

# Welcome to...



## White Flint Children's House



**AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY**  
education that transforms lives

**Member School**

### A Little Bit About Us



After 10 excellent years at the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission building, White Flint Children's House has a history of innovative and academic excellence. WFCH opened its doors in July of 2004 at 11810 Parklawn Drive in Rockville, Maryland. Our well-planned, indoor space allows for large, fully-equipped classrooms and provides opportunities beyond the classroom walls with a library, an auditorium, a gallery, and indoor gymnasium, and an outdoor playground. Specialist programs include weekly, and some daily classes in Spanish, Movement, Art, Drama, and Music. We also offer additional optional programs such as Ballet/Tap, Piano, Karate, and Soccer. Field trips and in-house guests further enrich our Montessori curriculum. We provide an overall well-balanced and nurturing program where your child can grow and learn with us through our eleven-month school year and optional seven-week summer camp.





## Our Mission

**White Flint Children's House is a Montessori school that fosters an environment where resilience, confidence, independence, and joy flourish.**

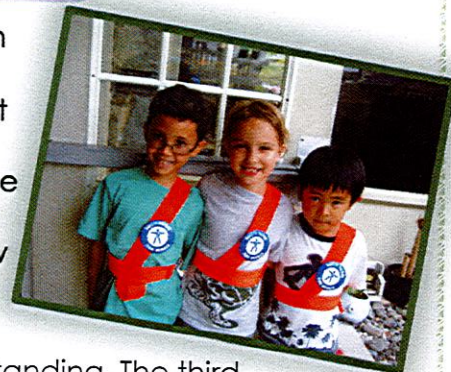
## Our Vision

*"Our vision, In the long term, our relentless pursuit of excellence at White Flint Children's House will significantly amplify our impact in establishing a robust educational foundation, ensuring our children receive a well-rounded and impactful education that sparks a lifelong passion for learning. By laying this essential groundwork, we play a vital role in nurturing young minds, equipping them to become active global citizens capable of tackling the diverse challenges of our time with confidence and determination.*

## A Curriculum That Grows With Your Child

Montessori is focused on teaching for understanding; memorization and the rote learning of facts is not our goal. Our students benefit from the sensorial and concrete learning that occurs during the first 2 years at WFCH; by their third year at our school, this foundation allows for the more complex lessons to come together and increase the child's academic skills. The child is then ready to form a mental picture of abstract concepts such as how many is a thousand, how many hundreds make up a thousand, and what is really going on when we "borrow numbers" in a mathematical operation. This

opportunity gives the child a solid foundation for a lifetime of understanding. The third year of the Montessori curriculum allows the students the opportunity to be leaders and role models in their classes. It is also a time when many of their earlier lessons come together and become a permanent part of the young child's understanding.



## Montessori Philosophy

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was an Italian physician who designed a method of education by observing young children and how they learn. Her extensive early childhood research, which is supported by modern research, revealed that children experience sensitive periods for learning during their early years. They easily learn particular skills during the corresponding sensitive periods, more so than at any other time in the child's life. Dr. Montessori's method encourages the natural development of the whole child from birth through maturity. Out of this research-based foundation, the Montessori "Method of Education" emerged.







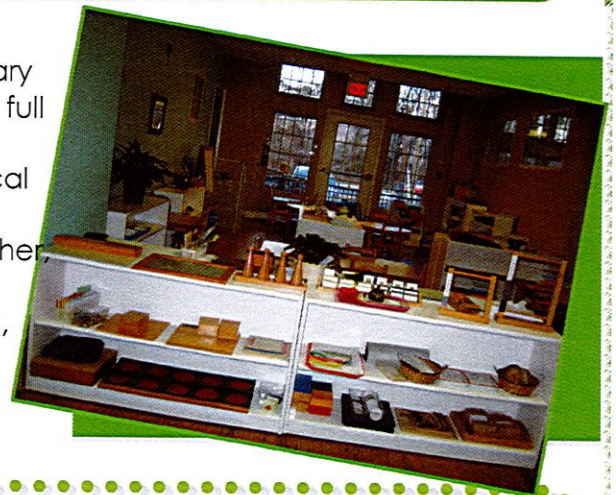
## Why do we call it “The Children’s House”?

