

Our World At Small World



Step into Our World At Small World!

Dear Parent(s),

We are excited about all the learning activities and celebrations that our students have been up to over the past month! Students invited Grandparents to join them and step into their shoes to see what it is like to be a student at Small World Montessori Schools! From story time to creating unique art, students were able to share meaningful moments with Grandparents and show them just how big of an impact they have upon their learning experience in their early years.

Our annual Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration had students excited to learn about the different Hispanic and Latino Communities all over the world! Students were served traditional food and were excited about the cultural activities they were able to participate in, such as cultural dances, listening to native music and learning about famous historical Hispanic and Latino figures. We would like to thank all of our parents for helping to make this celebration a success for all students by bringing in a dish or item to contribute to their child's classroom!

This upcoming month we are excited to continue hosting celebrations and events for our students to immerse them in the holistic process of learning about the world around them. From our Diwali Celebration to the annual Fall Festival, we will continue encouraging our students to learn and create a self-confidence that will allow them to succeed with any event that may happen within their life. It is our aim to provide parents with a monthly newsletter highlighting all of the activities and happenings from the previous month. We will also feature an article based on topics that parents suggest. In this month's newsletter we have provided parents with a featured article about the effects of screen time on young children. This newsletter is for the parents and we welcome your suggestions for content!

We hope that you enjoy reading about all the fun activities that your child has been up to, as well as learning about ways you can help them grow and learn too! If you have any question or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me!

Sincerely,

Ms. Ashley Cruz
Administrator of Communications

Important Dates

Wednesday, October 23rd: Diwali Celebration

Friday, October 25th: Teacher Planning Day - NO SCHOOL

Thursday, October 31st: Fall Festival Celebration

Monday, November 11th: Veterans Day - NO SCHOOL



Teacher Highlight

Every month, we will be featuring a member of our Administration or Teaching staff. This month Ms. Christina, our Director of Admissions, will discuss some alternatives to screen time for children below!

As an educator and a mommy, I look forward to eventful evenings with my son. In our house, we dedicated one hour per night to interactive games such as Monopoly Junior, Trouble, Sorry and Scrabble Junior. These games are great for children between the ages of 4 and 8. These activities will teach your child more about following directions, turn taking and completing a task from beginning to end (all traits we encourage in a Montessori classroom). I also recommend fun group activities such as Jenga and Uno. These are great for 2 to 4 family members and will teach your child more about strategizing and creating friendly competition!

One night a week we substitute Game Night with a fun hands-on baking activity, such as baking cookies or homemade muffins. We gather ingredients that are needed and practice measuring. Once ingredients are all placed in our mixing bowl, the items are blended together. These food preparation activities promote order, eye-hand coordination skills, increased independence, creativity and most importantly a sense of accomplishment!

On the weekends we take advantage of the beautiful weather by taking our morning snack out on the patio, and enjoy a fun game of soccer or kickball, and on occasion we'll delve into some outdoor painting, and children's archery while mommy enjoys her coffee. You know your child(ren) best. Be creative, and establish a well balanced routine for your children!

Screen Time: Effects on Young Children

It's no surprise that screen time has become a big part of everyday life for children, causing it to be a topic of discussion amongst parents. Does screen time truly affect the development and growth of a young child? The answer is YES! There has been extensive research conducted that demonstrates that screen time has negative consequences on a child's growth and development.

Consequences of Screen Time in Developmental Areas:

Adverse consequences of screen time on language development

Language development begins from birth. Studies have shown that excessive amounts of screen time are associated with a decrease in language development in young children. When a child is busy interacting with a screen, they are missing the most important interaction of all: human interaction. One of the sources from which children gain the capacity for language is interactions with parental figures. Verbal motor development occurs when a child monitors the formation of words by the adult. Simple auditory input is not enough, a child must observe and reenact the motor muscular movement of the mouth. Therefore, it is imperative that children be engaged in activities that require them to enter dialogue preferably one that enhances vocabulary as well. Such human interactions will help to enhance the child's ability to speak clearly and appropriately giving proper definition to syntax. Examples of such interactions can occur on car rides, dinner table conversation and bedtime activities such as reading a book prior to the child being placed to sleep.

