



mindful moments

WINTER 2012

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**Emergency Closing/
Delay Information:**

In the event of inclement weather or other type of emergency, the Children's Center main number will have a recorded message to update you with closing and/or delay information by 5:30 am: 914-597-2253

**Or call our Weather
Advisory number:**
914-597-2303

Dear Parents,

As we welcome in the New Year, we are honored to be introducing a new logo and a new form of communication, our newly designed newsletter, *Mindful Moments*. This captures the essence of our mindful attention to our children each day and our interest in being present with them. The idea of mindfulness means attentive awareness, especially of the present moment. This fits in nicely with our Montessori philosophy, practice, and curriculum.

The purpose of the newsletter is to help educate our parents and our community about our Montessori philosophy of education and how it comes to life in our classroom and in our lives.

We know that many of our families first come to us because we are a child care center, offering full-time, year-round care for children from as young as three months in a beautiful and safe environment. We also know that many of our families are drawn to us because we are a Montessori center, and as such provide a rich curriculum of education and learning for the children in our care.

When you visit our environments, you'll see children happily engaged. The rooms are peaceful and quiet; the children are joyful. Even the youngest are busy, "reading" a book, discovering their new ability to climb the stairs. See a toddler delight when she discovers something new she can do by herself; watch as two early childhood children bend their heads together, working cooperatively; listen to the sounds of three children discussing their work around the easel.

Our new logo exemplifies the ideals of our Center. We are at our heart a Montessori center, supporting each of the children in our care, at each level of their development—infant, toddler, early childhood—as they reach their potential. We aim to assist them as they grow toward independence, confidence, and self-esteem, and to help them each develop a lifetime habit of learning, curiosity and collaboration. It is the light of their natural intelligence that we look to nurture.

Please take some time to read through this first edition of *Mindful Moments*, as it will give you some insights into our philosophy and the life that we share with your children each day. Maria Montessori said, "Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence."

We are honored and privileged by the work you enable us to do with, and for, your children, here at the Montessori Children's Center. We look forward to working with you in the years ahead in this meaningful task of assisting your children as they grow.

Your children are the stars in our logo. We are grateful to be able to use the tools of our trade, our Montessori training and practice, to help them shine.



Any child *who is*
self-sufficient, *who can*
tie his shoes, dress
or undress himself,
reflects in his joy
and sense of achievement
the image of
human dignity, *which is*
derived from a sense of
independence. ✨

-Maria Montessori

FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY ROBERT DEROSA

Professional Development at the Children's Center

Parents often wonder what happens during our Professional Development Days at the Montessori Children's Center. To fulfill their desire for lifelong learning, in addition to meeting the NYS requirements, every year teachers and administrators become adult learners in programs and workshops that enrich them as professional early childhood educators.

This past summer, I was enrolled in the Infant and Toddler Teacher Education Program at Queen's College, which was offered by the Center for Montessori Teacher Education/NY. This five-week academic course was the first step in receiving my certification at the Infant and Toddler level. In January, I will begin the internship portion, which requires both hours in the classroom working with the children, and written documentation of my observations, reflections, and ideas. In addition to classroom hours, I will be conducting evening parent education workshops at the Montessori Children's Center. Once certified, I will have my Montessori certification for ages birth through twelve, as I completed the age three to twelve certification in 1994 in Toronto, Canada.

During Center Renewal Week, the teachers and staff spent an entire day getting recertified in Infant and Child First Aid and CPR. We received our recertification from the American Red Cross, which must be renewed every two years.

During two evenings in September, K.T. and I joined all the teachers in workshops on communicating with children and parents, held in our classrooms. Then, in October, we all came together for a "Journey through the Environment." Working with trained Montessori presenters, we "journeyed" through each classroom and spent time seeing and discussing what happens during a typical day with the children. Activities, materials, and photographs were available for us to deepen our understanding of the rich environments we have for

children at every age. We plan to offer a similar "Journey" for parents in early 2012.

In November, we closed to children for the day to attend two very important and required workshops. We were all



recertified in Child Abuse Identification and Prevention, which also included awareness of Shaken Baby Syndrome. This extremely important workshop reminded us of our obligations as Mandated Reporters, with additional responsibilities regarding the children in our care. We also attended a presentation titled, "Know your Regulations," to ensure that every staff member has a good understanding of the NYS regulations for a Child Care Center. A copy of the regulations can be found on the parent bulletin board for your review.

