



*Castle Mound Montessori*  
*Where the magic of learning begins!*

## November Newsletter

From Varsha's desk....



Greetings Parents,

I trust you are enjoying this beautiful autumn season, and also hope life is good for you and your family.

The past month has been a bit concerning for everyone in light of all the stories of the H1N1 (swine flu) spreading throughout the region and the delay in being able to access the needed vaccines. I want to assure you my resolve is strong to do what it takes to keep the school disinfected and virus-free as much as possible to guard your child's health. I am happy to share that we have had relatively few cases of the flu to-date and feel so blessed that our students have remained healthy for the most part.

Our teachers are observing the children closer than ever, and if a child comes to school and does not quite seem "themselves" in terms of their wellbeing, we will immediately separate them from their classmates and bring them to the administrative office for a temperature check and observation. We then call parents quickly to share our findings, allowing you to call their pediatrician if you feel you need to do so.

Because it is important to have children wash their hands as soon as they arrive, before meals, and often while they are in school, we are spending extra time at the sink these days. In addition, throughout the day we are disinfecting door handles, and materials in the school in an attempt to avoid cross-contamination if a sick person happens to be present.

Our teachers have been giving lessons to the children on how to sneeze into a tissue or their arm to prevent germs from landing in their hands and we would appreciate if you could also practice this as well at home with your child.

If your child does contract a case of the flu, they should not return to school until they are fully recovered and are free of fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducer. If they are feeling a bit marginal, I would suggest keeping them home an extra day to be absolutely sure they are healthy again.

Thank you for understanding the role we take in keeping our students healthy, and as always- thank you for your trust.

Sincerely,  
Varsha



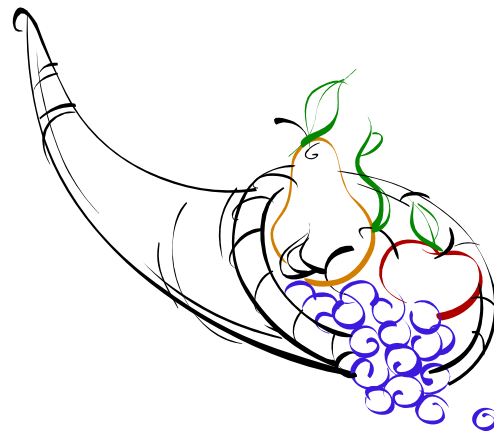
## Parent observation time slated

The parent observations will be held **Nov. 2nd - 6th**. This is an opportunity for your child to share with you a dynamic picture of what life is like in a Montessori environment complete with friends, teachers, Montessori materials, as well as the less tangible atmosphere that is “home” for the child during their working day.

We know from experience that what you will actually see is colored by the excitement that your child will have during your presence. To minimize this excitement factor, both for your child and others in the class, we ask that you view the “Suggestions for Observing” handout, which will be provided before observations begin. We also offer hints for observing and interpreting what you see. A sign-up sheet will be available at the front desk so you may select a date

## Food Drive

Castle Mound Montessori School will hold our Second Annual Horn of Plenty Food Drive to benefit the North Texas Food Bank beginning **Nov. 2 until the end of the month**. Last year’s food drive was very successful and we look forward again this year to having a huge amount of food to offer to the hungry in North Texas. We are so blessed to be in a position to help others and the experience of teaching children to care for others is an integral part of what we do at the school each day. If you can help, please deposit the items in the large



## Parent/Teacher Conferences

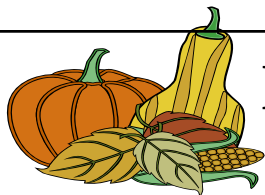
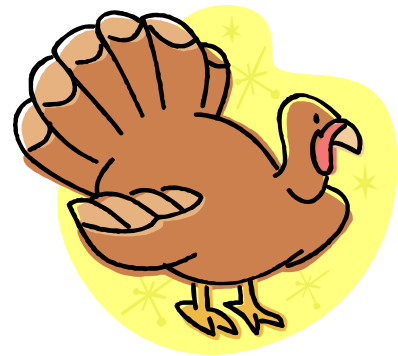
Parent/Teacher conferences will be held **Saturday, Nov 7th from 9am to 3pm**. This conference is designed to give you an opportunity to discuss your child’s progress with the Lead Directress. Because Montessori is a non-graded method, the discussion will be centered on your child’s personal, emotional and mental development. Please look for the conference sign up sheets in a binder on the front desk.

