



Newsletter

September 2021

A Message from the Head of School

Dear Children's House Community,

Happy Fall! What a wonderful start to our school year. We were so happy to welcome back our returning students, and are enjoying getting to know our new students as well! Our community is growing, we have about 35% more children now than we did last year, and we look forward to continuing that growth.

If you would like to be a part of the school community, there is a community organization, the Friends of Children's House Montessori School (FOCHMS). This organization provides support in different ways. They plan events, fundraise, help broaden our presence in the greater community, and more. The organization formed in October of 2019, and had a good start. Then, when the school moved to distance learning due to COVID, the participation went down. We would like to build that back up and go back to having regular meetings. The annual meeting, which is when officers are elected, is in October. We will hold the meeting on Wednesday, October 20 at 3:15. The meeting will be via zoom, and I will send a link out to everyone that morning. Everyone is welcome!

In October, the children really get excited about Halloween. On October 29, we will have or in school celebration, as well as an evening event. Please see page 2 for more details.

Our parent education nights will be taking place over the next few weeks. Please watch for information from your child's teacher to come to your email for more information.

Take good care,
Ms. Kelly



A huge thank you to
Jon Fitzsimmons and
J.R. Angier for
building and filling
the new sand box.
The children have
loved playing in it!!



Calendar Events for October

- Oct 11: Indigenous People Day—**No School**
- Oct 12: Toddler Parent Education 4:30-5:30
- Oct 14: Primary Parent Education 4:30-5:30
- Oct 19: Lower Elementary Parent Education 4:30-5:30
- Oct 12: Upper Elementary Parent Education 4:30-5:30
- Oct 20: FOCHMS Meeting 3:15 (via Zoom)
- Oct 26: Trunk or Treat Meeting 3:15
- Oct 29: Halloween Celebration—**11:30 Dismissal for All Students**
- Oct 29: Trunk or Treat Event 5:30-7:00



“Education is not something which the teacher does, but is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment.”

~Maria Montessori





On Friday, October 29, we will celebrate Halloween in school, and also in the evening!

Your child is welcome to wear their costume to school Friday morning. Costumes should not be violent or too scary. Any props should be left at home so they are not lost or damaged. Students in Elementary, please watch for information from your child's teacher. These children link their school costumes to an in class activity.

At 8:15, we will have a parade around the parking lot loop. If you would like to attend, you can park anywhere once the drop off loop is complete. Please either wear a mask, or practice physical distancing. After the parade, the children will enjoy activities in their classrooms. The Lower Elementary classes will go to the retirement home to do a parade for the residents there. This will take place outside to ensure that everyone is safe. Many children in Toddler and Primary want to change out of their costumes once the parade is over, so please be sure to send an outfit that day.

That evening, from 5:30-7:00, Children's House and Faith Lutheran Church will be co-hosting a Trunk or Treat event. There will be a spooky walk through the woods (one section more spooky than the other to accommodate all age groups), games, dancing to Halloween music, a selfie station, free hot dogs from the church, and of course Trunk or Treating! There will also be a food truck here selling delicious sweet treats. If you would like, please bring some chairs so you can sit and enjoy your food. Please join us for some family Halloween fun! This event is free and open to anyone in our community.

If you would like to "trick out your trunk" please let me know. Please note that you will need to provide your own candy to hand out.

We are still in need of some donations. If you are able to bring anything in, we'd really appreciate it. We need the following:

- Pumpkins for Jack-o-Lanterns 
- Clothing for Scarecrows 
- Bales of Hay

We also need volunteers to help set up and clean up. If you are available, please let me know.



The Lower Elementary Class

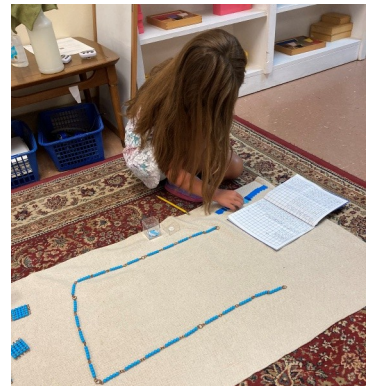
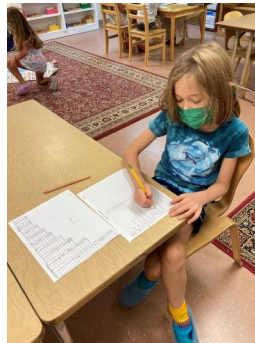
with Ms. Princess and Ms. Nikki

We are very excited about fall and all of the things that it brings, like cooler weather, hay rides, pumpkins, corn mazes, spice teas, and cakes. We are beginning to work on our Halloween reports and decorate our classroom for fall. A few things and reminders:

Parents, please let me know by Tuesday who your child will portray for Halloween.

We are in need of adult size shoe boxes. Please send one in with your child no later than October 27. The boxes are decorated in class then used to put their Halloween treats in.

