



2009 South Garfield Ave., Monterey Park, CA 91754

Phone 323.724.0683 Fax 323.724.0028

943 East Altadena Drive, Altadena, CA 91001

Phone 626.798.1171 Fax 626.798.6790

MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY VS. PUBLIC/PAROCHIAL ELEMENTARY

What sorts of experiences do you want your child to have in elementary school? The enclosed papers compare public/parochial schools with AMI accredited Montessori schools. Children in the Montessori Elementary program learn in a unique way. While the children overall learn similar things in both systems (even though Montessori children are often a grade level ahead), the real differences are in the methods of teaching and learning themselves. For instance:

THE CHILDREN MAKE CHOICES

In Montessori the children themselves make choices as to what they will work with on a given day; in public/parochial school the teachers decide. Therefore, in Montessori, a child who has intense interest in multiplication (perhaps the multiplication process is finally making sense!) is able to spend all day absorbed in multiplication exercises of his choosing. In public/parochial school that enthusiasm must be contained until the period arises in which multiplication is offered, and even then the child can only do those exercises which the whole class is working on and only for the period in which the class is doing them.

SPONTANEOUS ACTIVITY IN EDUCATION

Some examples from one of our classrooms: The children thought of giving the teacher a surprise birthday party. They made a poster, found someone to make a cake, made confetti, etc. Another example: The children have been taught a lot about music, both theory and practice, and they have a number of instruments to practice on. They will then spontaneously get together to play duets and compose songs. This is all without any adult suggesting anything. In short, the motivation, interest, desire, and energy all combine to make for motivated, enthusiastic learners.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

In Montessori the children are able to freely move about the classroom and work in groups. This promotes a great deal of interaction with peer help and stimulation. This principle of freedom of movement allows for spontaneous and active education.

WELL ROUNDED PERSONALITY

In Montessori we are as much interested in children learning **how to learn**, as the content of learning itself. Also, we care very much about the children learning to cooperate and learn together. The child's social and emotional nature is important to us. In contrast to schools where children are under a lot of academic pressure, in our School the children learn at a relaxed pace. In short, we are not a "brain factory"!

CHILDREN PROGRESS AT THEIR OWN PACE

Since the children are of mixed ages, each one is able to progress at his or her own pace. The slower child is not hurried along and the rapid learner is not held back to progress at some "average."

PAPERWORK VS. MANIPULATIVES

In Montessori the children work with manipulatives designed to give them a concrete idea of the concept being taught. Once they have abstracted that idea they leave the manipulative behind. In contrast, public/parochial schools mostly use textbooks and workbooks. But in Montessori, the paperwork usually comes after the concept has been understood.