

Montessori in the Home

There are many simple ways to incorporate Montessori principles in your home. Preparing your home environment to facilitate and support your child's natural urge to be independent, is a great way to support what your child is learning at school. Typically, the process begins by taking stock of your home, how your child uses and accesses things for daily living and then making simple modifications to increase age appropriate independence. When thinking of organizing a space consider following the simple mantra that "everything has a place, and everything is kept in its place." By committing to picking a consistent place for everything it will be easier for your child to help you return something to its predictable spot.

Here are a few tips by room, to help you in creating an organized and stimulating space for your child to participate in daily.

Your Child's Bedroom

- Organize seasonally appropriate clothing by type, on shelves or in drawers, that are at a low enough level to be accessible to your child.
- Less is more! Keep options (clothing, toys, hats, pillows etc.) to a minimum. By having only a few options available, your child will feel successful when making choices throughout the day.
- Create a chart that outlines the steps your child can do to get ready in the morning. This will establish a clear routine for your child and help them to feel prepared.
- Suggested bedroom toys and activities:
 - 5 different types of items out on a low shelf, a collection of books, a map on the wall.
 - A calendar to keep track of days and activities – cross them off as they are completed!
 - A reading corner that is inviting; your child will want to read and relax in this space.
 - An area to listen to music, with a device your child can access and operate on his own.

Hallway/Closet

- Hang low hooks for your child's jacket and bag.
- Check the weather with your child the night before. Collaborate on any needed snow or rain gear that needs to be prepared for the next day.
- When buying clothing, make sure that your child will be able to open and close shoes and jackets independently. The simpler, the better!
- Remember, one warm coat is easier for your child to manipulate than many layers.
- Mittens are easier for your child to put on than gloves.

Kitchen

- Have a step stool available for your child that allows her to reach the kitchen sink, see on top of the counters etc.
- Hang hooks for kitchen clean up tools such as washcloth, a broom and a dustpan.
- Provide child sized kitchen tools and show your child how to use them safely.
- Use child sized plates, glasses and utensils. Plates should be breakable so that children learn how to handle them with care.

Living Room

- Family board games.
- Provide manipulative toys and art materials on a low shelf or bookcase.
- A child size workplace or a chair.
- Your family's main collection of books can be stored in the living room, and the rest dispersed around the house in thematic baskets.

Your Bedroom

- Keep a collection of books in a basket.
- Provide a small reading nook for your child with a pillow or blanket. This gives them a small space, in your space, to feel comfortable and invited.