUAL AND AGE ATTRIBUTES ARE SELECTED AND USED.

Infants:

Simple, lightweight, easily washable toys such as, containers, balls, pop-beads, nesting cups, action-reaction toys.
Cuddly toys, toys to mouth such as teethingers, rings.
Pictures of real objects.
Crawling area, Sturdy furniture to pull up self.

Toddlers:

Push and pull toys.
Stacking toys, large wooden beads/spools/cubes.
Sturdy picture books, music, pounding bench.
Simple puzzles, play telephone, dolls, pretend toys.
Large paper, crayons.
Sturdy furniture to hold on to while walking.
Sand and water toys.

Preschoolers:

Active play equipment for climbing and balancing, unit blocks and accessories.
Puzzles, manipulative toys, picture books, records, musical instruments.
Art materials such as, finger and tempera paints, crayons, scissors and paste.
Dramatic play materials such as dolls, dress-up clothes and props, child-sized furniture, puppets.
Sand and water toys.

School-agers:

Active play equipment and materials such as, bats and balls for organized games.
Construction materials for woodworking.
Unit blocks and accessories for blocks such as, figures, signs, cars and trees.
Complex manipulative toys (connecting or interlocking toys, jigsaw puzzles).

Materials for hobby and art projects, science projects.

Materials for dramatics, cooking, books, records, musical instruments, board and card games.

#18

STAFF PROVIDE A VARIETY OF DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES AND MATERIALS THAT ARE SELECTED TO EMPHASIZE CONCRETE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND TO ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING GOALS.

- a. Foster positive self-concept.
- b. Develop social skills.
- c. Encourage children to think, reason, question and experiment.
- d. Encourage language development.
- e. Enhance physical development and skills.
- f. Encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutritional practices.
- g. Encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts,
- h. Respect cultural diversity.

#19

STAFF CONDUCT SMOOTH AND UNREGIMENTED TRANSITIONS BETWEEN ACTIVITIES. CHILDREN ARE NOT ALWAYS REQUIRED TO MOVE FROM ONE ACTIVITY TO ANOTHER AS A GROUP. TRANSITIONS ARE PLANNED AS A VEHICLE FOR LEARNING.

Young children are always learning from both planned and unplanned activities. Transitions between activities are integrated into the program as learning opportunities. Children should be encouraged to help during transition times. Transitions should be carefully planned: children should be given advance notice to prepare for change; transitions should be gradual rather than abrupt; and waiting should be minimized. Lines are rarely necessary and are to be discouraged. Routine tasks are incorporated into the program as a means of furthering children's learning, self-help and social skills. Routines such as diapering, toileting, eating, dressing and sleeping are handled in a relaxed, reassuring and individualized manner based on developmental needs. Staff plan with parents to make toileting, feeding and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children. Provision is made for children who are early risers and for children who do not nap.

#20

PARENT CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are offered twice a year, in the fall and again in the spring. Conferences can be held more often as needed by the parent and teacher. Written reports of the conferences are kept in each child's permanent file. The conference report involves the child's physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.

DAILY SCHEDULE: INFANTS

Hours: 7:00-6:00

Each infant is on his/her own schedule. We do not make any infant conform to a general schedule.

Each infant does follow/or is involved in the following activities as his/her parents and staff deem appropriate.

Arrival: Greet caregiver/parent - exchange written and verbal information about the babies day and night before.

Each infant can crawl, move, swing, be rocked, cuddled, talked to, sung to, read books to.

Each infant can play freely with any and all of the materials in the room, infant manipulatives, teething, soft cuddly toys, sorting, stacking toys, etc.

Each infant can nap as needed during the day.

Each infant will be fed, formula, breast milk or whole milk, solids and snacks as they are needed or indicated by the infant's behavior or parents suggested schedules.

Older infants will have several activities added to their schedule as they show interest or approach moving to the toddler program - books, puppets, puzzles, flannel board, songs, crayons, markers, push and pull toys, large muscle, climbing toys, outdoor play and walks.

Generally, our total room schedule is:

Arrival, exchange of information, music is played throughout the day.

Play and interaction/diaper changing.

Morning nap, snacks/feedings; play and interaction/diaper changing.

Lunch; Afternoon nap; Snack; Play and interaction/diaper changing.

Departure/exchange of information.

DAILY SCHEDULE: TODDLERS

6:30-9:00	Free Play, Music, Stories
8:30	Music, Singing, Puppets and Flannel Board
9:00	Snack
9:15-10:00	Fine motor activities, puzzles, manipulatives, art activities, blocks, small group work, sand and water play (Diaper changed as needed)
10:00-10:45	Outdoor/Large Motor, Play Yard, Walks
11:00-11:30	Large Motor – Puppets/Stories
11:30-12:30	Lunch
12:30-2:30	Nap Time
2:30-2:45	Snack (Diapers Changed)
3:00-3:45	Fine motor activities, Art Creative Movement, Puzzles Manipulatives, Blocks, Small Group Work.
3:45-4:30	Outdoor Play
4:30-5:00	Large muscle/free play
5:00-5:30	Stories/snack/music/puppets
5:30-6:00	Videos or books

DAILY SCHEDULE - PRESCHOOL

6:30-8:30	Activities include: puzzles, books, blocks, small manipulatives, art materials, dramatic play, puppets music and large muscle.
8:30-11:30	8:30-9:00 Story/Music 9:00-9:15 Large Group 9:15 Snack 9:15-10:30 Work Time Sensorial Math Language Practical Life Science Writing Art Geography Small Group Work 10:30-11:15 Outside/Large Motor
11:15-12:30	Lunch
12:30-2:30	Nap-free play for non-nappers after $\frac{1}{2}$ hour rest.
2:30	Snack
2:45-3:30	Outside/Large Motor
3:30-5:30	Arts, creative dramatics, story, music, sand & water play, free play/outdoor play
5:30-6:00	Videos and books (individual)

DAILY SCHEDULE: KINDERGARTEN AND SCHOOL AGE

6:30-9:00	Activities include: puzzles, books, blocks, small manipulatives, art materials, dramatic play, puppets, large muscle, games, snack.
9:00-11:30	9:00-9:30 Large Group 9:30-11:00 Work Time Sensorial Language Math Writing Science Art Geography Dramatic Play Small Group Work
11:30-12:30	Lunch
12:30-1:30	Outside Play/ Large Motor
1:30-2:30	Rest Time
2:30-3:00	Free time/Snack
3:00-3:45	Outside/Large Motor
3:45-4:30	Art/Music/Drama
4:30-5:30	Stories/Group Time/Games, Dramatic Play, Puppets, Books
5:30-6:00	Video or Books (individual)