




Authentic Montessori in Long Day Care

Challenges and Rewards

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The Question;

Is it possible to meet the regulatory, staffing and financial requirements of Long Day care and maintain the integrity of a Montessori programme?



What do we encounter in Long Day
Care that make our type of service
provision unique?

Some of the unique elements of LDC

- Children in care for 10-12 hours per day
- Enrolment of children occurs whenever there is a vacancy
- Children leave at various stages of the year
- Integration of children with additional needs
- Grouping of children by age
- Group size
- Staff qualifications
- Staff rosters and contracts
- 48 – 52 week continuous operation
- Provision of food
- Provision for Sleeping
- CCB and CTR reporting
- National Quality Assessment (currently NCAC)
- Parent/ family involvement
- Most children do not stay beyond 5 years of age.
- Many centres are stand alone - not connected to Primary Schools
- Most of our children will not progress into a Montessori Primary School
- Many centres are Privately owned and operated – Commercial viability/ protection/competition
- We may find ourselves in competition with the Universal Access Scheme for 4 year old children.
- Initial motivation from families is to find good quality care rather than choosing the centre because of the Montessori philosophy
- High proportion of working parents



What ingredients define the
'Integrity' of a Montessori
Programme?

Is this the recipe?

Qualified staff

3 year age grouping

Uninterrupted work periods




Prepared environment

Montessori materials

Montessori philosophy


Montessori curriculum




How many ingredients can we
remove without being left with a
different product?




How many ingredients do we find
ourselves allergic to?



How can we start with the basic product (generic ingredients) and add to the recipe over time?



What obstacles are we
likely to meet?



What happens when we add the
new National Quality Standards?



Does a mix of Montessori and
the EYLF blend together?



The Montessori Early Years Learning Programme



The outdoor environment is an extension of the indoor program where children interact with nature by taking responsibility for tending the garden, caring for the plants and trees and discovering the inter-relationship of plants and animals. Creative play spaces also provide opportunities for children to engage in the social and physical activity of free play.

Children in a Montessori environment are immersed in pre-literacy learning through a vast array of experiences with music, stories and sounds. The richness and beauty of language as an expression of emotion and as a form of communication is enhanced as children are exposed to quality literature and culturally diverse music and language. The Montessori philosophy encourages children to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas through verbal and written communication. Montessori materials extend on this experience by allowing children to master the foundations of written composition and reading.

The Montessori Mathematics curriculum introduces children to the concepts of time, distance, dimension, currency and quantity. An extensive array of materials are available throughout the classroom that reinforce the numerical hierarchy of zero to ten. As children work with the materials they gain a strong recognition of these numbers and their corresponding quantities. From this solid foundation the children are then introduced to much larger numbers and to the mathematical operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The Montessori materials provide concrete representation of numerical value and this gives the children an ability to easily understand each concept before it is presented in its abstract form.

In the context of a Montessori classroom the Cultural curriculum consists of the study of science, geography, botany, history, biology, art, music and multi-cultural society. Children make interesting discoveries about the world they live in. Lessons present factual information to help children to identify, name and classify the things around them. Understanding the inter-relationship of plants, animals and people enables children to gain respect for all living things and for their environment.

The precisely crafted Sensorial materials provide the children with an opportunity to explore concepts of dimension, colour, shape, weight, volume, texture, scent, taste and sound. The materials encourage comparison, observation and problem solving. The lessons accompanying the Sensorial materials provide children with diverse descriptive language and a heightened sense of awareness to intelligently observe their environment.

Practical Life activities support the child in developing the essential skills to successfully deal with day to day experiences. Practical Life activities allow children to engage in meaningful tasks such as cleaning, food preparation, arranging flowers, gardening or caring for animals. Children can access child sized tools such as kitchen utensils, mops, sponges, sweeping brushes and watering cans that enable them to participate in the care of their classroom and outdoor environment. Practical Life activities assist children to refine and coordinate their movements, to develop concentration and to build skills that will allow them to contribute to society in an independent and responsible manner.

Children in a Montessori classroom are encouraged to move freely from one activity to another based on their interest and self-motivation. Children can work alone, with a friend or as a participant in a group activity. Social etiquette and safe conduct form an essential component of a Montessori classroom. Respect is also a fundamental element of the Montessori philosophy and reciprocal respect is present in all of the relationships within the classroom community.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)				
Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5
Children have a strong sense of identity	Children are connected with and contribute to their world	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	Children are involved and confident learners	Children are effective communicators