

Park Forest Montessori School  
847.237.9274 www.parkforestmontessori.com

Winter 2007

# MONTESSORI Kids!

Our Children's Garden is coming along nicely. If you would like to volunteer to help with the garden, please tell Tammy Badger or Cindy Neidigh.

## In This Issue:

**Temper Tantrums**— most tantrums take place when your child is hungry, tired, ill, hyper-sensitive, testing you, feeling hyperpowered, or frustrated.

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We are pleased that Spring is almost here and we'll be using our Children's Garden again soon.

Experiences with nature play a critical role in shaping lifelong attitudes,

values, and patterns of behavior toward natural environments. Children must develop a sense of respect and caring for the natural environment during their first few years of life or be at risk for never developing such attitudes. It is an important part of healthy child development that enhances learning and quality of life over the span of one's lifetime.

We appreciate your interest in our ongoing project and we'll keep you updated on our progress as we continue to develop our Children's Garden!



## SCHEDULE

March theme: Spring is Coming!

We will study baby animals, author study, wind, farm, and the art of collage. Letters of the week: p, k, v, y

April theme: Growing and Changing

We will study baby birds, frogs, earth day, plants and seeds, and flowers. Letters of the week: q, z, s, m

May theme: Summer Fun!

We will study backyard bugs, ocean, summer safety, Independence Day, and summer poetry. Letters of the week: a, t, f, b

Chinese New Year is a very important holiday in China. It is celebrated in late January to early February (depending on the year). Chinese New Year starts on a New Moon and ends with the lantern festival on the full moon 15 days later. In 2007, Chinese New Year is celebrated on February 18; the year 2007 is the Year of the Boar. In the Chinese calendar, it is the year 4704.

恭賀新禧

Happy New Year

WEEKLY Schedule  
MONDAYS: KinderMusik w/ Fen-Fen Lin  
TUESDAYS: French with Susan Lacy  
(a.k.a., "Madame")  
WEDNESDAYS: Art  
THURSDAYS: Science  
FRIDAYS: Sharing (Show & Tell)

### NOTE TO PARENTS:

Talk with your child about the letter of the week. Ask your child what word they said at circle time that begins with the Letter of the Week!

# Temper Tantrums

by Katherine Kvolos

There are seven types of situations in which temper tantrums may occur. Most tantrums take place when your child is hungry, tired, ill, hypersensitive (to clothing, abrupt changes, etc.), testing you, feeling hyperpowered, or frustrated. The first four situations pertain to meeting your child's physical needs. In these situations, your child literally seems to be out of his own control. In the last three, (testing, feeling powerless, and frustrated) there seems to be less intensity and your child appears to be in more control of his behavior. These last three require more discrimination in determining how to respond to your child's temper tantrum.



Take the time to know your child's signals. For example, if you try negotiating with a child who is hungry, tired, ill, or hypersensitive, you will be fighting a losing battle. If you try negotiation with a child who is testing you, you may lose the respect of your child because he may be asking for you to hold a boundary that you have set. However, negotiation works well with children who feel over-powered or are frustrated. Refer to the list below to determine what to do with each form of temper tantrum.

## Fatigue

*What to do*

- Meet child's need
- Minimize talking that may lead to conflict
- Hold or rock your child

*Example: Take your child to bed or a quiet area to rest as soon as possible.*

## Hunger

*What to do*

- Meet child's need
- Minimize talking that may lead to conflict

*Example: Give your child something to eat as soon as possible, even if it is not a scheduled snack or mealtime.*

## Illness

*What to do*

- Meet child's need
- Minimize talking that may lead to conflict
- Hold or rock your child

*Example: Give your child medical assistance when necessary.*

## Hypersensitivity

*What to do*

- Remove object causing sensitivity
- Minimize all talking that may lead to conflict

*Example: If your child's shoe is too tight, loosen quickly. If it is a garment, take it off.*

*Sometimes children are sensitive to anything scratchy, like textures of clothing or labels on clothes. If you child is sensitive to abrupt changes, give advanced warning or a choice. "Tom, we'll be leaving in 10 minutes," or "Would you like to leave in 7 minutes or 10 minutes?"*

