



dubuque **montessori** school
Loving Children Since 1968

The Sandpaper Letter

October 2011

Contact

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Office Hours

Monday	7:15-1:00
Tuesday	7:15-4:00
Wednesday	7:15-1:00
Thursday	7:15-1:00
Friday	7:15-1:00

Mission

Dubuque Montessori School, a parent-run, not for profit 501(c)3 corporation, brings together children of all social, economic and cultural backgrounds in an atmosphere that encourages children to develop to their fullest potential, using proven, child-directed Montessori methods and materials.

Dates to Remember

October 7
 School Closed/All Staff Inservice

October 9
 SCRIP Orders Due by Noon

October 17
 Parent/Board Meeting 6:45 PM

October 23
 SCRIP Orders Due by Noon

October 25
 Mother's Night 6:00-7:30 PM

A Message from Our Director

Happy October!

It was nice to see so many of you for Popsicles by the Playground. The weather could not have been more perfect! Special thanks to our Parent Club Chairperson Jennifer Webber and her family for hosting this fun event.

As we settle into our second month of school, the children remain very busy exploring in their Montessori environments. When preparing the Montessori learning environment for the children, teachers must give great care. Our aim is to prepare an environment, which cultivates the child's natural desire to learn and allow for self-discovery. This is done with very careful planning and a profound understanding and appreciation of the varying levels of development and interests of each of the children in the classroom.

The materials in the Montessori environment are meticulously placed and can be divided into three main groups; Exercises in Practical Life, Sensorial Materials and Educational Materials with emphasis in Geography, History, Mathematics, Science and Language. In addition, Art and Movement also play an important role in the Montessori environment.

The exercises of practical life consist mainly of three groups; those, which are concerned with the **care of the child's own person**, those that are concerned with the **care of the environment**, and those that promote **grace and courtesy**. Activities in the first group include exercises in dressing and undressing, hand washing, shoe shining, washing clothes, sewing, buttoning, lacing and zipping. Activities in the second group include exercises in mopping a spill, pouring, sweeping, dishwashing, setting the table, sorting, polishing, clothes washing, etc. The materials used for the exercises in the first two groups must be in accord with the child's physical and mental development. They must not be too big or too small and they must not be too simple or too complex. Activities in the third group consist of walking the line, carrying objects as well as manners. Lessons of grace and courtesy are practiced daily in the Montessori environment as well as exercises in self-control. The "Silence Game" is a favorite among the children. This fun exercise builds the child's ability to gain control over his/herself and helps the teacher track progress.

The importance of the exercises in practical life cannot be overstated and when well done, promote the coordination of movement, order, diligence and independence. Skills which are vitally important to the child's future success in the other areas of the Montessori classroom, their future educational experiences and life!

When reflecting on your child's Montessori experience, please remember that Montessori is a process-oriented method of education involving manipulation of materials and hands-on experiences. Your child will not necessarily bring "work" home each week. Watch the mailbag for the weekly sheets that are sent home by your child's teacher. This will help keep you informed on what is new and exciting in the classroom and serve as an impetus for discussion with your child.

As always, thank you for entrusting us with your very precious children.

~Beth Gilbreath

The Positive Effects of Learning about the Environment

Did you know that learning about the natural world benefits your child as well as our planet? A great environmental education promotes interest in and engagement with the natural world and encourages the next generation of conservationists who will protect our precious natural resources.

Environmental education can also benefit your child academically. Here's a fun little quiz to test your knowledge.

Environmental education has been shown to improve student performance in which of the following disciplines:

- A. Science
- B. Reading
- C. Social Studies
- D. Math
- E. All of the above.

The correct answer is E. All of the above.

Numerous studies have shown that students at schools using some kind of environment-based curriculum do better academically than their peers at traditional schools, or show improvement after the introduction of environment-based education. According to a 2005 study for the California Department of Education, sixth-graders' scores on a science knowledge test improved by 27% after participating in just a week-long outdoor education program! And, scores remained higher 6-10 weeks after the program, according to the report from the American Institutes for Research.