Also, we need drivers to transport the children to and from the Florida Lutheran Health Center immediately following the CHMS Halloween Parade on October 29. Please let me know if you can drive and if you can also transport children in addition to your own by October 25.



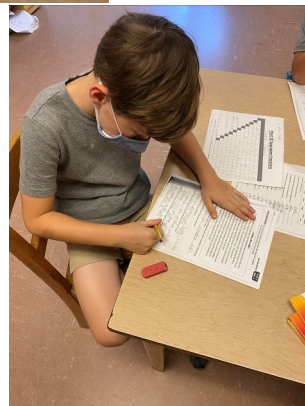
The Lower Elementary Class

with Ms. Patsy and Ms. Kalie

We started out the year with the great lesson. This lesson tells of the creation of the universe, of galaxies, of the solar system, and of the earth.

In addition, the students have been working on biomes, reading comprehension, fraction equivalency, cursive writing, building a biome, and organization of living things.

We're all looking forward to dressing up and visiting the Health Center for Halloween!



The Primary Class

With Ms. Amy, Ms. Cory, and Ms. Morgan

In the Primary classroom we have begun studies of North America as well as the seasons – this being fall. Our classroom is beginning to be adorned with fall decorations made by the children.

Lessons are in full swing in Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, and Math. The children are eager to learn and are always asking for the next new lesson.

They are very excited about the upcoming holiday and the many new decorations that they will be making. Many of these are made by the children doing a pricking which is meticulously pricked out using a premade pattern on construction paper. This activity is fun but also builds muscle strength in the hand. They will be pricking out pumpkins, bats, black cats, ghosts, and spiders!



"Believe in the child"
~Maria Montessori

The Upper Elementary Class

With Mr. Keegan, Ms. Diane, Ms. Travis, and Mrs. Clarke

They say it takes a village, and this year in Upper Elementary, the village has come together to support Mr. Keegan. He will be in training all year this year while also teaching the Upper Elementary class. Because of this, he will be leaving early most days so he can attend his online classes through the Southwest Institute of Montessori Studies. Mrs. Clark will continue to come in a few mornings each week to offer lessons to the students as she has been doing for a few years now. In the afternoons, Ms. Travis and Ms. Diane will be with the class. We are so happy and thankful that these teachers are able to support the class and Mr. Keegan this year as he completes his AMI training!

The class has been learning about the Timeline of Life, which is exactly what it sounds like. The students learn about the evolution of life on earth, and eventually create their own timelines to show this evolution. They show different animals, the rise and fall of eras, geological events that altered evolution, and more. It's a really exciting lesson because it covers so many different things!

They have done reports on a species of animal that they chose. This gives them some Science lessons as well as working on their research skills, teaches about how to write drafts of documents, as well as their literacy (both reading and writing) skills.

With Ms. Diane, the students have just finished creating fossilized dinosaur replicas in art and are currently creating artwork for the upcoming "Dia de los Muertos". In the garden and life sciences, they are studying and raising tadpoles, and have planted a garden bed of yard-long beans, peppers, and tomatoes.



“Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.”

~Margaret Mead

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The Toddler Class

With Ms. Tashira and Ms. July

Happy Fall! For the first part of our school year, the children learned about farms and farm animals. They even got to milk a cow in our classroom! We talked about the foods that are produced at farms, and how they get from the farm to our tables.

We are also working on shapes, colors, counting, preparing food, and more! Every day, the children practice sitting in their chairs, dressing and undressing, using the toilet, and other skills that help in their everyday lives. Let them do these things at home too! In the end, it makes things easier for the parents also.

We are so happy to have our class pet, Frida the guinea pig. We say good morning to her each day and help keep her clean.

We're all looking forward to celebrating Halloween later this month!

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

~ Maria Montessori



What's Growing in the Gardens?

There have been lots of exciting things happening in the gardens! The children have helped with planting, including peppers, tomatoes, and basil. They also learned about the parts of the seed and dissected a seed to locate the different parts.

We've been talking about the life cycle of a frog. We have tadpoles and they have been checking on them each day to see how they have changed. We are anxiously waiting for them to grow legs!

We have also been studying the life cycle of painted lady butterflies. We received hundreds of eggs (donated by Lynn Kee, thank you Lynn!) and watched them go through the entire caterpillar phase and form their chrysalis. After the butterflies emerged, they were released into the gardens.

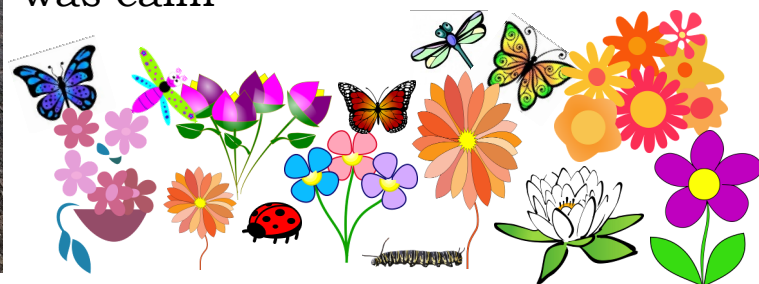
The children all love our garden pets, the chickens (Quiche, Zee, Fluffington, Betty and Bella) and our rabbit, BunBun. They help to feed them, collect eggs, and provide them with lots of love!

