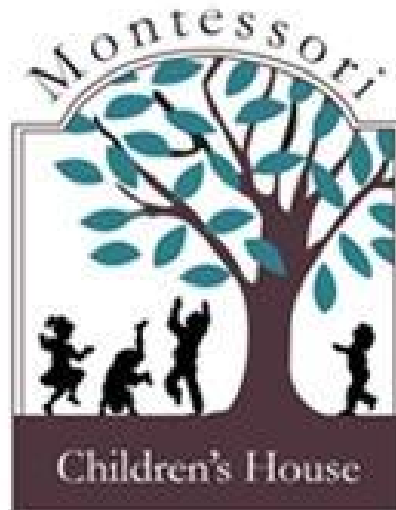


Parent Handbook



Montessori Children's House

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Montessori Children's House

PARENT HANDBOOK

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Mission Statement

Teachers and parents working together to honor and encourage each child's unique potential through high quality care offered in a nurturing, creative and educational environment.

Welcome to *Montessori Children's House* where you will find an enriching, caring environment for children 6 weeks to 3½ years old. Our name was chosen in honor of Dr. Maria Montessori's first school "*Casa Dei Bambini*". Our goal is to create an educational community based on Montessori's educational philosophy and materials. Montessori Children's House has three learning rooms for each age group: infant, toddler, and pre-primary. Our main lesson rooms are where the children have the opportunity to use the Montessori Materials and to receive one on one lessons from their teachers. The second rooms are used for our group circle time, music and movement line work and nap time. Our activity rooms are for arts and craft activities, meals and where we play with our friends. Our curriculum includes excellent fine and gross motor development activities along with sensorial, language arts, numbers, art, music, French and Spanish.

Because children progress through stages of mental growth at different rates, our environment is structured so that children have maximum freedom to gravitate toward materials that enhance their current state of development. Children are encouraged to choose their own activities, with a teacher's support and guidance, if needed. With this freedom to choose, each child develops a sense of responsibility for his or her own actions. The atmosphere of the *Montessori Children's House* fosters the growth of inner discipline and independence that leads to a healthy self-image. By nurturing young children as individuals, we seek to develop confidence, intellectual growth, creativity and joy in learning. We seek to maintain a partnership with the parents of our students

and look forward to working with you in the development and special care of your child.

Montessori Children's House is licensed as a child care center through the Montana Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing Bureau.

School Hours

Morning: 7:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Afternoon: 12:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.

School Day: 7:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Full Day: 7:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m.

Drop-off & Pick-up

Drop-off and pick-up times need to be closely observed by parents. The teachers need time before class for preparation to ensure a smooth and productive day. We ask that you not arrive before 7:45 a.m. or after your scheduled pick-up time. Our circle times are at 8:45 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Children feel included in the program when they start the day together. The children's working day starts at 8:30 a.m.

It is required by the State of Montana that you sign your child in and out each day using your full signature. The tablet is kept in the entry way to your child's classroom. Also, please check brightwheel for information on your child's day.

We reserve the right to charge a late fee of \$10 for every ten minutes a child is late in being picked up. Promptness in the child's life is very important. Children, who arrive late or are picked up late, might feel awkward and uncomfortable. **Please let us know if your child will miss school or be late.**

Separation

If a child has a difficult time separating, it can help to have a parent stay awhile until the child feels more comfortable. It is important for the individual child's needs to be

respected. For most children, this adjustment period will only take a few days. Please let us know what we can do to help make the transition smooth. Our experience has shown that when the parent feels calm and comfortable, the child will also feel comfortable. After the first few days a short, quick drop-off is usually best for most children.

Releases

No child will be released to anyone whose name does not appear on your Emergency Contact Form without your specific instructions. We will not release your child unless we are absolutely sure. Please let us know in advance, and only ask us to release your child to people you have introduced to our staff and who are prepared to show an ID if necessary.

Admissions

Admissions are based on availability of space and determination by the staff that the child is ready to benefit from the environment. Prospective parents are asked to observe the classroom with their child so they may focus on his or her reaction to the environment. Please make an appointment to observe. The minimum enrollment for each child, per week, is two mornings or two afternoons.

Montessori Children's House does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, gender, or religion in the administration of educational policies, admission, scholarship or other school administered programs. *Montessori Children's House* is not affiliated with any political or religious organizations.

