

# The Montessori Lexis

September 4, 2009 The Montessori School of Bowling 515 Sandridge Road Bowling Green Ohio 419-352-4203

## EDUCATION FOR PEACE

We have the signs in our yard, we've seen the new website, we've heard the slogan, **but just what does "Education for Peace" mean?**

The word "peace" has many different connotations and definitions in our culture and world. But for our school, peace boils down to three main ideas.

- 1. Peace means taking care of ourselves.** At this school, we strive to educate the whole child (mentally, physically, and emotionally) by guiding the children to learn to take care of themselves. This starts by teaching them to independently choose their work and to put it back on the shelf when they are finished; to learn practical skills, such as washing, spooning, sorting, etc. so that the child has the abilities to be successful with life skills. Taking care of themselves develops into time-management and organizational skills as they plan and prepare for assignments and projects. Another important aspect of taking care of themselves is learning to navigate their emotions and learn when it's time to take a peaceful moment away from the group, or how to express themselves in writing or in appropriate speech.
- 2. Peace means taking care of each other.** At our school, children are taught from the first day of school how to prepare their work for the next child and how to use respectful and calm words to resolve conflicts. Teachers are highly trained in peaceful conflict management and constantly model a calm and loving manner. Students use objects like the peace rose to engage another student in a loving way to resolve the hurt feelings. Older students learn to do peer mediation and work on the lifelong skills of listening, speaking respectfully, and finding a solution through compromise and diplomacy. What incredible skills they will have as adults!
- 3. Peace means taking care of the earth.** Students develop a sense of wonder for the universe. Students are encouraged to ask big questions about the earth's formation, the enormity of the universe, and the scale of time that life has been on the planet. Students are taught to love and care for our beautiful planet and to appreciate their unique place in space and time. Even in the early childhood classroom, students learn earth science concepts on their birthdays when they hold a model of the earth and orbit around the sun to mark each year of their life.

**Besides all the ways already mentioned, how can I see peace in the classroom?**

### **1. Opening Group/Circle Time**

Each classroom has a circle or group time where the entire class comes together. In the early years, the teacher provides a curriculum demonstration and also guides the children through community building and peace activities. By upper elementary,



the students are “in charge” of group time and organize and prepare the day. Included at all levels is a chance for students to express who they are concerned for, what they are thinking about, and time for a quiet moment of reflective thought. Sometimes students share about a loved one who passed away, or a mom they are worried for because she has a big meeting, or a friend who has a special celebration, but always students are taught to think about other people.

## 2. The Peace Corner

Each and every classroom has a peace corner with introspective materials, quiet music or books, and sensory materials. This provides a haven for any student to choose to go to when he or she needs a moment for reflection, quiet, and *peace*. Many families have shared with us that they have benefitted from putting a peace corner in their homes. Even as adults, finding a quiet place in our busy world is a gift.

## 3. Conflict Management

Students are taught to resolve conflicts through “I” statements, to listen to their friends, to share their honest thoughts calmly by taking turns, and then to negotiate a reasonable solution.

## 4. Loving Teachers

Teachers are trained in positive and effective means of communication with students that are appropriate to the students’ developmental abilities and are always respectful.

## 5. Community-Building and Peace Activities

As part of the curriculum, students do a variety of peace activities, such as the classroom peace bundles, the peace candle, the Black Elk story, as well as numerous community-building activities that promote a unified and peaceful classroom.

## 6. Consistent Ground Rules

Students learn the ground rules of the classroom during orientation and the early days of school and these rules remain remarkably consistent throughout the entire school, including the special subjects, and in the extended care rooms. Ground rules are always stated positively (“We walk in the hallways” instead of “Don’t Run.”) and with the entire school population in mind.

## 7. Peaceful Transitions

Our school adheres to Maria Montessori’s multi-age groupings that are based in long-standing child development research. When children follow the natural progression from early childhood, to lower elementary, to upper elementary, they enjoy guided transitions that are peaceful and exciting.

Excerpts of this article were inspired by Paulette Meier’s song “What does Peace mean?” on her album *Come Join the Circle* which is widely used in peace curriculums and Montessori classrooms.

What does Peace mean?  
Peace means taking care  
of ourselves  
each other  
and the earth



## 8. The Labyrinth

Behind the office, and just north of the playgrounds, is our school labyrinth. Labyrinths are ancient, cross-cultural, peace-making entities. Walking on the labyrinth path gives you a time for reflection and meditation. Please enjoy the labyrinth with your children and experience the peace that it brings.

Montessori School of Bowling Green: Education for Peace!

## Early Childhood

Welcome Back!!!

It is hard to believe the school year has already begun! However, the sound of foot steps in the hall, colorful book bags and slippers in the cubbies and the sounds of laughter and goodbye tears let us know that the school year 2009-2010 has already begun!

