



Westside Montessori School October 2011 Newsletter



Dear Parents,

Welcome to a busy autumn at Westside Montessori School. The new children have begun to settle and some to be feeling more comfortable in the Montessori environment.

There are many activities and events coming up this month. Please remember to refer to the daily white boards and bulletin boards outside both classrooms for additional notices and sign up sheets. These will help you keep up-to-date with the activities of your child's class.

Monthly Theme

For October and November of this year we will be studying The Five Senses. We will be investigating sight, sound, touch, taste and smell through different learning experiences for the students.

If you have books, posters, etc. related to our theme please feel free to send them in. Please label them with your child's name.

Monthly Composer/Artist

This month we have the pleasure of learning about the artist, Tom Thompson. The work of this well known Canadian artist was influential for the members of the Group of Seven.



We will be studying the work of the composer Mozart. We will be enjoying his music and learning more about his life and work. If your family has CDs, books or artefacts to share related to our topics, your child is welcome to bring them in (labelled with a name). Show

and Tell Tuesdays are an excellent opportunity to share art, music and artefacts related to our theme or monthly artist or composer.

Outside Toy Policy

Please do not send personal toys along with your child to school. The school is full of Montessori materials which are conducive to learning and outside toys can be distracting for all of the children. If a child would like to have a toy leaving the house, please have him or her leave the toy in the car while at school.

Scholastic Book Fair

The Book Fair will be coming to WMS on **Tuesday, October 4th**



and **Wednesday, October 5th**. This is a wonderful opportunity to purchase some new books for your child and it benefits the classroom book collection as well. Up to 60% of each purchase is donated to the school!

If you are available to volunteer your time to help us oversee the payment booth between 8:30am and 9:15am or 3:00pm and 3:45pm on either day, please sign up on the bulletin board outside of your child's classroom.

Thanksgiving Celebration

Each year, our Thanksgiving tradition celebrates the harvest. The children will be preparing a small feast of corn on the cob and apples. The children husk the corn and prepare the apples.

We will celebrate on **Thursday, October 6th**. Both classes will come together to give thanks and enjoy the fruits of their labour. It is truly a favourite Westside celebration.



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To help the children better understand the idea of sharing food at this time of the year, we ask that each child bring a donation for the Food Bank. It would be best if it is an item that the child has selected him or herself to make it more meaningful. There will be a Food Bank collection box outside the classroom on October 6th.

Thanksgiving Holiday



There will be no school on Monday, October 10th, 2011. Happy Thanksgiving!

Photo Day

Smile! On Thursday, October 13th, 2011 our school photographs, both individual and class group will be taken. Excalibur Photography will be taking the pictures once again. Please let your Directress know ahead of time if your child is camera shy, so we can help with the process.

Photo Consent

Throughout the year we like to take photographs of the children in their day-to-day activities or special events. These photographs are shared on the school website, newsletters, etc. (without names attached). A consent form will be sent home with your child on Tuesday, October 11th regarding this issue. Please take the time to complete this form to let us know your preference.

Pumpkin Patch Field Trip

On Thursday, October 20th, we will be taking a field trip to KJM Country Gardens at 7226 Blenheim Street, Vancouver (in the Southlands area). The consent form for this exciting event will be sent home with your child on Tuesday, October 11th.



Parents or guardians are required to bring their own child or to arrange for alternate transportation such as carpooling. The morning classes will meet there at 9:30am. The afternoon classes will meet there at 1:00pm.

Since this is an outdoor field trip on a farm, we suggest that the children be dressed appropriately with layers and rain boots. The children will each be getting to pick a pumpkin to bring home. Please bring a carrier bag as the pumpkins are often covered with soil and can be difficult to carry.

Halloween Celebration

Halloween is an exciting day for the children at the school. We have a costume parade through both classes, make Halloween crafts and have a party. The children are welcome to wear their costumes to school that day. We ask that any costumes do not include play swords or any other pretend weapons.

It is optional for parents to bring goodies with the children that can be placed into loot bags for the other students in your child's class. Each child will be bringing home his or her loot bag at the end of the school day. Please remember our NO NUTS food policy.