Dismissal

We will do our best to work with parents and children to resolve any serious problems. We reserve the right to dismiss a child for any reason, and will do so for one who does not appear to be benefiting from our environment, or who exhibits behavioral patterns that require constant help from our teachers such as biting. For the children's safety, our child-biting policy is as follows: First biting incident, the parent is informed. Second biting incident, the parent is informed and we continue to offer the child extra close attention, assistance and understanding. Third biting incident, a parent needs to stay in the class with the child until the behavior is no longer present. Our experience of teaching this age group has shown that it is best for the teacher to focus on positive

behaviors. To excessively focus on a child's bad habit does not fix the problem. The key is to give the child extra positive attention and this is why we would request your help for this type of situation. In addition, a child may be dismissed if we determine that the parents are unwilling to support the philosophical approach of the school. We reserve the right to dismiss a family whose account is delinquent. If a parent behaves in a disrespectful or belligerent manner toward any member of our staff, we reserve the right to ask that parent to not enter our building and continued infractions could result in removal of the student from our program.

Application and Registration Fee

A non-refundable \$50.00 application fee is due when the application for enrollment is submitted. An annual \$150 registration fee is due at the time your child is accepted into the program. This is a yearly non-refundable fee which holds your child's place in the school.

Tuition

Tuition is due the first day of the month. Payments will be considered late after the 5th and a late fee of \$25 will be assessed if you are more than 5 days late. The same monthly tuition is due each month regardless of the number of days a child attends school. For instance, in December, the school is closed for almost 2 weeks. However, the tuition is the same as the months when a child attends every weekday in the month. No credit can be given for absences due to vacations or illness. Once a schedule is chosen, days cannot be switched. You can request additional "drop-in" days or hours using the form available in the school entrance area.

Written notice must be given 30 days before a child is withdrawn for any reason. Without notice, one month of tuition is forfeited.

Holidays

Re-enrollment

Each Spring, parents will need to reserve a space for the following school year, completing the re-enrollment form and submitting the annual registration fee by the designated due date. After that date, we accept new students to fill any vacancies.

Clothing

Play clothes are encouraged — simple, washable, sturdy and easy to manage. Elastic waistband for pants and Velcro fasteners for shoes are the best for children learning to dress themselves. Please label shoes, and all children's items. **Everything** (except your child!) **needs labeling.**

Personal Property

Each child at Montessori Children's House has a personal storage box. It must be stocked with at least two complete changes of clothing. The box will be placed in his/her cubby each day. Please check the upper basket every day for items like artwork and letters for parents. Ensure that your child has diapers every day. We have some storage available if you prefer bringing a full pack of diapers. Please discourage bringing toys to school. They are often difficult to share and the Montessori materials and environment provide for the necessary mental and physical stimulation for your child. Except for diapers and emergency clothing, all personal items and clothing must be taken home every day.

Lost & Found

A container for lost & found items is kept in the cubby room. Please check it for socks, mittens, etc. Help us by labeling all your child's items.

By the First Day of School, Please Bring:

1. Emergency contact and parental consent form.
2. Copy of Current Immunization Records:
We cannot admit your child without current immunization records or an exemption form. Our license requires that we have the certificate of immunization form on file.
3. Children 6 weeks - 24 months must have a physical exam by a doctor before their first day of school (up to 3 months prior to their 1st day). The pediatric health statement form needs to be completed and signed by a physician.
4. Photo consent form
5. Infant feeding plan form (for students less than 12 months)
6. Over the counter medication authorization form

Personal Items to keep at school

These items must be clearly labeled with your child's name. Montessori Children's House will not be responsible for lost items.

- A. A pair of indoor shoes or slippers. To encourage independence, we prefer shoes that the child can put on themselves. (if old enough)
- B. Every child must have at least two complete changes of clothing (in addition to what they are wearing). Many situations, aside from the obvious toilet mishap, require a change of clothes. Please make sure to exchange them as the seasons change, and your child grows.
- C. At least six diapers must be on the child's diaper shelf at all times. We also offer storage for bulk diapers if you prefer to bring a package with your child's name written on it.
- D. Sun block and hat for sunny days.
- E. Winter clothing is very important. We emphasize adequate protection from cold and wind. Please remember to bring a warm hat and mittens (with their name on them).
- F. Children who will be with us for naps need to bring a crib-size fitted sheet and a light blanket. For infants under 12 months, blankets are not permitted in their beds. Instead, please bring a sleep sack for your infant.
- G. Younger children (Infants) need to bring bottles. Toddlers need to bring a cup with a lid to use for the day. Please label it with your child's name.
- H. School-day and full-day children need to bring a nutritious lunch from home in a lunch box with ice pack.