Maria Montessori's focus on the “whole child” led her to develop a school very different from the traditional adult-centered classroom. To emphasize this difference, she named her first school the “Casa de Bambini,” or the “Children’s House.” Her words are profound, for the Montessori classroom is not the domain of the adults in charge, but rather it is a carefully prepared environment designed to facilitate the development of the children's independence and sense of personal empowerment.

White Flint Children's House is a true community of young children. They move freely within the classrooms, selecting work that captures their interest. Even very young children assist in the care of themselves and their environment. When they are hungry, they prepare their own snack and drink. When something spills, they help each other carefully clean things up. Adults are often amazed to see small children in Montessori classrooms cut raw fruits and vegetables, sweep and dust, carry pitchers of water, and pour liquids with barely a drop spilled. The children go about their work so calmly and purposefully that it is clear to even the casual observer that this is their environment: “The Children's House.”

## What makes a Montessori education so unique?

The “whole child” approach is part of what sets Montessori apart from regular education; one of the primary goals of a Montessori program is to help each child reach full potential in all areas of life. Activities promote the development of social skills, emotional growth, and physical coordination as well as cognitive preparation. The holistic curriculum, under the direction of a specially trained teacher allows the child to experience the joy of learning, time to enjoy the process, ensure the development of self-esteem, and provides the experiences from which children create their knowledge.



### “The Prepared Environment” at WFCH

The Montessori classroom is carefully prepared to promote independent learning and exploration. The environment is organized, aesthetically pleasing, and equipped with specially designed materials that engage children in hands-on learning experiences. The classroom setup encourages freedom of movement, choice, and responsibility, fostering a sense of ownership and empowerment in children.



## Classroom Work Cycle

Many fundamental lessons and work in the WFCH Montessori classroom involve tactile, concrete materials the student manipulates and organizes to gain understanding of abstract concepts. Most often results are not found on worksheets. Children don't often bring home traditional papers to represent their advancement in the Montessori curriculum. You will receive monthly individual newsletters showing some of the lessons your child has received.



## Mixed-Age Groupings

Maria Montessori was the first educator to group children of mixed ages in the same classroom. Those who began with us as parents of three-year-old children -- now six-year-olds! -- will attest to the many benefits of mixed-age grouping. The older child mentors and motivates the younger child. The older children are excited to reach the status of "mentor" and all the responsibilities that go with it. They look out for their younger peers, give them lessons, and help the teachers in many ways. This is a big boost to their ego.

White Flint Children's House consciously groups children in mixed-age classes to allow for a large portion of returning children each school year. This environment promotes continuity and provides opportunity for mentoring and building community. Returning five and six year old students strengthen their academics when they assist younger first and second year students. Independence and autonomy are natural outcomes of our mixed-age grouping. Peers stimulate each other intellectually while moving through the curriculum at a healthy, appropriate pace.

## The Montessori Materials

Dr. Montessori's observations of the kinds of things that children enjoy, and go back to repeatedly, led her to design a number of multi-sensory, sequential, and self-correcting materials that facilitate the learning of skills and lead to learning of abstract ideas.





## Child-Centered Approach

Montessori education places the child at the center of the learning process. It recognizes that each child is a unique individual with their own interests, abilities, and pace of learning. The curriculum and activities are tailored to meet the individual needs of each child, allowing them to learn at their own pace and pursue their areas of interest.



## Holistic Development

Montessori education emphasizes the holistic development of the child. It recognizes that intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth are interconnected. The curriculum encompasses a wide range of subjects, including practical life skills, sensorial exploration, language development, mathematics, cultural studies, and the arts. This holistic approach nurtures well-rounded individuals and promotes a love for lifelong learning.

## Self-Directed Learning

Montessori education fosters a love for learning and cultivates independent thinking skills.

Children are encouraged to follow their natural curiosity and interests, and they are given the freedom to choose their activities within the prepared environment. This self-directed learning approach allows children to develop a sense of responsibility, decision-making abilities, and self-motivation.