In December, the Center for Montessori Teacher Education/NY invited us to attend several workshops held as part of their fall seminar for the adult learners who are enrolled in the various programs. The Infant and Toddler teachers, along with K.T. and I, spent an entire Saturday at the Montessori Children's Center learning about the Infant and Toddler curriculum, classroom design, and program development. The Early Childhood teachers spent Friday and Saturday evenings at two workshops; one covered observation and recordkeeping, and the other covered communicating with parents, with an emphasis on parent/teacher conferences.

In addition to the workshops that we do together in groups, teachers and administrators often attend programs on their own time that are of interest to them and beneficial to their specific program needs. Two that were attended this year were a workshop for Assistant Teachers and one on Curriculum.

All of us at the Montessori Children's Center are committed to on-going professional development. We hope that you understand the value for your children, even when it means we close the Children's Center to devote our day to learning, just as all of your children do everyday.



MOMENTS FROM...

THE INFANT, TODDLER, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD ROOMS

Infant Room: Toilet Education

By Donna Pellegrin

Toileting preparation in the Infant Room is an on-going process that we incorporate into our daily opportunities of diapering. While diapering a child, we introduce and use language to explain the process and to assist the child as he begins to understand and identify what is occurring. This helps children to be successful in their toilet learning as they grow and helps make diapering a pleasant experience for adult and child alike.

We start with our youngest babies, using diapering as a time to create a foundation of understanding. We tell the child everything we are doing, thus fostering trust, building communication, and assisting in language development. We use simple phrases such as: "You have a BM in your diaper;" "I'm going to lay you on the table and give you a clean diaper;" "Can you hold your diaper?" "I'm opening the tabs," etc. We mention parts of the child's body: arms, legs, hands, and feet.

Once the child begins to stand and walk, we diaper them in a standing position, in front of a full-length mirror rather than horizontal on the changing

table. This gives the child the opportunity to see all that is happening and aids in the development of self-care. Our children's diapers and wipes are kept on low shelves in the bathroom, within their own reach. The child gets his own wipes and pulls out his own diaper from his box. You'll notice each box is labeled with a photo of the child—as well as his written name—so the child can identify which box contains her things.

As we move through the process of diapering, we talk about everything we are doing: naming, identifying, narrating, and speaking in a friendly, matter-of-fact, non-judgmental tone. We want the child to have a sense of participation in his own diapering. If the child is able to, she can help by pulling down pants, unsnapping "onesies," and opening or closing diaper tabs. At the end of the process, the adult washes her own hands, explaining to the child, "I am washing my hands" and then offers a wipe for the child to also wash his hands. This communicates to the child that the steps for toileting include hand-washing, and thus helps establish a life-long pattern of healthy hand-washing after using the toilet.

We have a potty seat in the diapering room. If a child shows interest, we will ask if he would like to sit on the potty. The presence of the child-size potty in the space enables the children to become familiar with it as a normal object of their environment. Thus, it is not strange or foreign to them when

they are ready to move to that stage of their toilet education. Some children choose to sit on the potty with a diaper on; others will sit with the diaper removed, at times urinating or having a BM. The child may choose to come back to sit another time, or may not. Sometimes the child sits while looking at a book (just like Daddy does!).

We recognize that while it is early developmentally to engage in the formal process of toilet learning for most of the children in our room, the presence and vocabulary of toilet education begins to lay a foundation for healthy toileting habits as they grow and become more ready.

At home, you can help the child participate in his own diapering. If the child is able to stand, have him stand up whenever you change him. Ask your child to help: by choosing a diaper, getting the box of wipes, pulling down or pulling up pants, picking out a dry shirt. Have your child wash hands or use a wipe, along with you. Try to be neutral when it comes to soiled diapers. Making bowel movements and making urine are a natural part of life and we all need to eliminate our wastes through our bodily functions. When we engage in conversational tone with the child about what is happening—without judgment or harsh language or reprimand—the child can feel natural and comfortable, and will not develop shame or fear around her body or bodily functions. We use the



◀ Jonti Craft (800-543-4149) makes an extra safe, acrylic plastic mirror with a distortion free image, which is perfectly sized for children. The stand can be removed and placed in two ways, so the mirror can be used in either the horizontal position (for infants) or vertical position once the child can stand. 13" wide x 48" high

terms “BM” and “urine”—rather than slang words—as a way to convey our respect to the child. We do a lot of naming work with our children at this young age, as part of our Montessori approach. We believe that giving children real words gives them the tools to understand themselves and the world around them. This helps them to learn to communicate effectively with others.

