

Montessori at Sundance Square

November 2014



A Chance to Give Back

In the spirit of the holiday season, we will be hosting two charitable activities that will allow children to learn about their community and helping others. In December, we will host a donation drive for families through the women's shelter in Fort Worth. Please feel welcomed to donate items needed including gently used clothing for women and children. We will have more information to come.

Beginning in November, we will help our children to create Holiday Mail for Heroes through the American Red Cross. With many service members and veterans separated from their families this holiday season due to deployments and hospital stays, the American Red Cross Holiday Mail for Heroes (HMFH) program empowers people to "Give Something That Means Something" by sending a card of thanks and support to the members of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families. The cards and personal messages, sent by tens of thousands of Americans, provide a welcome "touch of home" for our troops during the holiday season. Our children may create art work or write messages (with help) that will spread cheer to many deserving men and women. If you'd like to get involved, please let us know!

Thank you all for your participation and generosity in regards to our annual Fall Festival. We raised over \$1000 to help our Bright Spaces within our community as well as our Better Together group.

Important Dates

November 1-30: Parent/Teacher Conferences

November 10-23: Voices of Gratitude: What Are You Thankful For? (see pg. 4 for details)

November 26: Grandparent's Day, *Early Dismissal @ Noon*

November 27-28: Thanksgiving Break – *School Closed*

December 24: AM Holiday Parties, *Early Dismissal @ Noon*

December 25-31: Winter Break, *School Closed*

January 1: New Year's Holiday, *School Closed*

Reasons to Celebrate

Ms. Linda AND Ms. Natasha welcomed healthy baby girls in October. Mamas and babies are doing great and we look forward to having them back soon. Ms. Ariane is enjoying the Primary 2 classroom and has enjoyed giving Linda updates.

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Classroom Highlights



Infants

Our youngest children show their love for music as they give Ms. Sheila their full attention. Babies imitate sounds and experiment with their voices to match pitch and notes. Infants are wired to receive music and discriminate among differences in frequency, melody, and stimuli. Their facial expressions are priceless!



Toddlers

Red Rods – children learn pre-math and spacial skills while practicing physical balance and coordination walking through the path they have created.

Toddlers

Practicing pre-handwriting skills with fine motor movements while talking about shapes, colors and sizes.



Primary

Celebration of Life – a birthday celebration in Montessori tradition. The child is able to be the center of the circle as family shares stories and memories of him/her. Happy birthday to all of our fall birthdays!

READY for SCHOOL Parent News: Measurement

Preschool children like to compare objects or people and often want to figure out which is bigger, longer, or heavier. They especially love to compare themselves to others – who is taller, whose hair is longer, who is the oldest, etc. We can take advantage of these opportunities to help children learn the basics of measurement. Children typically progress through a series of stages in understanding measurement (Copley, 2000):

- 1) Comprehending that objects can be compared and measured and understanding the meaning of questions like “how long is this?,” “how heavy is that?,” etc.
- 2) Making comparisons themselves, such as judging which block is shorter, which rock is heavier, etc.
- 3) Determining an appropriate unit and process for measurement
- 4) Using standard units of measurement (inch, pound, centimeter, etc.)
- 5) Creating and using formulas to help count units

During the preschool and kindergarten years, children primarily focus on stages 1 and 2 and may begin to work on the concept of “unit” in the third step. Steps four and five are typically focused on in the elementary school years.

What kinds of activities encourage the development of measurement in preschool and kindergarten children? Here are a few samples to get you started:

- Use measurement and comparison language frequently in your incidental conversations with your child.
 - “This grapefruit feels really heavy. Is it heavier or lighter than this orange?”
 - “This tablecloth is too short for this table. Let’s find a longer one.”
 - “Do you think this pitcher will hold all the juice?”
- Include language that compares time (earlier, later, tomorrow, next week); temperature (warmer, colder); and capacity (holds more, holds less).
- Consider introducing non-standard measurement. “This fire truck is four blocks long.” Offer children opportunities to practice non-standard measurement. “Let’s see how many hands long this rug is.”
- You can also incidentally introduce standard measurement language (Talk about gallons, liters, yards, meters, etc. during your daily life as you pour milk or juice, measure wood for a home improvement project, etc.)
- You might provide a plastic bin filled with water or cornmeal as a place for your child to practice with volume and capacity. As children pour from a tall, thin cylinder to a short, fat cylinder, for example, they are developing a concept that Jean Piaget called “conservation.” If a child understands the concept of conservation of volume, he/she knows that a tall, thin container can hold the same as a short, fat container. Piaget’s research showed that children learned to conserve around age seven or later. More recent research has been showing children conserving earlier than that.
- Provide tools for measurement for children’s easy access throughout the day (rulers, meter sticks, bathroom scales, etc.).

Reference:

Copley, J. V. (2000). *The Young Child and Mathematics*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Bright Horizons News



Submit your art during Nov. 10-23, and it will be displayed in a Bright Space!



Voices of Gratitude: What Are You Thankful For? is an opportunity for the Bright Horizons community, parents and teachers alike, to come together and support the **Bright Horizons Foundation For Children®** by submitting art that illustrates the answer to “What are you thankful for?” The resulting piece of collaborative artwork will be proudly displayed in all **Bright Spaces®** (Bright Spaces are warm, safe, and enriching spaces in shelters and agencies across the country that allow children to heal from trauma through play and experience the joy of childhood).

The Bright Horizons community will be invited to upload the artwork via social media or email it to thankful@brighthorizons.com. Submissions will be accepted from November 10-23. Participation is optional.

How to Grow a Giver this Holiday Season: Family Resources for Teaching Compassion



As a parent, you try to raise your child to become an active, compassionate member of society. [Growing Givers](#) is a resource to help you find age-appropriate activities, projects, and volunteer opportunities to encourage empathy, caring, and compassion for the world and all its people. *Growing Givers* offers ideas for how you can promote empathy and social awareness through your daily interactions and modeling with children and through service opportunities from home or out in the community.

As fall and winter holidays approach, we’ve collected a list of resources from *Growing Givers* that can help you come up with easy ways to incorporate giving into your family’s routine:

- **(Parenting Blog Posts)** [Family Volunteering: Tips for Finding Ways to Give Back](#), [Teaching Manners and Good Behavior Through Books](#), [How to Raise a Grateful Child](#)—join the conversation on *The Family Room* blog: <http://blogs.brighthorizons.com/familyroom/>.
- **(Community Topics)** [Volunteering with Small Children](#), [Donating Old Toys to Charity](#)
- **(E-family News)** – [The Caring Connection: Teaching Empathy to Children](#), [Raising Caring and Giving Children](#)
- **(Family Matters Series Webinars)** Raising a Socially Responsible Child ([Part I](#) & [Part II](#))—featuring Bright Horizons early education experts and guests from *The Volunteer Family*

Visit www.brighthorizons.com/growinggivers for additional resources and at-home activities to promote empathy and social awareness.