## Specially Trained Teachers

Our Montessori teachers undergo specialized training to understand the philosophy, principles, and techniques of Montessori education. They act as facilitators, observing each child's unique development, providing individualized guidance, and fostering a supportive learning environment. Montessori teachers strive to inspire and ignite the natural curiosity and love for learning within each child.

## Focus on Independence and Life Skills

**Focus on Independence and Life Skills:** At WFCH Montessori education places great emphasis on developing practical life skills and fostering independence. Children are taught essential life skills such as dressing themselves, caring for the environment, and preparing their own snacks. These skills not only contribute to their independence but also lay the foundation for self-confidence, problem-solving, and responsibility.



## Our Montessori Classroom

Perhaps the biggest difference of a Montessori education from that of a traditional preschool is that the Montessori curriculum emphasizes the development of children as independent people. The child moves freely around the room, making his or her own choice, and independently takes that work off the shelf. The child completes the work and replaces the work in the same place (often again and again, as children choose work over and over again to gain mastery of it). Instead of waiting for an adult to choose for them, the child learns to think, "What do I want to do?" and takes the initiative to do it repeatedly, day after day.

Because an adult is not standing over the student at every moment, praising or disciplining, a child becomes focused on his or her own work or behavior.

Thus, a Montessori child is able to develop his or her own sense of concentration as well as a greater sense of confidence, character, and self-esteem. If the child drops or breaks something, the teacher is there to make sure that he or she is unharmed and to encourage the child to recover. The child will clean up his or her own mess, again affirming that the child is capable of handling his or her own errors.



## Our Faculty

The WFCH Montessori School is proud of its professional and experienced faculty of certified Montessori teachers and classroom assistants. We maintain teacher to child ratios surpassing those required by the state with a 1:10 ratio in the primary classes and a 1:4 ratio in our 18mos- 2-year-old-classes. Our teachers are available to communicate with parents daily. There are also two regular parent-teacher conferences scheduled during the year. Each teacher at WFCH is required to maintain a continuing education plan unique to his or her area of concentration. Our teachers emphasize the process of learning over the product and gently guide

children as they follow their natural curiosity. At WFCH the teachers' mission is one of service to the child in the process of self-construction. Although the science can be taught, the art is learned through experience. The art is to know when to guide the child and when to stand back and let the child develop independently. Our Montessori teachers must care for the difference in each personality and prepare for a life in a harmonious community. Dr. Montessori wanted teachers not to impose adult will on the child, but to set free the individual potential within the child. The Montessori teacher is a spiritually aware adult who observes, records and facilitates a prepared learning environment that allows young children to peacefully explore, appreciate, and experiment with Montessori works which suit the children's personal interests and is geared towards their sensitive periods of development.



# WFCH Montessori Accredited Program

## Educational Goals

The educational goal of WFCH is to open the doors to a world of learning by providing a carefully planned, stimulating environment, which will help our students to develop an excellent foundation for creative learning. The specific goals for the children who attend our program can be simply put as follows:

### ❖ Exploring each child's ability to develop a positive attitude toward school

Most of the learning activities are individualized; for example, each child engages in a learning task that particularly appeals to them because they find the activity to be geared to their personal needs and level of readiness. Consequently, the child works at his or her own pace and repeats the task as often as they like, allowing them to experience a series of successful achievement. In this manner, they build a positive attitude toward the act of learning itself.

### ❖ Helping each child develop self confidence

At WFCH, tasks are designed so that each new step is built upon what the child has already mastered, thus removing the negative experience of frequent failure. A carefully orchestrated series of successes builds upon inner confidence in the child, assuring them that they can learn by themselves. These confidence-building activities likewise contribute to the child's healthy emotional development.

### ❖ Assisting each child in building a habit of concentration

Effective learning presupposes the ability to listen carefully and to attend to what is said or demonstrated. Through a series of absorbing experiences, the child forms habits of extended attention, thereby increasing his ability to concentrate.