We have had such a great time catching up with all of our returning students from last year and are enjoying getting to know the new students as they are becoming familiar with our classroom. Orientation week was a success for us and we cannot thank you enough for your time and patience. We understand that this week must have been very challenging for you as it interfered with daily schedules and work commitments. However, the week was essential for the new children to become acclimated to the classroom and for the returning students to review the classroom rules and assist their new friends.

We have lots of new and exciting things planned for this school year and we are thrilled to get started. The first few weeks we will focus on building our classroom community using peace activities and conflict resolution strategies. Understanding and following the rules of the classroom and learning how to effectively work and communicate peacefully with peers will help build a strong foundation in our child-centered classroom. Our goal is to encourage every child to be independent by creating a setting in which they have structured boundaries and multiple choices to make within those boundaries.

We are very excited to see your child grow in character and skill throughout the course of this year. If you have any questions please feel free to ask at anytime!

~The Early Childhood Staff

## Lower Elementary

Welcome back to another wonderful year. We have 24 excited learners in class and they are off to an excellent start. They have been introduced to rhyming work, living and non-living objects, the calendar, the seven continents, parts of the tree, addition fact practice, building numbers, and sequencing. We have also been working on reading, handwriting, and math assessments. It's been a busy first couple of weeks. Thank you for sending us your children, we are very happy to be starting another peaceful community.

One peace activity we do each year is to demonstrate the strength of a community versus standing alone. We did this through our peace stick ceremony, in which each child placed their own stick in a bundle that was then tied together, to show each of us working as one.

We would like to thank all of you for bringing in school supplies. It helps us teach your children cleanliness, and responsibility. We look forward to the possibilities the year holds.

~The Lower Elementary Staff

## Upper Elementary

“School is going great.” “I am very excited about the new 4<sup>th</sup> grade in our class.” “So far my favorite subject is Math.” These are some of the comments we read from the papers of our students when we asked them to write on the topic, how is school going? We busied ourselves the first week setting up our community. We decided what jobs needed to be done and made a job chart. We brainstormed a list of rules we felt we needed to keep our classroom safe and then did some collaborative group work to pick the ones we thought were the most important. We also did some fun “getting to know you” activities.

Now that we have settled into our second week of school our schedule is set. On Mondays we have physical education and music in the afternoon, on Tuesdays we have German in the morning. Wednesday afternoon we have physical education and also visit the library. Thursday afternoon is our art time and on Friday we have music from 11:00-11:45. Please make sure that your child comes to school with the proper footwear to participate in P.E. class on Monday and Wednesday. New to the classroom this year is Muffin Monday. This morning we read *If You Give a Moose a Muffin* by Laura Joffe Numeroff and our snack workers made muffins for the class. We plan to make this a weekly event. What a wonderful way to start the week!

~Deb/Megan/Liz




## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year!

This school year I would like to invite you to visit our physical education class (**Mondays and Wednesdays**). You will see children participating in developmentally appropriate activities that will help increase their physical competence, self-esteem and joy of being physically active no matter what their physical abilities may be.

There are a few issues and suggestions that I have to help ensure the comfort and safety of your child.

1.  **Proper shoes are required to prevent slipping or falling.** Proper footwear includes tennis-type sneakers - those with a flat bottom (no heel) and the foot is fully covered. Clogs, platforms, sandals, dress shoes, boot-like shoes and any heeled shoes are not appropriate types of footwear for Physical Education class.



2. **Proper Clothing** - appropriate for activity that doesn't inhibit movement in any way.
3. **Temporary Medical Conditions** - please send a note with your child if he/she has a temporary condition that will limit their activity.

Thank You,  
Miss Antonia

**Spotlight on Staff – Christin Cable**

Christin is our part-time before care and lunch helper in the Early Childhood rooms. She is a Gibsonburg High School graduate and received her Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education from Owen Community College. She is currently working on her Bachelor’s Degree in Education at Heidelberg University. She has been working with children for eight years. In her spare time she and her fiancé enjoy going to different parks in Ohio, having cookouts, fishing and traveling to Logan County for the holidays.

**Art**

Miss Amanda has requested that each elementary child bring in two rolls of paper towels to the art room. The beautiful projects that your children make also create an artful mess! Thank you in advance!

Also, she needs at least 200 (yes, 200) plastic Gerber baby food containers with lids as soon as possible. If you have a baby or have a friend that uses these containers (see picture below) please bring them in and place them in the basket in the foyer. Any help would be greatly appreciated!

**Calendar of Events**

Labor Day	September 7, 2009
No School	
Open House	September 13, 2009
Evening Conferences	Oct. 15, 2009
Evening Conferences	Oct. 22, 2009
Conference Day	Oct. 23, 2009
No School	



**MSBG Yard Signs**

are available in the front office.

If you are new to the school (welcome to the family!) or didn’t receive one last year, please stop by and pick one up for your yard.

Please visit our website at  
[www.montessorischoolbg.com](http://www.montessorischoolbg.com)

The website features...

- The Latest MSBG News
- Weekly Calendar Events
- Forms
- Photo Gallery
- Montessori Education Video
- Lexis Newsletter and Archives
- And More!