Our approach to diapering begins to educate and engage the child in a supportive, cooperative experience that leads to self-care and language development as a part of a stress-free and caring toileting experience. Please let us know if you have any questions or would like more information about how you can continue this approach at home.



Toddler Room Transitioning from Diapers: How we help our Toddlers

By Jeanne Cooper and Diana Mendez

Toilet Education in the Toddler Room is a wonderful experience in assisting our children to gain independence. In our work at the Montessori Children’s Center, we strive to enable our little ones to have as much independence as possible and sometimes it is easier for us here than it is at home. We have designed our bathroom specifically with this education process in mind. We have toilets that are small and at the child’s height—so they are comfortable for little bodies. We have a mirror at the child’s level. The mirror allows each child to get a full-length view of their body and enables them to see themselves as they sit on the toilet. We also provide a small stool that enables the child to sit down and change their own clothes.

Most children have the muscle control to regulate themselves between 18 months and 3 years of age. Children begin to show that they are ready for toilet education by displaying a number of readiness signals:

- Able to sit down and play quietly for about five minutes
- Able to help dress and undress self
- Able to understand and follow simple directions
- Takes pride in his or her accomplishments
- Has bowel movements at regular times every day
- Has well formed bowel movements
- Is able to remain dry for about 2 hours at time
- Can urinate a good amount at one time
- Shows imitative behavior
- Wants to put toys and other possessions where they belong

We often get a very clear message from children because they ask to use the toilet, or even go so far as to pull down their pants, take off their diaper, and sit right down on the toilet or potty!

When we begin transitioning to toilet education, we ask, “Would you like to sit on the toilet?” If the child answers “yes,” she has a choice of three toilets—two are traditional toilets and one is a small chair with a plastic bowl cut out in the center.



Sometimes children prefer one shape or fit better than another. At home, you might see what happens if you place a small plastic potty next to your adult toilet. If you are comfortable, it is very helpful to use the bathroom at the

same time as your child. At the Montessori Children’s Center, adults do not use the bathroom at the same time as the children, but because we always have an open door into the children’s bathroom, all the children are able to gain a sense of comfort and naturalness around the concept of toileting. This integration of toileting in their everyday routines helps to support the child as he begins his transition to toilet education at this age.

Our children are already familiar with the words we use to express the natural bodily functions: “urine” “BM” “bottom” “toilet”. Naming the functions helps them to understand what is going on, become familiar with their own bodily process, and helps them express what is happening.

If you can use these words at home, it will help in creating consistency during the toileting process.

We provide books to help a child relax as she sits on the toilet. Helpful books include: *Once upon a Potty* by Alona Frankel; *The Potty Book for Girls* or *The Potty Book for Boys* by Alyssa Satin Capucilli; *Everyone Poops (My Body Science Series)* by Taro Gomi; *All by Myself!* By Alikei.

When a child is finished, we encourage the child by saying, “You did it!” Or we might say, “You were listening to your body, you knew you had to use the toilet!”

We sometimes hear our children say “I made a BM by accident.” We treat an accident as a learning experience. We tell that child, “that’s okay,” without passing judgment or reprimand. It is natural for children to have accidents as they transition to using the toilet every time and we want each child to trust us to help them through the process without feeling anxiety, stress, or pressure.

If a child is oppositional or disinterested in this process, we will not push him to use the toilet, although we do continue to invite him. We want to elicit cooperation

from the child, and until he wants to cooperate, we do not force him.

With parents reinforcing the methods used by the teachers at the beginning and end of the day, over the weekends, and during holidays, the child has a sense of consistency in the toilet learning process. As always, it is important that parents and teachers maintain communication about the child's progress and share any concerns or questions while we work together to help the child begin to master this skill.

Using real underwear enables the child to feel wetness. Diapers and pull-ups are so well designed to wick away wetness that the child has no idea what is happening and this slows their learning process. It is important for the child to experience the sensation of wetness so he can begin to utilize the muscle control that is now available to him. Disposables keep the child from experiencing the cold, damp discomfort of wet cloth. The discomfort helps motivate the child to stay dry. You can purchase thicker "training" underwear that provides your environment with a little more protection (less leakage), while still enabling the child to feel the wet or dry.

