



WHY CHOOSE MONTESSORI OVER TRADITIONAL SCHOOL?

Circle of Friends Montessori School
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Like most parents, you have probably had days when your child returned home from school, and when prompted, "How was school today?", replied with a shrug and a bored-sounding, "fine." But perhaps there were rare days when your child bounded off the bus or into the car from the pick-up line, bursting to tell you what he or she learned in class that day. Montessori schools are unique in that they prioritize engaged instruction, focusing on inspiring children to discover for themselves the joys of learning. Montessori schools differ from traditional schools in three key ways: their philosophy, physical classroom, and pedagogical methods. Understanding these differences highlights some of the benefits of Montessori over traditional schools.

Philosophy: Montessori education is based on the philosophy that all children have endless potential, unique talents, and individual learning styles. Unlike traditional schools, which typically focus on achieving learning goals and fostering general interpersonal skills, Montessori aims for a holistic approach which encourages personalized, child-centered instruction, promotes confidence as students recognize and celebrate their uniqueness and potential (and that of others), and aids personal development that invigorates academic development.

Physical classroom: Montessori classrooms are deliberate in matching the classroom's physical space with the philosophy described above. Montessori classrooms are inclusive and mix-aged, allowing students of different ages to learn from each other. Most Montessori classrooms utilize open floor space and mats or cushions for students to complete hands-on activities. Shelving or cabinet units hold activities, separated into sections including mathematics, language arts, practical life, geography, and science. Montessori classrooms often extend outdoors; thoughtfully arranged playground structures, trees, paths, and gardens offer spaces for play and reflection.

Pedagogical methods: Finally, Montessori schools use unique pedagogical methods. Teachers act as guides to discovery rather than direct transmitters of knowledge. Hands-on activities are the basis of learning; for instance, sandpaper letters or solar system models help students utilize visual and kinesthetic learning techniques to grasp concepts. These pedagogical methods have been shown to be effective for all learners but are particularly helpful for children with cognitive or physical delays or disabilities, children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and children with other challenges who may struggle in traditional classrooms.

So, why should parents choose Montessori schools over traditional schools? If you want a place in which your child's uniqueness - including his or her challenges - will be celebrated, in which your child will discover the joy of learning, then Montessori is for you.