### ❖ Fostering an abiding curiosity

In a rapidly changing society, we will be students for our entire lives. A deep, persistent, and abiding curiosity is a prerequisite for creative learning. By providing each child with opportunities to discover qualities, dimensions, and relationships, amidst a rich variety of stimulating learning situations, curiosity is developed and an essential element in creative learning has been established.



### ❖ **Developing habits of taking initiative and maintaining persistence**

By surrounding the child with appealing materials and learning activities geared to his or her inner needs, they become accustomed to engaging in activities on their own. Gradually, this results in a habit of initiative - an essential quality in leadership. "Ground rules" call for completing a task once begun which gradually results in a habit of persistence and perseverance after the task is accomplished.

### ❖ **Fostering inner security and a sense of order in the child**

Under the guidance of a certified Montessori teacher, learning is individualized and self-paced. Each classroom provides a stimulating environment for 20 to 30 children ranging from 3 to 6 years of age. Emphasis is placed on task analysis and development of a logical and ordered thought process. Each classroom activity is executed from beginning to end with careful attention to the accuracy of sequence and process.

## Six Specialized Areas of Learning



### **1. Practical Life**

***"The first essential tool for the child's development is concentration.  
The child who concentrates is immensely happy." -Maria Montessori***

The child develops an independent approach to personal care and care of his or her surroundings while increasing fine motor coordination. Various exercises involving buttons, brushes, pitchers, water, and other objects that the child might recognize from home help the child to feel comfortable and successful. The child also learns to pay attention to detail as he or she follows a sequence of actions. Practical life prepares the child for all other areas of the room, including reading and writing. The emphasis on task completion and continuity encourages good working habits.





## 2. Language

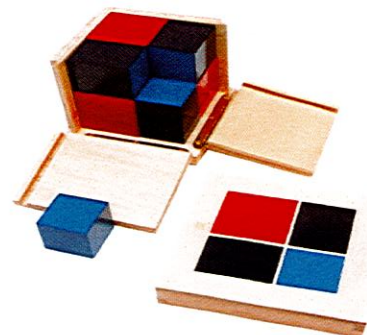
***"Written language can be acquired more easily by children of four years than by those of six. While children of six usually need at least two years to learn how to write, children of four years learn this second language within a few months."  
- Maria Montessori***

Oral communication is encouraged as children learn to communicate with each other in small group or whole group situations. Children are given names for everything in the environment. Letters are tactically and naturally introduced to the individual sounds of the alphabet through sandpaper letters. After acquiring the ability to recognize several sounds, the child uses the moveable alphabet to make words. Miniature objects or pictures are used to represent the word; the individual sounds in the word are found in the moveable alphabet box and placed, in order, next to the object. While the child is acquiring a solid foundation in phonics, sight words are introduced. A variety of reading series awaits the child who has learned to decode the written language. Emergent readers can progress independently through reading series designed to increase both decoding skills and comprehension. Word study and parts of speech are all addressed through manipulative activities designed to help the child acquire beginning grammatical concepts. The reading and writing connection is fostered through countless classroom opportunities as the child begins to use handwriting as a learning tool and an avenue of creative self-expression.

## 3. Sensorial

***"The senses, being explorers of the world, open the way to knowledge."  
- Maria Montessori***

A young child meets the world around him through the constant use of his or her senses. This is an ideal time to give the child equipment that will sharpen the senses and enable the child to understand the many sensorial impressions found in the environment. Visual, auditory, and tactile activities sharpen the child's discriminatory skills. To help the child organize sensorial impressions, each piece of classroom equipment is carefully designed to define only one quality such as color, weight, size, or sound. As the child uses and manipulates the sensorial impressions, he or she begins to discover the multi-dimensional interrelationships found among the various pieces of classroom equipment. Further exploration leads to delight as the child progresses through a wide array of extension activities, more discoveries, and keener perceptions about the surrounding environment.





## 4. Mathematics

***"Sometimes very small children in a proper environment develop a skill and exactness in their work that can only surprise us."  
-Maria Montessori***

If a child has access to concrete mathematical materials, he or she can easily assimilate the many facts and skills of arithmetic. Montessori mathematical materials help the child acquire conceptual understanding through repetition, manipulation, and mastery of skills. Enticed by inviting activities, the child is introduced to the concepts of counting, place value, and, finally, the basic operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.