Part of being "environmentally literate" also means getting kids outdoors, a proven way to help combat both physical and psychological health concerns like childhood obesity, asthma, depression and ADHD (Source: www.earthshare.org).

Developing a love of the natural world begins in early childhood and the benefits can last a lifetime. So let's all take advantage of these beautiful fall days and spend some time outdoors with our children. One fun idea to try at home is having a family leaf hunt. Take along a bucket for collecting. Talk about all of the colors and types of leaves you find. Press the leaves using squares of cut cardboard and rubber bands or by placing them inside an old book. Once dry, you can glue the leaves onto paper to make a natural collage.



Fall Fundraiser

We are pleased to announce a COLORFUL way to help support our school this year with super cute trendy bags by MixedBag Designs. They are a great quality, very useful, a GREAT gift giving idea AND great for our environment –reduce, reuse, recycle! Our school keeps 50% of every dollar collected. These funds are used for enrichment programs and activities that benefit your student.

- Go Green! Great for the school and community
- The "Million Use" bag...Eco "chic" reusable tote bags.
- High quality, durable and wipe-able ... Lots of sizes & designs to choose from
- Great for shopping, travel, toy, beach, project bag, gift giving (Holidays SOON!)
- All orders are PREPAY. There is NO sales tax. Cash, Check or Money Orders please.
- Include Students Name & Classroom Teacher on check & order

LAST DAY TO TURN IN ORDERS: October 26

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Dubuque Montessori School

Please remember to clip and save **BOX TOP\$ FOR EDUCATION** and **SWISS VALLEY CASH FOR CAPS** for Dubuque Montessori School. Please send your collections to school with your child at anytime. Thanks for your support!

Thank you for supporting **DMS Fall Fundraisers!** Questions about Fall Fundraising? Please contact Amy Van Otterloo at anbvo@mchsi.com or 557-1375.

Parent Education Night

Join us on National Family Literacy Day for “Encouraging Literacy in Your Home,” Tuesday, November 1st, 6:00-7:15 p.m., presented by Christine M. Quintana.

Fellow Montessori mom Christine Quintana will be presenting “Encouraging Literacy in Your Home”. Christine holds a Master of Science in Elementary Education with a specialization in Early Childhood Education. She has particular training and experience in working with early childhood literacy programs. The parent portion of the evening will run from 6-7 p.m. with the children joining us upstairs at 7 p.m. for a special family story time. Register today and let's get reading!



Welcome to Hannah Simpson!!! Hannah (Allison's younger sister) will be the new staff person in DMS extended day T&TH 2:30-5:30. She will also be working on Mondays over the lunch hour and into late afternoon (11:15-4:00).

Don't forget to check out your teacher's **Wishing Wall!** Can you grant one of their wishes?

KIDS EXPO is Saturday, October 29th! DMS will be there!!

DMS kitchen is always in need of brown paper sacks as part of our food scrap program.

Create-a-Card Fundraising Program

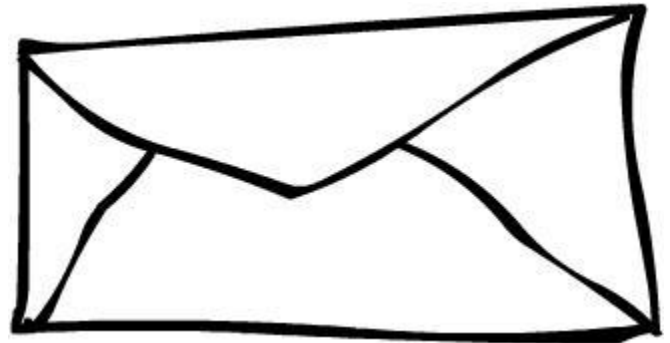
The DMS is embarking on a new fundraising program that engages the creativity of the children at DMS. We are working with a local printer to make personalized note cards using DMS students' artwork.

The 4" x 5-1/2" note cards will feature a full-color print of the children's artwork on the front of the card. Children may choose to include their name, age, and date within the image. The back of the cards will read “Students and Alumni of Dubuque Montessori School.” Cards are printed on high quality card stock and will be shrink-wrapped into packages of 20 cards with envelopes.

