

“Montessori is an education for independence, preparing not just for school, but for life.”

A Deeper Look at Student Independence

Last week I wrote to you about fostering independence among our students during this Remote Learning Period. Today, I'd like to dive a little deeper on this. I've been thinking a lot with our staff about what independence looks like in the home, and how does that help us once we return to school?

Among our challenges in this Remote Learning Period is this: how do we embrace all the previous Montessori training your kids have had at school and apply it to the home setting? This is key because we all want the children to be those independent learners while at home.

Why is Independence so important to your child's Montessori education?

The child looks for his independence first, not because he does not desire to be dependent on the adult. But because he has in himself some fire, some urge, to do certain things and not other things. - Dr. Maria Montessori

Independence is a key aspect of their capacity to furthering their growth. In the classroom, we spend time fostering 'normalization'. In our Montessori world, this means that our students feel comfortable in their learning environment, they know the sequence of steps and expectations for the activities they are working on, and they can access their environment independently because it's designed to meet their needs.

Here are some small and big ways you can help support your children in their independence.

- set up their personal learning environment so they can access their materials independently.
- utilize checklist for steps related to the technology they are using
- make a color coded list of log ins and passwords
- walk away from classroom meetings to allow children to be alone with their teachers
- encourage independent work of the home. These include daily chores of dishes, floors, making their bed, keeping env clean and pleasing, etc.)
- support your child in the initial part of a work (getting set up) IF Needed, then walk away and allow the child to continue independently.
- minimize interruptions to allow for 'ah ha' moments and a consistent train of thought
- encourage them to fix their own snacks and practice self-care
- encourage social collaboration with classmates (via Zoom, email, telephone; please ask Jen at the Front Office Help Desk if you need assistance connecting with classmates).

How will this impact the classroom when we return to in-person learning?

All of these seemingly small actions by you and your children in your home, supports their past experiences in our classrooms, and their future experiences once we are back together at school.

I hope you will help your children continue their practice of making a plan, following thru on that plan, and meeting goals. These are all important muscles for them to continue to strengthen. This will help them as they transition from the home setting back to our public Montessori classrooms.

~ Laura Wrubleski, Educational Program Director