## Testing

*What to do*

- Do not give in
- Bring the child to self-quieting space
- Leave the room
- Do the unexpected

*Example: These are non-negotiable boundaries that you have set and your child is testing your limits. You can discern this type of tantrum because you will feel manipulated.*

## Feels Powerless

*What to do*

- Refuse to negotiate until he has calmed down
- Acknowledge anger
- Brainstorm solutions together
- Give child a sense of power

*Example: "When you calm down, I will be willing to discuss this with you" or "Please use your negotiating voice" or "I understand you are angry."*

*"I want you to win and I would like to win too. How could we work this out so we could both win?" Ask yourself how you can give him more power in an appropriate way right now. "Yes, I would like ice cream too. Two scoops with hot fudge and nuts! What would you have if you could?"*

## Frustration

*What to do*

- Check your expectations—are they too high?
- Break down the task into smaller steps
- Make sure she knows how to follow the directions

*Example: If she is having a difficult time with cleaning her room, break it down into specific, obtainable tasks, and present them one at a time. "Please put all your books on a shelf." When that is done, "Good job with your books. Now please pick up all your dolls and stuffed animals and put each of them away."*

# Montessori Basics

## Sensorial Exercises

—Excerpts from an article in *Tomorrow's Child* magazine  
A child interacts with the physical world through her senses. From birth, she will look, listen, touch, taste, pick up, manipulate, and smell almost anything that comes into her grasp. At first, everything goes into the mouth. Gradually, she begins to explore each object's weight, texture, and temperature. She may watch something that catches her attention, such as a butterfly, with infinite patience. The Sensorial curriculum is designed to help the child focus her attention more carefully on the physical world, exploring with each of her senses the subtle variations in the properties of objects.



# PARENTS

*as partners*

## BUILDING RESPONSIBILITY

Doing chores helps your child develop responsibility. Doing chores helps children feel part of the family—they learn to take pride in what they do.

Here are some tips:

- **Let your child have some choices.** Allow her to choose whether to walk the dog or fold the clothes. Offer choices about when chores are done “Would you like to walk the dog before or after your snack?” (Not, “Will you please walk the dog?” ...that choice may not get you the desired result!)
- **Do not do anything** for your child that he can do for himself.
- **Make sure your child** picks up after herself. Once she’s had a snack, teach her to rinse her plate and put it away.
- **Praise your child for effort.** Say, “Good job!” (Not “Good boy!”)
- **Break large tasks into small ones.** Be specific with your requests. “Clean your room” may be overwhelming, but “put the blocks in their bag, the books on the shelf, and make your bed” may not.

Thank you for your support of our Non-Profit School!



Our school is registered with the “**Box Tops for Education**” program! We can get 10 cents for every box

top you bring us. Take home a collection box.

**Thank you for your support!**

Watch here for other ideas on how to help.

## Those Mysterious Montessori Materials

### Sensorial Exercises: Red Rods & Cylinder Blocks

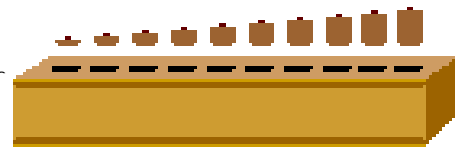


**The Red Rods** are a series of ten rods (thin rectangular prisms) in which the height and weight are uniform, but which range in length from one decimeter (10 centimeters) to a full meter. The child scatters them around her rug and looks for the longest.

As each in turn is arranged along side of the others in a series, they help the child discover the real progression of length. The teachers introduce vocabulary: short, shorter, shortest; long, longer, longest.

The red rods are quite similar to the red and blue rods in the math area, which help the child learn to count by showing the growth of quantity as length, distinguished by alternating patterns of red and blue to represent each decimeter.

**The Cylinder Blocks** are a set of four naturally finished (unpainted) rectangular blocks of wood, into which each have been cut 10 cylindrical holes. Each hole is filled with a matching wooden cylindrical inset fitted with a little knob on the top to make it easy for a child’s small hand to grasp and lift the inset out of its perfectly fitted hole.