### Morning of thrills awaits children!

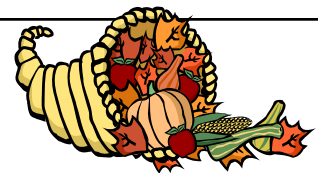
Tipi Tellers, a dedicated group of professional storytellers will visit our school on **Monday Nov. 16th**. The group utilizes the power of story to develop strength of character, teach respect for all life and promote inter-cultural harmony. Employing the Native American philosophy of stewardship, they foster understanding of the interdependence that exists throughout all of nature and teach respect for themselves, each other and all living things. Members believe teaching through story is the most effective means of imparting values in non-threatening and entertaining format and the power of story is the time- proven teaching method of history’s greatest leaders and educators. A huge, authentic tipi will be erected in our parking lot on the day of the event. Please make sure your child arrives at school by **9a.m.** to be able to participate in this exciting event!

### School holiday closing announced

Castle Mound Montessori school will be closed for the holidays on **November 26th and November 27th**. We look forward to seeing you and your child back on Monday Nov. 30th. Have a wonderful and safe holiday.



### Multicultural Feast Set



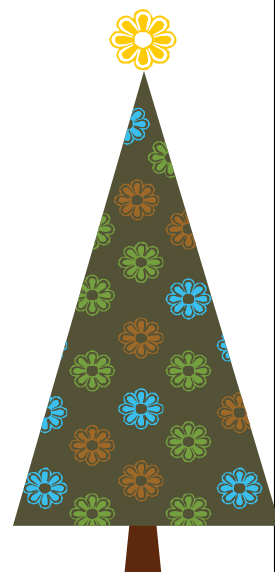
Thanksgiving is a time for sharing, enjoying a meal and remembering our blessings. We know the first thanksgiving celebration in America with the Pilgrims and members of the Wampanoag tribe sharing a harvest meal of friendship and gratitude.

The gathering of our students to share our Second Annual Multicultural Feast will be a true harvest of gratitude between cultures. Our Multicultural Feast will be enjoyed on **November 25th** during lunchtime. Sign-up sheets will be on each classroom door as the date approaches. Feel free to visit briefly if your schedule permits.

# The Giving Tree benefits needy children

Castle Mound Montessori is hosting a Holiday Gift Drive this holiday season. We have chosen to work with the Salvation Army to help support the local families. We have been provided 30 "Angels" outlining the specific holiday needs for the families. If you decide to adopt a children, please bring the angel to the front desk.

We will take the information from the angel and replace the angel on the tree with an ornament with your child's picture on it. Please have your child help with the shopping so that the child will take ownership of their generosity. We ask that all gifts for the angels be received no later than December 16th. Please do not wrap the gift, the families have asked that we put the gifts in a gift bag so that they can see what has been gifted for their children. Once you have completed your angel's requests, please bring your gifts to the front desk. As always, THANK YOU for your generosity and support for this worthy cause to help us be a part of giving a child the opportunity to be a child.



## Winter Reservations

**Silver Bells, silver bells  
Ring them loud and clear.  
Silver Bells, silver bells  
Bringing Holiday cheer.  
(Tune to Jingle Bells)**

**Winter holidays are just around  
The corner!!!**

**Please let us know if you plan on  
being away for the holidays to  
help us correctly staff our class-  
rooms. Reservation forms will be  
going out to each child late part  
of November/early December. If  
you have any questions,  
let us know.**

## Last Minute Shopping Night



**December 18th  
6:00pm-10:00pm**

This is a fun and exciting night for all. Parents of children ages 18m-12yrs can drop their child/ren off for a night of pizza, crafts, games, movie and much more.

The cost is \$30.00 cash for the first child and \$15.00 cash for the second child. We have extended the hours to help in those last minute shopping trips. Please be sure that you are here at 10:00pm or there will be a late fee of a \$1.00 a minute for anytime after 10:00pm.

Reservation forms will be available at the Front Desk closer to the day of the event. Hope to see you there!!!

### **Programs begin at 8:30**

Our Montessori program begins each morning at 8:30 a.m. and we believe there is great value for your child in participating in the entire program as it is designed. Children of all ages thrive in a setting where a set routine is established and followed each day. Please arrive by starting time when at all possible to help us develop this strong routine and sense of community in your child’s classroom.

