

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! Our students participated in our annual Fall Festival Celebration at the end of October. We enjoyed seeing all of the amazing costumes our students showed off for the Costume Parade! From Harry Potter to a Fairytale Princess our students were able to become their favorite character for a day and there is no doubt that they enjoyed every second of it! Students were also able to participate in fun Fall activities such as carving pumpkins, painting spider cutouts, and trick or treating within the classroom for healthy snacks! We would like to thank all parents for helping to make this celebration a success for all students by bringing in a snack 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! Our students will be getting into the holiday spirit though our annual Thanksgiving Celebration. This month it is our goal to help students learn, understand and express gratitude for the family, friends and special events in their lives. 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 benefits and process of teaching young children the importance of gratitude. This is a newsletter 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 participated in, as well as learning about ways you can help them grow and learn too! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me!

Sincerely,
Ms. Ashley Cruz
Administrator of Communications

Important Dates

*Tuesday, November 26th:
Thanksgiving Celebration*

*Wednesday, November 27th:
Early Dismissal at 2pm*

*Thursday, November 28th:
Thanksgiving — NO SCHOOL*

*Friday, November 29th:
Day after Thanksgiving —
NO SCHOOL*

*Wednesday, December 18th:
Holiday Show — Toddler
Classrooms*

*Thursday, December 19th:
Holiday Show — Primary
Classrooms*

*Monday, December 23rd -
Friday, December 27th:
Winter Break — NO SCHOOL*

*Tuesday, December 31st:
Early Dismissal at 2 pm*



Teacher Highlight

Every month, we will be featuring a member of our Administration or Teaching staff. This month Ms. Miriam, a Primary Lead Teacher at our Miramar Campus, will discuss ways students are taught service within the classroom.

While November is considered the month our nation focuses on gratitude, in the Montessori philosophy this virtue is at the forefront of our classroom culture! Practical life is one of the areas in the classroom where children learn gratitude. The exercises in this prepared environment resemble chores at home, as well as in our daily life. By performing these activities, the children learn to adapt to their community. This allows for them to see themselves as a contributing part of the family; a social unit.

Grace and courtesy, a component of practical life, exposes the children to positive social behavior. Grace is a very important component to be emphasized. Some examples include how to get someone's attention, asking for help in a polite manner, and how to observe another child at work without interrupting.

In the Montessori community children are invited to help with daily tasks, by helping children gain knowledge and appreciation about the efforts of others! In Montessori, we practice peace education with the end goal of fostering self-controlled behavior and positive decision making. This is a light that comes from within and another contribution of gratitude!

The Development of Gratitude in Young Children

Every year around Thanksgiving we begin to reflect on the aspects in our lives that make us grateful. Whether this be through family, friends, or any other aspect in your life, we express gratitude for all the amazing opportunities that we have been given throughout the year. However, it is important for us to remember that we should not just express gratitude over the holiday's, but rather throughout the whole year.

Teaching children the importance of gratitude is something that we as parent's and educators should strive to instill throughout the entirety of the year. The essence of gratitude has a significant impact on the development of a child.

Gratitude is known as a sense of thankfulness and joy in response to receiving a gift, whether it be tangible or intangible (J. Froh, G. Bono; 2008). It is important for parents to teach children not only how to give gratitude where it is due, but also explain the reasons why a person must have a sense of thankfulness or joy after a certain action. This allows for a child to develop a personal and relational well-being and understanding. It is important for parents to understand that the idea of gratitude is made up of many different aspects. According to Jeffery J. Froh and Giacomo Bono, there are four different parts for the grateful disposition. *Intensity* is the first part. This is essentially the amount of gratitude that a child may feel, and could be greater if they feel more grateful and are aware of why they should be grateful. The second part is *frequency*. A child who is more frequently taught to not only display gratitude, but also understand why it is the correct thing to do, is more likely to continue this trend as they get older and develop into adults. The third part of the grateful disposition is *span*. Children who show gratitude in several different aspects of their lives, such as family, friends, school, etc. are more likely to understand and continue developing and using gratitude in their everyday lives. The fourth and final part of the grateful disposition is *density*. This essentially means the amount of people and positive outcomes that a child may be grateful for. Understanding and ensuring that these four parts of gratitude are used to the fullest allow for a child to develop the virtue and emotion of gratitude properly.

Teaching young children how to understand and practice gratitude at a young age is very crucial to their development. Learning this virtue and emotion brings many benefits to a child's life. According to Dr. Sheela Raja, an assistant professor and clinical psychologist at the University of Illinois in Chicago, developing a sense of gratitude at a young age has an emotional health benefit that will impact a child for the rest of their life. By developing the virtue and emotion of gratitude, children are less likely to compare themselves to others. This allows for a child to become confident with who they are as a person and not develop traits that could hinder them later in life, such as envy. Dr. Sheela Raja also discusses the idea that by developing the virtue of gratitude, a child is able to place themselves into the shoes of another and understanding that a person can do something nice for another without reaping any tangible benefits. Through the development of this understanding a child is able to develop the ability to relate to those around them and have a sense of belonging within the environment that they are in (Stewart; 2010). It is known that children begin to learn and understand different emotions and virtues from a young age. When a child is exposed to the virtue and emotion of gratitude from a young age, it becomes like second nature for them to continue practicing healthy habits over the course of their lives. However, for a child to obtain all the benefits from gratitude they must not only know how to carry out the correct action, but also understand why they are carrying out certain actions to show their gratitude. This allows for a child's development to go beyond just learning manners. According to researchers, as a child gains more cognitive skills and practices using those skills, they are more likely to show gratitude. This happens due to the child beginning to notice, think, and feel the repercussions of the actions (Hussong; 2017).

Through my observations, it has become apparent that children are able to grasp the concept of gratitude from a very young age. Due to children being so impressionable at a young age, it is important for parents to understand they are the ones that their children learn from the most. One of the most important and effective ways to teach a child gratitude is by being a model for them! Parents are encouraged to show their child gratitude by practicing it within their daily routines. It is beneficial for a child to see their parent acting with kindness and gratefulness in any positive situation because it allows for the child to see the affect that it has on those around them. This will translate into the actions that a child has with other adults and children. It is also important for parents to help a child practice gratitude by engaging with their child on the topic. Parents are encouraged to acknowledge the acts of gratitude with their child and explain to them why it is important to be grateful for a certain positive outcome. I believe that learning and understanding gratitude allows for a child to develop skills that will allow nothing but success in their future endeavors. Even though they may be little, young children have a great capacity to learn and retain information. By learning to be kind and grateful they will lead a life that can help to change the world for the better.

Maria Montessori, the founder of the Montessori Method, believed that gratitude required a strong presence within the classroom. It is one of our core beliefs that children gain an understanding and appreciation for what someone has done for them to allow them the opportunities that they have today. We incorporate lessons that allow a child to develop and demonstrate positive social behavior;. The classroom is an environment where students can learn from not only their teachers, but their peers as well! For further resources on "The Development of Gratitude", please visit our website www.swmontessori.com and click on the "Parent Education" tab.

Presented by:

Ms. Ashley Cruz
Administrator of Communications



A Peak into Our World at Small World!



Scope and Sequence

Monthly Theme: Veteran's Day and Harvest

Monthly Virtues: Service and Gratitude



Children in our Toddler Program learn about how important it is to appreciate help from their peers while completing a lesson together!

Our students learned about the importance of helping others by participating in our Collection Drive to help those affected by Hurricane Dorian!



Our students learn how important it is to appreciate the educators that help them learn their lessons!



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