Negative consequences of screen time on social and emotional development

According to Murray and Murray's (2008) article about the uses and effects of television on children's social and emotional development, stated that the social, face-to-face interactions that occur during infancy are monumental as they set the groundwork for individuals to build meaningful relationships throughout their lives. Play is a significant part of the social interactions that occur during early childhood and with the increase of screen-based devices, the way in which children play is evolving. Now more than ever before, children have access to many forms of screen-based media including televisions, computers, video games, and portable devices such as



tablets and smartphones (Canadian Pediatric Society, 2011). With the increase of the accessibility of technology, researchers have found that children are exceeding pediatricians' daily screen time recommendations. Through the accumulation of research cited references include, Rideout (2013), Richert (2010), and Vandewater, Barr, Park and Lee (2010) examining the effects of screen time on children's health and development, pediatricians' have recommended strictly limiting screen time, to non-screen time at all or restricting screen time to only video chatting and high-quality programming and apps for children under two years of age. The current pediatric guidelines state that children over two years of age should have less than an hour a day of high-quality screen time, and parents are encouraged to make screen time a social activity by co-viewing and co-playing with their children in their screen time use (American Pediatric Academy, 2016; Canadian Pediatric Society, 2011). Although pediatricians recommend parents to follow such screen time limitations for their children, an American nationwide survey examining trends in new digital technology use of families with children between the ages of 0 and 8 years old, showed that most children under the age of eight are spending an average of three hours per day using screen-based media (Radesky & Christakis, 2016). In separate yet related literature reviews examining preschool and school-aged children's screen time use in relation to their time spent in play, Frost (2010) and Greenfield (2015) concluded that children are experiencing play deprivation due to their digital lifestyles. More specifically Greenfield, reported that children are spending more time playing in a two dimensional world and less time exploring and playing in their physical environment with others. Through her examination of literature on the impact of technology on brain development, Greenfield referenced British child psychologist, Professor Tanya Byron's belief that children's lack of play, specifically outdoor play could affect children's abilities to cope with challenges and take risks as they become adults "nothing can replace what children gain from the freedom and independence of thought they have when trying new things out in the open" (Byron, n.d., as cited in Greenfield, 2015, p. 22).

Radesky (2014) explored how early childhood media exposure is related to difficulties in self-regulation (self-soothing, falling, staying asleep, and modulating emotions) among infants and toddlers. Radesky and colleagues collected data from 7,450 children between the ages of 9 months and 2 years old using the Infant Toddler Symptom Checklist (ITSC) that parents completed to scale their child's self-regulation. The findings in their study revealed that infant and toddlers with self-regulation difficulties were exposed to more media on a daily basis compared to their peers. They also found that toddlers whose self-regulation skills had worsened since infancy were correlated with the amount of screen time that they were exposed to, more than two hours per day. Radesky discussed that in early childhood, children begin developing their media habits. Through their study they found that infants who were exposed to excessive amounts of screen time, were more likely to be exposed to even more in toddlerhood. Radesky found that caregivers often placed infants and toddlers in front of media to help distract and entertain them or as a tool to help soothe an upset child. Radesky recommended that parents learn strategies to help support children to develop their self-regulation skills through behavioral scaffolding and limit children's media exposure, as "infant self-regulation and early childhood cognitive and behavioral self-regulation (i.e., executive function) can be improved over time with sensitive, responsive parenting" (p. 1177).

An Invitation to Unplug and Play

Through my observations, I have witnessed the hypnotizing effects that screen time can have on children. With how distracting screen-based devices can be, I encourage parents to turn off televisions and computers when not in use. I also recommend to parents that they be mindful of their own screen time use as parents' use of handheld devices, specifically their phones, are another major contributor to detracting from parent-child social interactions. Parents are encouraged to plan to turn off their phones to fully engage with their children. For example, strategies I have recommended include setting family rules around screen time use by planning to always turn off cell phones at the dinner table allowing for less distraction and more meaningful social interactions to occur. Along with turning off screen-based media when they are not in use and parents being mindful of their own screen time use. One of the more meaningful ways for children to learn and develop is through play. Therefore, it is important that parents make time for their children to play without the distractions of screens. I am a firm believer in play-based learning. I believe that it is undoubtedly the most important activity that children can do to learn and enhance their social and emotional development. Play can occur in many formats, such as outdoor activities (structured and unstructured), memory games that can be monitored without the adult directly interacting, and board games that require social interaction.



The Impact of Montessori Schools

One of our core beliefs is that children learn by doing. The Montessori curriculum facilitates this by the interaction the students have with 3-D materials. The classroom is a social community where children foster the proper etiquette, learn self-regulation skills, and appreciate the importance of patience and tolerance. It has been our desire to foster a partnership with parents and the community to find methodologies and best practices that help guide the ever-evolving world of raising children in a digital age. For further resources on "Screen Time" please visit our website: www.swmontessori.com and click on the "Parent Education" tab for further resources.

Presented by:
Mr. Vayani
Head of School



Scope and Sequence

Monthly Theme: Fall
Monthly Virtues: Kindness and Courage



Children within our Toddler Program use leaves to celebrate the theme of Fall in a card to card recognition lesson.

Children within our Primary Program use pumpkins to celebrate the theme of Fall while engaging in a lesson that teaches students about counting.



Children within our Primary Program use different vegetables that are associated with the Season of Fall while engaging in a lesson of sorting.



Follow us on social media to see more of what our students are learning!