

Not Every Montessori School is the Real Thing!

Dr. Maria Montessori developed a style of teaching children which spawned a worldwide movement. The name Montessori attached to a school implies an enlightened, gentle and highly creative approach to learning. But be warned: not every school which claims to be Montessori is an accredited Montessori school nor are its teachers.

There are several Montessori organizations to which schools can belong. The two major ones operating in the United States are the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and the American Montessori Society (AMS). Parents considering placing a child in a Montessori school should ask about the school's affiliation(s) and if the teachers are AMI or AMS certified.

The name Montessori is not legally protected, and can be used by anyone, for any purpose; it is vital that anyone searching for a good Montessori school be aware of this.

Montessori is not a system for training children in academic studies; nor is it a label to be put on educational materials. It is a revolutionary method of observing and supporting the natural development of children. Montessori educational practice helps children develop creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and time-management skills, to contribute to society and the environment, and to become fulfilled persons in their particular time and place on Earth. The basis of Montessori practice in the classroom is respected individual choice of research and work, and uninterrupted concentration rather than group lessons led by an adult. Group lessons are seldom found in a Montessori classroom, but learning abounds.

There are schools 'influenced' by Montessori which bear little resemblance to (and have received substantial criticism from) other institutions with closer lineage to Montessori's work.

Parents must carefully research, and observe a classroom in operation, in order to choose an authentic Montessori school for their child.