Curriculum

Children need a fun, loving environment that promotes learning. At *Montessori Children's House*, we encourage, assist and guide the children through their natural development. Each child at our school is taught to work with the Montessori lessons at his own pace. Children learn to replace the material on the shelf and keep their environment clean. Through the lessons, the child is able to develop concentration, independence, coordination and skills that are needed in later learning. *Montessori Children's House* maintains an excellent teacher to child ratio. This gives the teachers the ability to comfort a child if needed, or allows a child to sit on a teacher's lap if needed.

Daily Schedule

The schedule is designed to be flexible so that the needs of the children are met. Variations occur, but in general, this is what happens during a day at *Children's House*:

In the Toddler Classroom (1 – 2year old children)

Drop-Off Time – free play	7:45 – 8:45
Circle time	8:45
Snack time	9:00
Diaper changes	9:45
art time / lesson time	10:00 – 11:00
Lunch	11:00
Diaper changes	11:40
Naptime	11:45 – 3:00
Outside play / quiet inside play	1:00 – 3:00
Pick-up Time for School Days	3:00
Snack time	3:00
Diaper changes	3:30
Outside / Inside free play	3:30 – 5:15
Pick-up for Full Days	5:00 – 5:15

In the Pre-Primary Classroom 2 – 3 ½-year old children)

Drop-Off Time – Lesson Time	7:45 – 8:45
Circle time	8:45
Morning snack and diaper changes	9:00 – 10:15
Outside time	10:15 – 11:15
Diaper Changes	11:15 – 11:30

Lunch	11:50 – 12:20
Naptime	12:20 – 3:00
Diaper Changes	3:00
Pickup time for School Days	3:00
Afternoon Snack	3:00
Lessons, crafts, outside playtime	3:00-4:00
Pick-up time for Full Days	5:00 – 5:15

Physical Needs

The *Montessori Children's House* program meets the physical needs of children by providing a safe, healthy, aesthetic and clean environment. Diapers are checked at least every two hours, and the diapering station is disinfected after every change. Cabinets, drawers and doors are child-proofed. All materials are disinfected often. Small objects are measured to ensure they are large enough not to be a choking hazard. All furniture is scaled to fit your child's size. Many indoor activities for the development of fine and gross motor coordination are available, as well as outdoor activities when weather permits.

Potty Training

Please let us know how you are potty training your child so we may coordinate our efforts at school. We recommend starting with pull-ups and then on to training pants, asking a child frequently to use the potty. Depending on their interest, and their age, a general guideline is to invite the child to sit on the toilet or small potty for a few minutes every time a diaper is changed. Each child is different and will potty train in his/her own time with positive encouragement.

Food

In the Toddler and Preprimary classroom, *Montessori Children's House* provides nutritious morning (9:00) and afternoon (3:00 pm) snacks. Infants need to bring their own bottles and food. We request that children in toddler and preprimary bring a cup with a lid until they are able to use a regular cup.

School-day and full-day children need to bring a nutritious lunch from home. We recommend using a lunch box with ice pack and drinks in a thermos to keep cold. A short thermos can also be used to keep foods warm. Teachers sit with the children for the meal. Lunch time is calm and enjoyable. Milk for your infant or toddler needs to be kept cool in a lunch box with ice pack or possibly in a cold thermos.

Cultural Needs

Each morning, the children are invited to circle time group activities. During circle time songs and activities reflecting various cultures are shared. Simple French or Spanish language activities are given that include songs, finger plays, and vocabulary lessons. Montessori education is intrinsically multicultural as Dr. Montessori traveled widely, and schools following her philosophy are operating on six continents. She is well known for her deep understanding of the little child and his/her incredible ability to learn from birth. We encourage you to read her book, “The Absorbent Mind”, for more information on the Montessori way.

Emotional Needs

Young children have strong emotional needs, and much effort is extended to meet them. *Montessori Children’s House* goal is to provide a calm, harmonious atmosphere. Maintaining consistency in the child’s schedule, as well as consistency in the staff the child sees each day contributes to confidence in the child’s world. *Montessori Children’s House* has an excellent staff to child ratio. Unhappy or crying children can be immediately comforted or held, which has a soothing effect on the classroom as a whole. Following the Montessori philosophy, teachers give lessons to small groups and single children individually, which reinforces the perception of significance within the child. When a new child starts at *Montessori Children’s House*, the teachers help parents and child deal with the issue of separation. The parent is invited into the classroom to help the child adjust to the new environment. In many cases, the child quickly becomes very involved in exploring the new environment. When more time is needed, parents are encouraged to be with the child, and then slowly back away,

