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A Mother's Reasons For Choosing Montessori

By Deanna Mascle

This is the time of year when the parents of many preschoolers must decide where their child will attend school in the fall. I wanted to take this opportunity to share my experience with Montessori preschool education.

My son is completing his second year in a Montessori preschool program and attended from the age of 3 1/2.

I chose Montessori for several reasons. First, my son is a bright, inquisitive child who already had a sound grounding in recognition of his alphabet, numbers, shapes, and colors before he started preschool. I was worried that he might be bored in a more traditional preschool. Montessori's highly individual program means he is always challenged and interested. In addition, my son is a very active child and the Montessori program gives him lots of opportunity for free play outdoors and indoors as well as more freedom to move about, stand, or even lie on the ground while working on his lessons in the classroom.

In my opinion one of Montessori's great advantages is the fact that the child drives the educational experience. My son's interests and abilities determine his unique educational program and so his lessons may overlap but are not identical to those of his classmates. This makes him an eager and motivated student.

The education program offered by Montessori also includes many advantages. My son's experience includes the arts, math and science, language, and life skills. He regularly impresses our friends and family with his knowledge of science, sign language, and other areas not traditionally included in preschool programs.

I also like the fact that his classroom includes a wider range of ages so he has friends who are both younger and older. In addition, he really enjoys having regular contact with the elementary-age students who serve as both role models and friends.

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Finally, as a parent, I cannot stress enough the benefits that a program like Montessori offers in terms of life skills. All students are expected to be responsible for their own personal hygiene as well as maintenance and cleaning of the classroom and food areas. While support is offered by adults and older children, even young children can learn to clean up after themselves. It has certainly had an impact on my son's willingness and ability to help out at home.

Recently I compared preschool experiences with a friend whose child is completing her second year in what most people consider to be the top preschool program in our community. We compared our children's skills to the checklist provided by our school district of 60 skills (including cognitive skills, listening and sequencing skills, language skills, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, and social/emotional skills) that will help children transition into kindergarten. My son has all 60 skills while her daughter lacked skills in each of the areas.

I recommend every parent at least consider Montessori for their child as it is a child-centered learning approach that can provide an excellent foundation for a child's future growth and learning.

Deanna Mascle writes articles to help you prepare your preschooler for school and life for her newsletter "Preschoolers Learn More". You can find more preschool education articles at

<http://TeachYourPreschooler.info>

Chinese Relatives

By Wong Yee Lee

Chinese Relatives by Wong Yee Lee

Chinese relatives

It may be interesting to know that, unlike western system, in China, we have different appellation for different relatives in a family. This is obviously good practice in order to tell who we are referring to in a conversation though some people may think otherwise!

Father's side

Mother's side

Father's father

zufù

Mother's father

wài zufù

Father's mother

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zumu
Mother's mother
wài zumu

Father's elder brother
bófù
Mother's elder brother
jiùfù

Father's younger brother
xu xu(uncle)
Mother's younger brother
same as above

Father's elder brother's wife
bómu
Mother's elder brother's wife
jiùmu

Father's younger brother's wife
shunshen
Mother's younger brother's wife
same as above

Father's elder and younger sister
gugu
Mother's elder and younger sister
yímu

Father's sister's husband
gufù
Mother's sister's husband
yífù

Father's brother's son
tángge(elder)

tángdì(younger)
Mother's brother's son
biaoge(elder)

biadì (younger)

I am sure this table can be endless knowing that one can have as big a family as possible. However, simply from the above, one can imagine how complicated it works when calling someone in your family

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in China. That is why it is not surprising that very often one doesn't know how to call someone when they meet in a Chinese New Year family gathering. What you need to know is that you always see this person every time you meet with your family and you can eat together at the same table.

Very often these days as well that sometimes my mother refers to someone about something in the family and she expects me to know who she is talking about. Well, the case is that I can hardly recall what this person looks like.....

In China, with the One-Child policy started over 2 decades ago, I think this system may not be as commonly used as before.

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