These cards could be used for holiday greetings, birthdays, thank you notes, general greetings, or a pack of 20 cards could be given as gifts for relatives.

In addition to being a fundraiser for DMS, this program could be a great self-esteem booster for DMS students. Children feel a great sense of pride when they see their creations turned into a professionally produced product.

In the coming weeks we will be inserting into mailbags manila envelopes containing a letter to parents with a form to indicate their intent to participate, paper, creative guidelines, and an order form to return with the completed artwork. We also plan to create a sample card, which we will post at DMS.



We would sincerely like to thank. . .

Chad Walker for taking care of DMS's technology issues

Janelle Koepke for volunteering to be DMS's Box Tops For Education and Swiss Valley Cash For Caps Coordinator

Jami Slater for being DMS's SCRIP Coordinator

To The DMS Board of Directors/Parent Club for the Back-to-School luncheon held for our teachers in August.

Thanks to the following people who helped put new mulch on our playground before the start of the school year:

Amy, P.J., and Mary Edwards
Amy, Josh, and Anna Van Otterloo
Jack Benda
Will Buse
Jack Haugen
Nick Topping
Maggie, Rebecca, and Owen May
Christine and Hector Quintana
Kate, Natalie, and Clara McDermott

Thanks to all DMS families who purchased Schwan's products for our fundraiser.

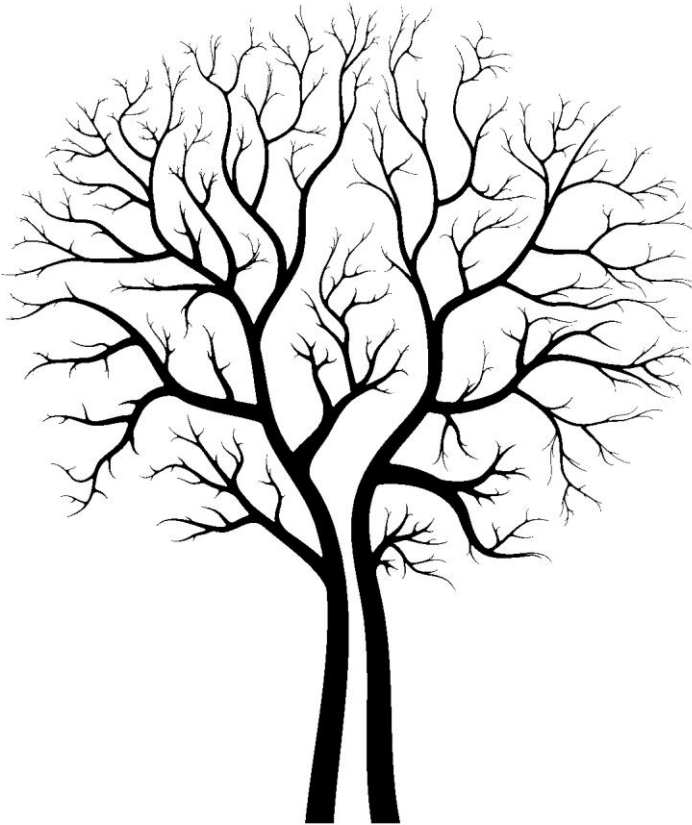
Thanks to Luke and Sheila Duve, grandparents of Olive, for taking a day off work to do chores around DMS! They cleaned windows, hauled things to the dump and placed a new sun visor in the office!

Parent club would like to THANK everyone who attended POPSICLES BY THE PLAYGROUND!! We had a fantastic day with amazing attendance! It was wonderful to see DMS families getting to know one another!

Parent Club would also like to extend their gratitude to everyone who signed up to help with Staff Monthly Powerful Positives and Staff In Service Luncheons:

Jen Hayes
Stacia McDermott
Emily Montgomery
Angela Steve
Megan Savoie
Heather Huckleberry
Keli Keyes
Libbie Weber Bettis
Megan Savoie
Emily Montgomery

Thank you very much!



"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." – Aesop