One of the things we do as a community is help to keep the gardens looking beautiful. The children help to collect debris, weed plant beds, and plant new flowers. The Lower Elementary children also help by trimming the hedges.

We recently harvested our green onions. The children helped to prepare an onion cream cheese spread and everyone was able to try it. It was delicious!!



AND WHEN LIFE BECAME TOO FRENZIED
She came to the garden and whispered to
the plants until
Her smile returned and her mind
was calm





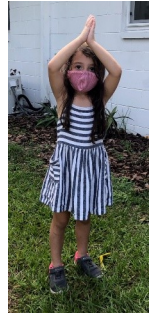
Yoga with Ms. Sunny

The children have been relaxing, stretching, breathing, and having fun in the yoga studio, and outside.

They learn new poses and then are able to show one of their own. They also incorporate yoga into some games.

During the year, they will be learning about the skeletal and muscular systems to get a better understanding of how our bodies work and move.

Yoga is a valuable way to teach them how to regulate their emotions through breathing, and keeps their bodies healthy at the same time.



Spanish with Ms. Noemi

¡Hola Amigos!

We are all bilinguals!

We have lots of fun in our Spanish classroom. Encouraging the creation of ideas and allowing students to assemble their own ideas and thoughts is a good way to promote creativity within the classroom. The Spanish classroom is one where freedom of expression is encouraged and honored and where the students are taught to analyze and think for themselves. Our class focuses on the instruction of basic language as well as it develops strategies to construct basic sentences and understanding of the written Spanish language. The conversation is open, and the students have so far, asked about the importance of learning a new language, which introduced items related to different cultures and ways of communicating. This was a great experience to learn about respecting and sharing with others. This week we are reviewing the seasons of the year in Spanish. What activities do we do in each season? What holidays are there? What colors identify each season? All in Spanish! This is how we are building the student's vocabulary while keeping the interest and allowing them to have lots of fun while learning.



Screen Time and How it Affects Children In and Out of School

I normally use this space to do some parent education in regards to Montessori methodology, practice, and history. This month, I'd like to highlight something that is universal among all schools, not just Montessori schools. Screen time is something that most children are exposed to on a regular basis these days. And, there are benefits to it. The world is becoming a digital world at a rapid pace. If children are never exposed to the technology available, they may find themselves lost later on. However, as with everything, there need to be limits.

Here are what some research has uncovered:

"...too much screen time was linked with poorer academic outcomes. However, the researchers found that various types of media could affect classroom performance differently. The researchers learned that more than one hour on the computer could negatively impact kids' math abilities, whereas two or more hours of watching TV had a poor impact on reading abilities." (1)

"...recent research finds that 63% of kids in the U.S. spend over two hours a day on recreational screen time. This is in spite of official guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics, which recommends less than one hour per day of screen time for children between the ages of 2 and 5, and, for older children, "consistent limits" on screen time and prioritization of sleep, physical activity and other healthy behaviors over media use." (2)

"The study found that too much screen time was negatively affecting children's learning abilities. Watching two or more hours of television per day at the age of 8 or 9 was associated with lower reading performance compared to peers two years later. The impact was equivalent to losing four months of learning. Using a computer for over one hour per day was linked to a similar degree of lost numeracy." (3)

One thing we have noticed is that children who talk about having a lot of screen time outside of school have a harder time working through a difficult academic challenge. They are used to getting the instant gratification that comes from a video game or a tablet. When something takes time, they get frustrated and shut down. The materials we use in the classroom are not meant to help a child speed through a problem. They are meant to break something down so they understand what they are doing, not just memorizing it. This is a slow, but very important, process. When children get frustrated by not immediately seeing a result, they are not absorbing what they are learning. This leads to academic struggles.

We are not asking for anyone to eliminate screen time at home, but please keep these things in mind, and consider setting a time limit. It will greatly benefit the children not only in school, but in other areas as well.

1 [Consumer Affairs](#)

2 [The Journalist's Resource](#)

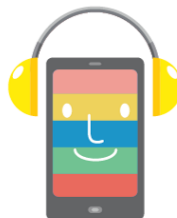
Overexposure to Electronic Devices Can Cause:

- Sleep deprivation
- Low energy
- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Increased stress
- Addiction
- Aggression and impulsivity
- Obesity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Developmental issues (especially in young kids)
- Dry-eye disease
- Decreased hand-eye coordination
- Reduced ability to form social connections and relationships
- Reduced executive function



SWAP SCREEN
TIME FOR
ACTIVE PLAY

Make screen
time a treat, not
a routine.



NO SCREENTIME
BEFORE AGE 2
and no more than one
hour per day for kids
older than 2