### **Parking lot safety a top priority**



When arriving and departing each day, we ask that you please take extra care to ensure all children remain safe at their school. Please park in the designated parking spaces at all times rather than in the fire lanes and have a firm grasp of your child’s hand when entering and exiting the building. The children are excited to arrive at school and equally excited to leave with you, so we cannot stress enough the value of holding them tightly in the parking lot. Please turn your car engine off when coming inside the building for child drop-off and pick-up. Thank you for keeping safety a priority at the school. Your carefulness is appreciated!

### **School uniforms important to learning environment**



Our uniform policy is designed to minimize the distractions of various clothing styles and individual clothing items. We believe wearing the school uniform helps children focus their attention on the most important aspects of school life. We have a full supply of both long and short-sleeved uniform shirts available for purchase in teacher workroom off the lobby. We can easily bill you for any shirts you may need.

Primary students are required to wear their school uniform on Monday through Thursday. On Friday your child may wear clothing of their choice and rubber soled shoes, with the exception of clothing depicting violence. Our uniform consists of the following: boys- khaki or navy blue shorts/pants (no jeans) and the school logo shirts with rubber soled shoes. Girls- the red and navy blue jumpers with the white blouse and rubber soled shoes. For their safety, please do not allow your children to wear open toe shoes/sandals, flip flops or clogs.

**Parenting/Teaching**

Through our children, we, the parents and teachers, are architects of the future of humanity. As we go about our daily lives in the presence of children, we are constantly teaching by our own words, thoughts, and behavior. Education is often narrowly defined as the teaching of math, language, sciences and the arts, but the most important subjects to be mastered are: how to be happy, to be a compassionate friend, to express care through thoughtfulness and good manners, to identify a problem and work hard to solve it. More than facts, we must help our children develop a love for learning, an ability to make intelligent and responsible choices, to concentrate and focus, and to do one's best to complete a task to the satisfaction of oneself rather than to please someone.

**Concentration/Contemplation**

It was the great discovery of Dr. Montessori, that after completing a prolonged period of deep concentration, a child often expressed a great joy and desire to help others. Perhaps this is what adults, who make time for daily prayer or meditation, feel and why we think of them as happier, more peaceful, and in some ways better human beings than those of us who just rush from one task to the next. Lessons on morality or gold stars/stickers, are exterior inducements to happiness and goodness. These external incentives are never as successful as a good night's sleep or a long period of concentrated work or contemplation. What is essential, however, is the time during which the mind can process the day's input or solve problems at a deep level and come out satisfied.

**Age 0-6**

At this age children literally absorb the world around them. We can never be too polite, kind, and respectful, to be their role models.

The 3-6 environment is called a *Casa dei Bambini*, or *House of Children* because it is very different from the traditional preschool. To imagine the difference, think of how you act when welcoming friends into your own inviting, comfortable, enjoyable home. Would you have everyone sit still on a line and put their hands in their lap and close their mouths? Or would you have specially prepared and interesting activities, perhaps with some food, while welcoming each person with a personal greeting, inviting her to make herself at home? Would you line up chairs and tables, labeling where your guests were expected to sit? Or would you arrange the home with paintings, comfortable chairs, plants, and soft music? If a guest in your home appeared at loose ends, would you tell him to get to work or would you have a private conversation with him and allow him to become comfortable? When your guests were all settled in and having a lovely time you would more than likely allow them to continue moving freely around your home offering conversation and activities to gain and keep their interest.

From ages 0-6, children are invited, but never required, to carry out certain tasks. There are two important rules in the 3-6 class. First, "we do not interrupt someone who is concentrating," and second, "one can work with any material whose purpose one understands"—having learned it from a teacher or from another child.

The adult observes and strives to meet the child's physical, mental, and emotional needs. Once a child has begun to concentrate upon a bit of work, the adult respects this choice and concentration and does not interrupt. Children are taught, through fun play-acting lessons, not to interrupt a child who is concentrating.

At this age, we give the child voraciously devouring experiences, the basic elements of all future studies—biology, art, geography, geometry, math, music and language.

**Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed."**

**-Maria Montessori**

**Dates to Remember:**

<i>November</i>	25 Thanksgiving Feast	<u>December</u>	31 3 p.m. early dismissal
1-30 Food Drive	26-27 School Closed	18 Children's book exchange	Jan 1 Closed
7 Parent conferences	30 Giving tree begins	24 3 p.m. early dismissal	
		25 Closed	



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