



Family Weekly Memo- Jan. 27-31, 2025

Good morning. It's a breezy day out there already but the sunrise is spectacular!

We have been struggling with our older students being dressed properly to stay outside. Please help them remember at least a coat! We all know it's not "cool" to wear a jacket but maybe a couple hoodies then?? They have no choice but to be outside in the morning for 30-40 minutes, depending on when their bus arrives and they have been getting pretty sneaky about trying to spend as much time inside as possible, going for breakfast, using the washroom, etc. The supervision in the morning is outside so please remind them of the expectation that they are outside. Classes also spend time outside at various times throughout the week and proper outdoor gear is a must. I've included an article that stresses the importance of students connecting to the outdoors. Thanks!

This week:

Monday Jan. 27 th	Pizza Sale-7-11
Wednesday Jan. 29 th	Snack Sale
Friday Jan. 31 st	NO SCHOOL- Professional Development Day

Upcoming dates:

Feb. 12	Mrs. Dixie's class Ski trip
Feb. 14	Valentine's Day
Feb. 17	NO SCHOOL- Family Day
Feb. 20	Grade 7's Ice Fishing
Feb. 21	Mrs. Vijay's class Art Gallery
Feb. 26/27	Early Dismissal-Student Led Conferences
Mar. 12	Showcase of Learning (stay tuned for more info)
Mar. 14	Last Day before Spring Break, End of Term 2
Mar. 31	First Day back after Spring Break, Start of Term 3
Apr. 4	Report Cards home
Apr. 7	NO SCHOOL- Professional Development Day
Apr. 14	Arts Starts Presentation
Apr. 18	NO SCHOOL- Good Friday
Apr. 21	NO SCHOOL- Easter Monday
May 5	NO SCHOOL- Professional Development Day
May 19	NO SCHOOL- Victoria Day
June 6	NO SCHOOL- Professional Development Day
June 20	Indigenous People's Day
June 25	Grade 7 Farewell/Report Cards home
June 26	Last Day of school for students

Connecting with the Natural World in the Montessori Environment

So all we could do was to Sit! Sit! Sit! Sit! And we did not like it. Not one little bit.

Dr. Seuss, The Cat in the Hat.

This beloved children's story says it all: children do not like to just sit inside. They want to be up doing things. The young child's sensitive periods of movement and refinement of the senses actually demand that she be up and about, exploring her environment. In addition, the sensitive periods for order and language help her learn how her environment works and help her discover the names of everything around her.

The Montessori Environment: Benefits for Children Connecting With the Natural World

As Montessori caregivers, we have a responsibility to follow the child's needs and capitalize on these sensitive periods by helping set the foundation for developing an appreciation for nature. We spend so much time preparing the indoor environment, that we sometimes forget to take into account the outdoor environment. The outdoor environment should be carefully planned down to the smallest detail in order to best meet the needs of these very young children.

Unstructured free play is necessary to a child's physical and mental health

Research supports the need for children to spend more time outdoors.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 60 minutes of daily unstructured free play is essential to children's physical and mental health. Unfortunately, studies indicate that children are spending only half as much time outdoors as they did 20 years ago. Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*, says that children today do not have as many direct experiences with nature and worries that this is forming a disconnect between the mind and body. Clinical Psychologist Dr. Laura Markham suggests that children who spend time outdoors are calmer, happier, healthier, and more creative; have longer attention spans, and do better in school.

Dr. Montessori understood the importance of taking children outside. Yes, bringing pieces of nature into the classroom has value, but taking children outside helps them form a meaningful relationship with those objects in their natural environment. When the child is outside, all of her senses are stimulated. Surrounded by the big outdoors, children can explore by touching, seeing, hearing, and when safe, even tasting. This awakens the senses and calls the child to come explore, creating a sense of awe and wonder that will be important throughout her life.

By developing an appreciation at such a young age, children naturally will grow to be respectful stewards and caretakers of the earth.

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