If the child does have an accident, let her feel it for a few minutes before you help change the clothes. You can talk about that feeling of being wet because urine or BM is in the underwear.

Once a child starts their transition to toilet education, please allow him the time he needs to adjust, and don't go back to diapers or pull-ups. You may decide you need some extra help for nighttime in the form of a pull-up, or you may find that your child can, in fact, make it through the night.

We consider toilet education to be a process that will help children gradually master toileting as an important human behavior. We work to ensure that their toilet learning is a non-stressful experience that is appropriate to each

child's individual development and involves the child, parents, and teachers. We believe that when children are in a group care situation, parents and teachers can work as partners so that children can be comfortable, confident, and successful while they learn toileting skills.

Toilet education in the Toddler Room is a fun experience for the child. It is one of the most important parts of the work we do to help a child gain a sense of independence, confidence, and self-awareness. We are delighted to be able to work with our parents to help the child achieve this great feeling of success.

If you would like to talk to us about starting the toileting process with your child, or if you have any questions about our toilet education, please let us know. We are here to help you and your child make this transition a fun and pleasant experience for all.



Early Childhood: Toilet Education

By Pam Serra

In the Early Childhood classroom, many of the children are already independent in regards to their toileting, while some children are still in the process of mastering the skill. We work with the children who are beginning to learn about toileting and we work with the children who are still in the process to help them achieve independence in toileting. It is such a milestone when their independence has been accomplished. The children feel a sense of pride and satisfaction at their own developing ability to care for themselves.

As new and young children join the class, they are encouraged to use the toilet by their own observations of older children using the bathroom. The

variety of ages present in a Montessori classroom supports children learning from each other in all aspects of their learning, including learning about using the toilet. The teacher helps the child who is new to toileting by inviting her to use the bathroom every hour, and thus gains knowledge of the child's schedule and pattern. Once the adult begins to know the child's usual time, she can help ensure success by inviting the child to use the toilet at that specific time. Some children are more internally regulated than others. To help everyone in the class have ample opportunities to use the toilet, we promote bathroom time throughout the day: upon arrival, a half hour after eating or drinking, before and after nap, before going outside.

During certain bathroom times, a teacher is present in the bathroom to guide children in toileting: sitting on or standing at the toilet for an extended period of time; how to pull one's own pants up and down; how to wash and dry hands. These reminders and modeling help set the foundation for the times of the day when the child uses the bathroom on his own.

Our bathroom environment is designed for independence and success. Each child keeps his extra clothes in a storage bin that is labeled with his own photo and name. The bins are set out at the child's level for easy access. Each bin contains 2 sets of clothing. If a child needs to change out of soiled clothing, it is an easy choice for the child to select what to wear. The child puts the soiled clothes in a bag to bring home. We ask that parents return clean items to school the next day, so that a set of clean clothes are always available for use whenever necessary.

Toileting presents an opportunity to expand children's vocabulary. We use actual names and words when discussing toileting: urine, urinate, toilet, bathroom, BM, and bowel movement. The children are at an age when they quickly pick up new words thus we want to give them accurate language for effective communication.

What do we do when accidents happen?

We treat accidents as a natural part of a learning process. We help the children learn from an accident by treating the situation as a problem that has a resolution. We involve the child in the resolution. Bathroom accidents occur for a variety of reasons. For example, the child may be unclear about body signals; the child is engaged in an activity

and waits too long; the child's clothing is difficult or cumbersome to remove; the child is unable to pull down pants or underwear far enough. By encouraging the child to become part of the solution by removing soiled clothes, putting clothes in the hamper or the laundry area, wiping their own body, choosing dry clean clothes, getting dressed, parents can help support the child's growing

independence and sense of control. Sometimes children may need help with the resolution process. But when the adult gives support by letting the child help himself as much as he is able, rather than quickly rushing in to resolve the problem, we help in a larger way by supporting their developing independence and sense of self-worth. Children gain much by being able to do things themselves and knowing that we, the adults in their world, trust them and believe in their ability to do it themselves. The process becomes easier and easier through practice, experience, and time.

Toilet education is a progression that begins in the Infant Room and continues through the Toddler Room and into the Early Childhood Room. At every age, the child becomes more familiar with the experience and reaches another level of understanding and ability. The process of toilet education may take a long time or a shorter time, and may sometimes feel like a challenge. With patience, consistency, role modeling, child involvement, and acceptance of accidents as a learning tool, the children do become independent in toileting and feel good about themselves along the way!