Each set of cylinders is constructed to vary in a regular sequence by either depth, diameter, or both. The children remove each cylinder in turn, carefully tracing its height and circumference and the depth and circumference of each hole with one finger. Once all 10 cylinders have been removed and placed on the rug, the children take each turn and find the hole into which it fits perfectly, with the top of the cylinder flush with the top of the cylinder block. If they’ve made a mistake, the children can normally see it for themselves because all 10 cylinders will not fit correctly.

The children quickly begin to challenge themselves by attempting to “see” which hole is likely to fit the cylinder in their hand rather than trying to fit each into one hole after the other.

When they are ready for a greater challenge, the children will mix the cylinders from two or three blocks together and try to fit them all into the corresponding holes.

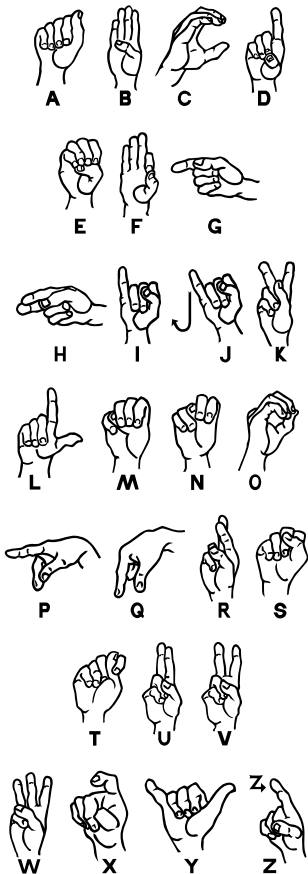
“The child must learn by his own individual authority... and not to be questioned in his choice. Our teaching must only answer the mental needs of the child, never dictate them. He must have absolute freedom of choice, and then he requires nothing but repeated experiences”  
(page 7, *To Educate the Human Potential*).

A Quote from  
Maria Montessori

from Tomorrow's Child magazine

Supposing I said there was a planet without schools or teachers, where study was unknown, and yet the inhabitants—doing nothing but living and walking about—came to know all things, to carry in their minds the whole of learning; would you not think I was romancing? Well, just this, which seems so fanciful as to be nothing but the invention of a fertile imagination, is a reality. It is the child's way of learning. This is the path he follows. He learns everything without knowing he is learning it, and in doing so he passes little by little from the unconscious to the conscious, treading always in the paths of joy and love. —Dr. Maria Montessori

## American Finger Spelling



# Q&A Ask a Teacher

**Q** My 3 1/2 year old son is only interested in Spiderman. Should I be worried?

**A** Children go through stages at different stages at different ages. Here are some annoying behaviors that show a child is okay.

Infancy—Cries when another baby cries

18 months—Loves dumping things out of a container

2 years—Yells "Me! Mine!" when asked to share a toy

2 1/2 years—Takes half an hour to wash hands

3 years—Spills milk at the lunch table every day

3 1/2 years—"Spiderman!" "Ariell"

4 years—Interested in exploring other children's bodies

4 1/2 years—Always wants to "win," to be "biggest" and "best"

5 years—Bosses younger children around

School age—Rebellious against authority after a long school day



If you have any questions, suggestions, or submissions for the newsletter, or would like to sponsor one, please contact Lori Dundon or one of the teachers.

www.parkforestmontessori.com  
sorchasmom@comcast.net or  
880-3343 (after 6p.m.)



If you shop at Target, don't forget to designate our school for their "Take Charge of Education" program! For every purchase you make with a Target Guest card or Target Visa, Target will donate 1% of purchases to our school.

**Our School ID # is  
23094**

Sign up at our local Target store, or go to [www.target.com](http://www.target.com), click on **Community Giving** at the bottom of the page, and then click on the **Take Charge of Education** link. You can click the **DESIGNATE** button and enter in:

**Park Forest Montessori School.**

**Thank you for your support!**

We are also registered at Giant (id# 01776).

## Sponsor's Corner

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State College, PA 16801  
Fax 814 237 0120  
**814 237 8474**  
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