maybe over a period of days, until the child becomes familiar with the routine of going to school. All of our teachers have experience with children. Our head-teachers have either Montessori training, an early childhood education degree and/or a lot of experience with children. The teachers' professionalism and understanding aids them in reacting calmly and lovingly toward the typical behavior (and misbehavior) that children exhibit. Discipline is maintained by the teachers redirecting the child away from troublesome situations and encouraging appropriate behavior. Children are encouraged to use language to express themselves. As the teachers model a calm, peaceful demeanor, the children learn to behave in the same way.

Recreational Needs

The Montessori philosophy is highly self-directed. Children at *Montessori Children's House* learn at their own pace in the areas where they want to explore and experiment. The prepared Montessori environment provides a tremendous range of materials for children to try whatever they feel moved to try. When they tire of one object, they move on to another. Recreational opportunities are provided by having this broad range of activities. Often the children imitate actions they see their parents do. They practice opening and closing fasteners, look at books, and wash a baby doll. The teachers encourage children to participate in group activities often. Since the children's days are filled with activities of their choosing, moving at their own pace, their time in the prepared environment becomes recreational.

Educational Needs

The importance of starting a young child in a Montessori school to lay a foundation for future academic success is more and more recognized throughout the world. *Montessori Children's House* has the basic material to prepare the child for his future learning. Introduction and familiarization with letters and sounds, numbers and counting are offered. When the children show interest, they can explore more advanced work and it is then presented to them. Materials such as sandpaper letters and numbers, matching cards, tracing with a pencil and cutting with scissors are just a few of the many learning materials Montessori has to offer.

Health

Sick Child Exclusion Policy:

Children with the following symptoms will not be allowed to attend school:

1. Fevers of 100 or higher. Children should be without fever for 24 hours before they can return to the group.
2. Children who have vomited or have had diarrhea in the last 24 hours or until symptoms have subsided for at least 24 hours.

Children with the following illnesses cannot attend:

- A. Conjunctivitis or pink eye (red eyes with colored, pus-like drainage)
 - B. Hand, foot and mouth disease
 - C. Impetigo
 - D. Strep throat
 - E. COVID 19
 - F. Skin infections (draining burns, infected hangnails, etc.)
 - G. Generalized rashes (over multiple parts of the body)
 - H. Head lice, scabies, or ringworm (until treatment is started)
 - I. Rubella, Pertussis, Mumps, Measles, Hepatitis A until 4-7 days after onset/treatment depending on illness
 - J. Shigellosis, Salmonella, or E. coli until cleared by local health authority
4. Bacterial infections must be treated with antibiotics for 24 hours before the child can return to school.

Children with the following symptoms may be required to stay home:

1. A child who is ill with any symptoms and is unable to participate in the usual school activities.

2. Thick, green or yellow nasal discharge persisting longer than three days if accompanied by any of the following symptoms: fever, persistent cough, eye drainage, or ear pain.

Illness at School

If a child becomes sick at school, or has a fever, we will isolate him or her and call the parents. Parents are expected to pick up their child as soon as possible.

Montessori Children's House will first try to contact the parents' home, then the parents' work.

If not reached, we will call the emergency contact provided to us (yellow form).

The child is expected to be picked up within an hour of notification.

Medication

Parents are required to fill out the medication authorization form before any over the counter or prescription medication can be administered to the child. All medications must be labeled with the child's name and in the original container. Prescription medications must have a current doctor's prescription to be administered.

Accident Procedures

Montessori Children's House provides fully equipped, easily identifiable First Aid Boxes in locations known to all adults. Caregivers in each class have up-to-date First Aid and CPR training, and at least one is in each classroom at all times. Emergency telephone numbers are located in each classroom and in the office.

Minor accidents are treated on the premises. Parents are advised of the injury and the action taken when picking up their child. If a child is upset, a parent will be called.

Accidents are recorded in brightwheel or an Accident Report form depending on the level of severity.

In the case of a serious accident, the child's parent would be notified immediately by phone. If a parent could not be reached, the child's emergency contact would be called. In the case of an emergency, 911 would be called as well. If a child needed to be transported to the hospital before a parent could arrive, an adult known to the child

would accompany him/her along with the family's Consent to Treatment form and would remain with the child until parents' arrival. Medical costs for the care of the child are the parents' responsibility.