HELPFUL TIPS:

Here are some tips for helping your child have a successful and positive experience:

- Invite your child to use the bathroom at transition times: coming home; a half hour after meals; before bedtime; in the morning upon waking
 - Have your child wear clothes with an elastic waist
- Avoid buttons, snaps, zippers, and belts when purchasing clothes for your child
 - Show the child how to pull pants up and down
 - Avoid many layers of clothes
 - Show the child how to flush the toilet
 - Show the child how to wipe
- Be accepting of accidents as a normal part of learning

NUTRITION

CHOOSING HEALTHY TREATS INSTEAD OF SWEETS



Indulging in a sweet treat now and then is not a problem. But when we—and our children—over-consume processed sugar, we not only alter our eating habits dramatically over time, we change what our bodies crave and how they function. This habit is easier and easier to fall into even without our awareness, as sugar, fructose, and corn sweeteners are added to so many of the processed foods produced for children: including breads, yogurt, pre-packaged snacks, frozen foods, juices.

Like many families, we at the Montessori Children's Center serve healthy foods that have little or no sugar. We encourage our adults to model these habits as well, when on our premises. For example, we do not permit soda to be consumed by adults when in view of the children. When we celebrate birthdays, we ask parents to provide healthy treats instead of sweets. We avoid sugary and processed foods in our menus and we request that when we gather as a community for merriment and rituals, we work together to model nutritious ways of celebrating.

Here are some tips to help you if you'd like to replace some of the sugar in your family diet at home:

BE FRUITY

Fruits are sweet by nature, which make them appealing. Bananas, pears, peaches, and oranges all contain natural sugars but are also packed with important vitamins and fiber. If you keep a bowl of interesting and appealing fruits out in your kitchen, within easy reach of your child—she can grab some-

thing healthy to snack on whenever she is hungry. And she'll be less likely to ask you for a sweet. You'll notice as she grows, she'll continue to reach for something healthy.

It is fun to introduce new fruits to your child. There are many new varieties of fruits to try and taste. Just as we do food tasting at the Montessori Children's Center, you can make this new experience a taste-bud adventure. Bring home a new fruit and share it with the family as a special dessert. Sometimes it takes 3 or more introductions of a new food before a child decides to like it. As with any new food introduction, if you see any sign of an adverse physical reaction, you probably wouldn't want to try it again without consulting your pediatrician.

BE BALANCED

Sugar cravings may be the result of a lack of certain nutrients in the body. If your child only seems to be eating one kind of food, you might ask your pediatrician to recommend a multi-vitamin to help round out their intake. The meals and menus served at the Montessori Children's Center are designed by a nutritionist to offer well-balanced nutrition for children without sugar and additives. Because our children eat together as a group, they tend to try and enjoy a range of foods that they might not otherwise eat at home. Ask your child's teacher if you think you have a picky eater at home or have questions about eating habits at school.

BE HYDRATED

When we're not properly hydrated, we may feel cranky, head-achy, even hungry, and little ones suffer that way as well. Of course, if they are still on the breast or bottle, additional water is not necessary. But as children get older, be sure to offer water if they are thirsty (with meals and throughout the day), especially if they are active. Water is always a better hydrator than fruit juice and important for both brain and body health. Sometimes it is just a matter of training to help children learn to choose something healthier than soda or sugary fruit drinks.

BE A ROLE MODEL

If you are chugging soda, you can bet your kids will be too. If you're grabbing a Starbucks "whoopee pie" on the way home, you can bet you'll be training your child to reach for the sweets. If you can keep your blood sugar stable between meals, it will help you make better choices. Waiting too long between eating may set you up to choose sugary or fatty foods. So try to choose protein and fiber-rich foods like whole grains and produce for your meals and snacks, and try eating more frequently. You may find this one small change can help you make healthier choices and you'll find you feel better and have more sustained energy, too.

BE READY

What's the easiest way to beat the sugar trap? Be ready! Make sure you stock your fridge and pantry at home with ample choices. Try packing healthy snacks in your car, so if you're rushing or late you can still find something fast for you and your child. Such things as nuts, dried fruit cut up crunchy veggies, rice cakes,

nut butters, cheeses, hard-boiled eggs are great to have at your fingertips. Offer your child a delicious, whole grain bread, spread with nut butter or hummus, and watch as your child experiences the calming effect of the release of serotonin. Now, that's the kind of feeling that lasts and sets both of you up for a better day or calmer night.

