



April 2024



# Toddler Times



March was tumultuous weather-wise but we greatly enjoyed breaking out! We have been having lots of fun both inside and out, with new materials, blooming minds and budding friendships. We thank you all for being so tolerant of our *mucky* yard. We all know how important and great mud play is for preschool kids, but still— **thank you for tolerating all the mud.** We are working on solutions and to start with have mud pants that we will provide and wash for anyone who would like.

A new family will be joining us April 22! Welcome Zeffie McCCasey and their parents, Laretta Dolch and Indi McCCasey. Do the parents' names sound familiar? Laretta grew up here and Indi is the ED @ Ithaca Public Education Initiative.

## 2023-2024 Tuition and Enrollment Policies Changes

### Calendar

Spring Recess

Closed April 1-5 & 8th

OPEN 4/10 ICSD Holiday



April					
M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12	
15	16	17	18	19	
22	23	24	25	26	
29	30				

Although this only affects a few, everyone should know...

Effective immediately, new enrollment is limited to 5 days/week.

Current 4 day/week children can continue part-time until September, adding days as needed. Effective September 2024, all spots will be for 5 day/week enrollment.

### Parent Support & Social Time

We had a great time at our March meeting! The group would like to gather monthly alternating parent-coordinated social gatherings with a bi-monthly time for parent support.

**Anyone up for coordinating a social in April ?**

Our next Parent Support Group will be Wed. 5/8, 5-6:30 @ Boatyard Grill \* hopefully the white chairs will be out!



Tuition is due early this month! **If possible, please bring your payment by 3/29.** Please let Jude know if you need to make a different plan. Thanks!

## Practical Life

Practical Life is the name Maria Montessori used to refer to the area of the curriculum dedicated to *Care of the Self*, *Care of the Environment*, *Grace and Courtesy*, and helping the child to refine *Elementary Movements* and aimed at developing *concentration, coordination, independence and order*.

**Care of the Self** is the ability to dress oneself, including mastery of clothes fasteners; the development of personal hygiene habits, inspiring artistic creativity and refining the manipulation of eye-hand coordination and fine motor control. Practical Life activities involve *pouring, spooning, twisting, squeezing, stringing and lacing* and *food preparation*

**Care of the Environment** includes dusting, cleaning, washing, flower arranging, taking care of plants and the natural world, gardening

**Grace and Courtesy** involves greeting, offering, accepting, apologizing, table manners, and general kindness towards others

**Elementary Movements** consists of navigating the room, activities like walking, sitting at the table, getting up and tucking in your chair, holding/carrying/putting down/picking up/returning materials to the shelf



**Purposeful Work** inspires engagement. It includes activities that give children a sense of purpose and allow them to more deeply pursue their interests. Activities that may be considered purposeful by the child change as their developmental needs and interests change. It may be learning to clean the table today, and how to cook in the future.

**Control of Error** fosters success and independent learning. Controlling error when learning to pour means not filling the cup—filling it just a little; having just enough water in the pitcher to be soaked up by that thirsty sponge or just enough in cup to be drawn into the baster.

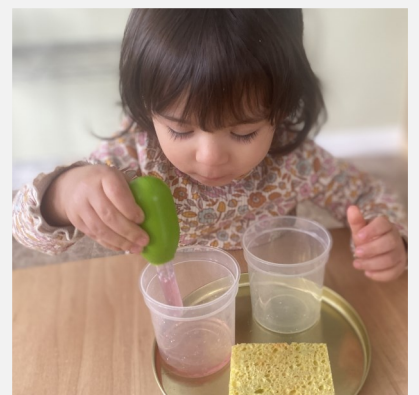


## Self-Correcting Materials

A puzzle is an example of a self-correcting material. The box contains just the needed pieces. It is clear when it is done correctly.

## Open-Ended Materials

There is no one way to explore or use open-ended materials. The pounding work Ellie is doing here is open-ended. So is sand play, art, building a tower with blocks, playing with a doll.





## Ball = Sphere & Diamond = Rhombus?

Maria Montessori used the idea of a **spiral curriculum**, although the term was coined in 1960, by Jerome Bruner. A spiral curriculum is designed to connect a child's prior learning with new learning. Major topics and skill areas are revisited with increasing complexity throughout a child's education.

There are many examples of how this is applied throughout the curriculum:

- starting with concrete experiences and moving to the abstract and symbolic
- going from 3D to 2D, using objects, then photos of real objects and building vocabulary by using accurate nomenclature i.e. learning the names of geometric solids and plane figures  
*a ball = sphere and a diamond = rhombus?*



### Bead Stair

The *Bead Stair* gives a sensorial and visual sense of number.

Children first sort the bead bars from smallest to largest. As they pinch and count the beads, children learn to pinch each bead once and to say one number for each bead, gaining *a sense of number and learn 1-1 correspondence*.

### Vocabulary Enrichment



One of the things I love about Montessori is its integrated emphasis on concrete learning.

In regards to language development, research shows that children's vocabulary skills are related to their self-regulation skills (Vallotton & Ayoub, 2011). The seemingly simple task of learning words has broad implications for overall development and well-being.

When it comes to learning to read, children progress from matching object:object, to matching object:picture, then picture:picture, picture:word, learn letter phonetics, word building, then decoding and ultimately reading.

The 3-part cards shown use picture:word matching to help children begin to distinguish letter and word shapes.



# April Curriculum



## Primary Themes

- Continue with Spring: signs of Spring outside
- Natural world, prepare to plant seeds from CACFP
- What plants need, sequencing their growth
- Worms, Bees
- Animals and Their Young

## Activities

- Playdough:  
flower cutters/tortilla press
  - Gluing, painting, printing
  - Color mixing
  - Care of environment:  
pouring, sweeping
  - Initial sounds, sand tray, rhyming
  - Counting and number games
  - Grace and courtesy
- Flower VEC
  - Seeds
  - Birds:  
identifying calls
  - Emotions
  - Recording selves
  - 1-10 Felt peas!  
short bead stair



## Books

- A Day
  - Lots of Feelings
  - Caps for Sale
  - Bees
  - Birds
  - Thank You Earth
  - Monkeys Jumping on Bed
  - What's the Weather?
  - Saltarin y la primavera
  - Tingalayo
- and more!



## Animals & Their Young

The interactive Enchanted Learning site will get you up to speed on animal nomenclature! This month we will focus on the accurate names for animals and their young. We will continue to refer to this table over time!

### Names of Animals, Babies and Groups

Image	Name	Male	Female	Baby	Group of Animals
	Alligator	bull	cow	hatchling	congregation, pod (of young)
	Alpaca	male	female	cria	herd
	Antelope	buck	doe	calf	herd
	Ape	male	female	baby	shrewdness

## Songs

- If You're Happy and You Know It
- Rain songs:  
Ants Go Marching  
Puddle Boots
- Long Tail Feathers
- Robin Red Breast
- Maria Isabel: beach, scarves

and more!