## 5. Social Studies

***"The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child." - Maria Montessori***

With geography tools such as globes, puzzle maps, and the atlas, the child begins to develop a spatial sense of the world around him or her. The passage of time is a concept presented through seasonal and daily time lines, while the various land and water forms are illustrated through actual models the child fills with water. Picture files, objects, and an extensive library collection bring life to the different aspects of cultures, traditions, and celebrations from around the world.



## 6. Science

***"The secret of good teaching is to regard the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which seeds may be sown, to grow under the heat of flaming imagination."  
- Maria Montessori***

The objective of the science program is to make the child aware of the world around him or her. It builds on the child's natural curiosity and helps the child to ask and answer "Why?" Plenty of opportunities are provided for the child to manipulate, classify, predict, and experiment.





## Six Characteristics of a Highly Effective Montessori Program

### 1. Specialized Montessori Materials

Dr. Montessori began her career as an educator of young children by working with a group of fifty children aged three to five years old. She had a few developmental materials, which she had previously developed to help learning-impaired children and were designed to help with sensory perceptions; she discovered that once these materials were introduced, the children worked spontaneously and repeatedly with them in total concentration. Being a scientist, Dr. Montessori observed and responded to this phenomenon by perfecting those materials little by little, through the experimental process of trial and error, which resulted in the creation of highly specialized materials that aided in skill development of children. Over a century later, Montessori materials continue to be used by children all over the world in response to their inner drives to learn.



### 2. A "Well-Prepared Environment" for Children

As children form and develop, they take from the environment what is needed for self-construction; the child clearly shows an inner need to learn about and to know themselves and their world. They want very much to develop their intelligence and to become independent and responsible. When adults prepare and provide these specialized environments, children can experience the fulfillment of their potential.

Each Montessori classroom is a well-prepared environment designed to support the child's need for learning and growth. It is a "child's house" where there are many carefully designed materials to meet the child's natural interests. The atmosphere is positive, supportive, and non-competitive. The classroom has six distinct areas (practical life, language, sensorial, social studies, mathematics, and science) to encourage a child's natural budding interest with the main objectives of providing creative and stimulating developmental experiences for the young child.

### 3. Multi-Age Groups of Children

Our Montessori classroom offers the child the opportunity to choose individual tasks from a wide variety of graded materials. Children can grow as their interests lead them from one level of skill to another. Having children of different age groups together provides models for younger children to imitate and gives the older ones an opportunity to reinforce their knowledge by helping the younger ones.





## 4. Specially Trained Teachers

Our Montessori teachers are specially trained in child development and in the Montessori approach. The teacher's task is to observe children "at work," keeping a record of the child's work with the materials. The teacher will note periods of readiness and may divert a child who chooses materials that are beyond his or her current abilities, while at other times the teacher might encourage a child to try a new, more difficult task. Whenever a child makes an error, the teacher allows the child to discover his or her own mistake through further manipulation of the self-correcting material. The

Montessori teacher tries to be sensitive to the needs of the child and values the process over the product. By letting children work toward their own goals, teachers are able to encourage children's natural enthusiasm for learning.



## 5. An Integrated Approach

In addition to the Montessori materials and specialized areas of the classroom, quality Montessori programs include a full complement of before and after care. Children have daily opportunities to use their gross motor skills during outdoor play and enjoy creative dramatics, art, music, food exploration, and special classes that offer children many options for self-expression. Such integration of other auxiliary programs provides children the ability to make a smooth transition to other educational settings.



## 6. A Life-Long Approach to Learning

Dr. Montessori once wrote, "It is true, we cannot make a genius; we can only give each individual the chance to fulfill his or her potential possibilities to become an independent, secure, and balanced human being." Montessori classrooms provide children with a solid foundation on which to build later learning experiences. Children who are encouraged to be creative, independent, and responsible during early childhood grow into competent, happy adults.