HOW SUGAR AFFECTS BEHAVIOR

Is your child sugar sensitive? You probably know if he is. Does he ask for sweet foods when he is hungry? Does he always choose a sweet food or drink if given a choice? Does your child have unexpected meltdowns that end in tantrums or tears, especially when hungry? When children act out, if you give them something sweet and they immediately settle down, you can probably bet they are sugar sensitive.

What does sugar do to kids? Little bodies don't process sugar the same way as grown up bodies. Mood swings, inability to concentrate, and temper tantrums can be the affects of too much sugar in a child's diet.

When we eat carbohydrates (such as sugars and starches), our blood sugar rises and our bodies release insulin. Insulin helps fuel the body. But when children are sugar sensitive, this careful balance is disrupted. Their blood sugar rises more quickly and reaches higher levels than normal. As a result, a larger amount of insulin is released. This creates that "sugar high" and subsequently leads to a sugar crash — which might be familiar to you as exhaustion, spaciness, irritability, or meltdown.

One brain chemical that is affected by sugar is serotonin. We often think of serotonin as the brain soother. Serotonin gives us the feeling of well-being and peacefulness. When a child has low serotonin levels, she feels out of control and overwhelmed. It seems that sugar sensitive children have lower levels of serotonin than other children, which makes it harder for them to find that quiet, peaceful place within.

SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO AT HOME TO HELP CHANGE YOUR CHILD'S DIET:

- Make sure every meal includes some protein
- Try to feed your child breakfast within 1 hour of her waking
- Serve high-protein snacks: cottage cheese, almond butter, seeds, nuts (if not allergic)
- Replace white flours with whole grain
- Try to avoid buying and serving processed foods

When you do your grocery shopping, stay along the perimeter



of the supermarket. Fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, meats and fish are displayed along the inside walls of the store. Processed foods, "junk" foods, sodas, and pre-packaged foods are shelved within. If you avoid food that comes in a box, you'll go a long way to reducing your child's processed sugar consumption.

In modest amounts, sugar can have a healthful place in a child's diet (or an adult's). But many kids get too much, too often, and many are extra sensitive to the effects of sugar. We know that sugar-rich foods tend to be full of empty calories, so when a child consumes sugar, it displaces the "hunger" for the nutritious foods children need.

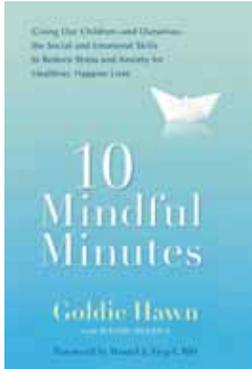
A recent landmark study of more than 3,000 infants and toddlers found that close to half of seven to eight month old children in the study were already consuming sugar-sweetened snacks, sodas, and fruit drinks.

By making some changes in diet, you can actually raise beneficial levels of serotonin. This will result in your child feeling and being more in-control, and will enable your child to have a much happier outlook.

Try it for a while and see what happens. If your child is sugar sensitive, you and she may be very happy you did!

BOOK NOOK

RECOMMENDED READING FOR PARENTS



10 Mindful Minutes: Giving Our Children— and Ourselves—the Social and Emotional Skills to Reduce Stress and Anxiety for Healthier, Happy Lives

Author: Goldie Hawn

Goldie Hawn (actress, comedian, director, mother) developed the revolutionary MindUP program to teach young children how their brains work. As children discover where their emotions come from and how their brains function, they become more self-aware and begin to discover the positive effects of mindfulness. This, in turn, empowers them to manage and reduce their own stress—and helps them to be happy.

This book takes the basic information behind the MindUp program and gives us—parents, teachers, and caregivers—a very clear understanding of how the brain functions, thus enabling us to give that vital information to the children in our lives. The understanding of how our brains work empowers us (and our children) to reduce our own anxiety and actually influence how we feel and act.

Hawn connects the overuse of digital media (computers, video games, cell phones) to changes in our children's attention spans and explains the negative effects of such usage on a child's ability to communicate. She demonstrates how the bombardment of violence in TV and games desensitizes our children and changes their abilities to be empathetic. These are worrying trends for our children and their future; thankfully her book gives us (and the children in our care) the tools we need to counterbalance and change course.