Safe Sleep Policy

Montessori Children's House promotes a safe sleep environment for the children's daily nap and follows Montana safe sleep law which can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/mtsafesleep> A firm mattress or mat is provided for each child. Children under two years are placed on their backs to nap and no thick blankets, toys, pillows, bottles or cups are permitted in their sleep area. All teachers are required to take a training class on promoting safe sleep.

Transportation

Montessori Children's House does not offer or provide any transportation. Field trips are not part of the curriculum.

In Case of an Emergency

Montessori Children's House holds periodic emergency drills as required by law. We ask your child to have inside shoes for these drills and also any potential emergency evacuations that may be required. In the event of an emergency that requires leaving the school grounds, our emergency meeting point is at the Berkshire Hathaway office, East of the school at 2001 Stadium Drive Suite A. If an emergency were to occur, we would first evacuate the school and ensure the safety of the children before beginning to contact parents and arrange for pickups.

We have developed these policies for the health and safety of your child. We take our responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment very seriously. We recommend teaching your child to wash his or her hands regularly and to wash hands when you arrive home. *Montessori Children's House* follows the regulations of the department of Public Health and Human Services.

A Few Words About the Director

Cynthia Bennett received her Montessori Teaching Certificate from Pan-American Society in 1985. She was the owner of Giving Tree Montessori Infant/Toddler Community in Bozeman, MT for 6 years (1996- 2002). She has over 18 years of experience in

teaching this age group and has 5 children of her own, 4 boys and one girl. Cynthia has a deep love for all children.

Montessori Children's House

Cynthia Bennett (Owner/Director)

School: **(406) 600-6210**

Email: Cynthia@BozemanChildrensHouse.com

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<u>MORNING SNACK</u>				
Rice Cakes, one Apple butter, one T. spoon lightly spread	Graham Cracker, 1/4 c. Apricots, fresh or canned, bits 1/2 c.	String Cheese, sliced, one stick Bananas, sliced 1/2 c.	Enriched Crackers, 1/4 c. Apples, peeled bits, 1/2 c.	Cheese Crackers, 1/4 c. Pears, fresh or canned bits, 1/2 c.
<u>AFTERNOON SNACK</u>				
Whole Grain Crackers, 1/4 c. Oranges, bits 1/2 c.	Cheerios, 1/4 c. Melons, bits 1/2 c.	Cornbread, 1/4 c. Grapes, quarters 1/2 c.	Whole Grain Bagel, one mini w/ Hummus, one T. Apricots, fresh or canned, 1/2 c.	Vanilla yogurt 1/2 c. Peaches, fresh or canned, 1/2 c

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<u>MORNING SNACK</u>				
Whole Grain Bagel, one mini w/ Cream Cheese, one T., Pears, fresh or canned, 1/2 c.	Whole Grain Crackers 1/4 c. Apples, peeled bits 1/2 c.	Rice Cake one w/ Hummus, one T. Grapes, quarters, 1/2 c.	String Cheese sliced, one stick Blueberries, quarters, 1/2 c.	Cheerios, 1/4 c. Melons, bits 1/2 c.
<u>AFTERNOON SNACK</u>				
Enriched Crackers, 3/4 c. Bananas, sliced 1/2 c.	Cheese Crackers, 1/4 c. Peaches, fresh or canned, 1/2	Graham Crackers, 1/4 c. Oranges, bits, 1/2 c.	Peach Yogurt, 1/2 c. Apples, bits 1/2 c.	Cornbread, 1/4 c. Apricots, fresh or canned, 1/2 c.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<u>MORNING SNACK</u>				
Cheese Crackers, 1/4 c. Apricots, fresh or canned, bits 1/2 c.	Vanilla Yogurt, 1/2 c. Pears, fresh or canned bits, 1/2 c.	Enriched Crackers, 1/4 c. Melons, bits 1/2 c.	Whole Grain Bagel, one mini w/ Cream Cheese, one T, Peaches, fresh or canned, 1/2 c	Cornbread, 1/4 c. Avocado, bits, 1/2 c.
<u>AFTERNOON SNACK</u>				
Rice Cake one w/ Hummus, one T. Apples, bits, 1/2 c.	Graham Crackers, 1/4 c. Blueberries, quarters, 1/2 c.	Cheerios, 1/4 c. Bananas, sliced, 1/2 c.	String Cheese, sliced, one stick Oranges, bits, 1/2 c.	Whole Wheat Crackers, 1/4 c. Seed Butter, one T. spoon, lightly spread