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Unicef

Every Halloween, Westside Montessori School participates in fundraising for Unicef Canada. The goal of Unicef is to help other children around the world by providing them with pencils and books, sports equipment, bicycles, full classroom learning supplies and school tents for locations where school buildings have been destroyed.

Unicef envelopes will be going home with your child one week before Halloween. They will be collected by November 3rd. Tax receipts will be issued for donations over \$25 or by request.

Preliminary Reports

These will be handed out to new students on **Monday, October 17th**. This report outlines activities your child enjoys and his or her adjustment to the Montessori classroom.

Scholastic Book Orders

Again we thank you for your support in ordering books from Scholastic as it does provide the school with many benefits such as books and supplies.

All orders should be returned as soon as possible. We try to make an order as promptly as possible as books do become out of stock quickly. Please accompany your order with a cheque made out to Scholastic Canada Ltd.

Meet the Class Pets

Our classrooms have quite a few pets. The children get to see them every day but we thought it would be nice for parents to be introduced to them as well.

Koal, the Chilean Chinchilla

Koal is our resident chinchilla. He is nocturnal, sleeps a lot during the day and is very active at night. He enjoys hopping and jumping, gnawing on pumice or wood and taking dust baths. Koal's favourite snacks are raisins and dandelions. Some of the children like making him pictures to decorate his home (which he sometimes eats)!



Parker, the 1st Floor Hamster



Parker is a long-haired Syrian (or Teddy Bear) hamster. He is about a year old. He sleeps most of the day but when we see him active, we've observed him go around the classroom quickly in his exercise ball! He likes eating corn on the cob and dried berries.

Pipsqueak, the 2nd Floor Hamster

Pipsqueak is a Dwarf Hamster. She is often seen burrowed in her small cave or in boxes of hay. Pipsqueak is small but very active. She enjoys running in her exercise wheel or zipping all around. Her favourite snacks are green leafy veggies and yogurt drops.



Bert and Sunshine, Our Class Fish

Each class also has a Siamese Fighting Fish (also called Betta Fish). The children enjoy observing and feeding them.



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Fire and Earthquake Drills

Once a month the classes practice our Fire and Earthquake drills. We prepare the children for these routine exercises and explain in detail why we practice them. A sign will be posted on the notice board the day before we practice for your information.

Nov 1st Professional Development Day

There will be no school on Tuesday, November 1st. Teachers will be using this day for classroom observations at Montessori schools and for an in-service session on lesson planning and curriculum.

Parent Information Night

A big thank you to all those parents who were able to attend our Parent Information Night on September 15th. There are handouts available upon request. Please ask your Directresses if you were unable to attend and would like one.

Our next Parent Information Night will be on Thursday, October 20th, from 7:30pm - 8:30pm. The topic of this evening is our Reading and Language Program. Please see the attached notice regarding this informative evening.



Label Everything

Let's keep our Lost n' Found clear by labelling all the children's belongings that come to school, including clothing, accessories (hats), etc. Unless there are special circumstances, there isn't a need to bring a bag to school.



Questions and Concerns?

The teachers at Westside Montessori School are committed to providing the happiest and safest environment for your children. If you have any questions regarding your child or our program, please do not hesitate to make an appointment with your child's teachers to discuss things with them.

Mark Your Calendars ...

- Oct 4th-5th Scholastic Book Fair
- Oct 6th Thanksgiving Celebration
(Food Bank Collection Day)
- Oct 6th Scholastic Book Orders Due
- Oct 10th Thanksgiving Day (School Closed)
- Oct 13th Photo Day
- Oct 17th Preliminary Reports
(For New Students Only)
- Oct 17th Forms Due - Photo Consent and
Pumpkin Patch Field Trip
- Oct 20th Class Field Trip to the Pumpkin
Patch at KJM Country Gardens
- Oct 20th Parent Information Night
(Reading and Language Program)
7.30pm - 8.30pm
- Oct 31st Halloween Celebration
- Nov 1st Professional Day (no school)
- Nov 3rd Unicef Envelopes due back

Afternoon Halloween Parties