10 Mindful Minutes is a salve. The steps and practices Hawn offers are easily assimilated into our busy lives. We all can use these skills, even in small amounts, to help reduce our stress and anxiety, and aid our children in developing powerful and sustaining life-long habits. For parents who already integrate this kind of practice into their lives and with their children, this book can be an additional support. If we are attentive to her words, we can help shape our children's brain for a lifetime of resilience and happiness and aren't those among the qualities we wish most for our children as they grow?





TO READ WITH YOUR CHILD

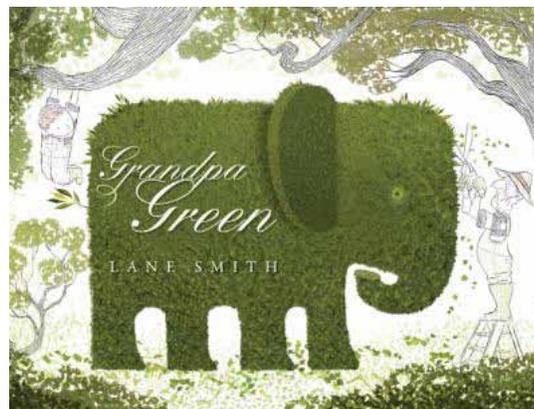
Grandpa Green

Author and illustrator: Lane Smith

I'm a dedicated gardener, so the new book, *Grandpa Green*, by best-selling author and illustrator Lane Smith, captivated and touched me in many ways. Lane Smith has taken the issues of aging and memory loss and woven a beautifully illustrated and inspiring tale that touches the heart. From the first drawing of a topiary trimmed in the shape of a crying baby, "He was born a really long time ago/before computers or cell phones or television," the story traces the life of Grandpa Green through whimsical topiary creations that enable the memories of the forgotten past to be remembered and retold. Halfway through the book, we discover the identity of the narrator: he is Grandpa Green's great-grandchild.

Like many beloved picture books, this one is brimming with fanciful, inventive illustrations that tell the story. The characters are drawn with line drawings and soft shading of color and the topiaries are a vivid green, full of verdant life against the white of the pages. At one point, the boy hangs from the branch of a giant tree, whose leaves turn from green to brown and then reveal bare branches. The metaphor of aging, memory loss, and the passage of time is beautifully expressed in this celebration of life and the importance of relationships.

We know that reading to a child every night helps with their reading readiness, and also bonds caregiver and child. The power of this stunning picture book is that it provides an additional pathway to strengthen these bonds; as you wander through Grandpa Green's Garden, stories of your own, that you will want to share with your little loved one, are sure to emerge along with each glorious and delightful page.



CALENDAR

THE CHILDREN'S CENTER WILL BE CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DAYS:

Monday, January 2	New Year's Day Observed
Monday, January 16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Monday, February 20	Presidents' Day
Friday, April 6	Good Friday
Monday, May 28	Memorial Day
Wednesday, July 4	Independence Day
Monday, August 27 – Friday, August 31	Center Renewal Week
Monday, September 3	Labor Day

We will re-open for the next program year on Tuesday, September 4, 2012.

INTRODUCTION TO MONTESSORI FOR ADULTS

Starting February, 2012 CMTE/NY is pleased to be offering a 4-Part "Introduction to Montessori". This introductory course covers the basics of Montessori philosophy and practice. "Introduction to Montessori" is an excellent program for parents, assistants, substitute teachers in a Montessori school, and anyone interested in starting their Montessori training or considering Montessori training. This is a core course requirement for Infant and Toddler and Elementary Certification for those who do not have previous Early Childhood Montessori certification.

The course covers the fundamental principles of Montessori: her theory of human development, central role of observation, and Montessori educational practices in the early childhood classroom.

4 Saturdays
Time: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Instructor: Blaire Jennings
Fee: \$950

For further information and to register, please contact Valerie Tarangelo at: vtarangelo@cmteny.com or 914-948-2501

ADMISSIONS:

We have a rolling admissions policy. Children move up from class to class throughout the year, as they become developmentally ready and old enough for each classroom. As spaces become available in our classroom, we accept new students. If you are interested in finding out more about our program and current openings, please contact Director, Robert DeRosa at 914-597-2234.

If you know someone in need of full-time, year-round child care for their children, we thank you for recommending the Montessori Children's Center.

