

A Montessori program is based on self-direction, non-competitive and cooperative activities that help a child develop a strong self-image, high levels of academic and social competence, and the confidence to face challenges with optimism. Encouraged to make decisions from an early age, Montessori educated children are problem solvers who can make appropriate choices, manage their time, and work well with others. They exchange ideas and discuss work freely. These positive communication skills build the foundations for negotiating new settings.

| Montessori  | Traditional Daycare and Preschool   |
|---|---|
| Emphasis on Cognitive and Social Development  | Emphasis on Rote Learning and Social Behavior                                 |
| Teacher has guiding role  | Teacher controls classroom  |
| Environment and method encourage self-discipline  | Teacher acts as primary enforcer of discipline                                |
| Mainly individual instruction   | Mainly group instruction  |
| Mixed age groups  | Same age groups   |
| Grouping encourages children to teach and collaborate   | Teaching is done by teacher; collaboration is discouraged                     |
| Child chooses own work  | Curriculum structured for child   |
| Child discovers own concepts from self-teaching materials   | Child is guided to concepts by teacher  |
| Child is allocated time to work on and complete lesson  | Child generally allotted specific time for work                               |
| Child sets own learning pace  | Instruction pace set by group   |
| Child spots own errors from feedback of material  | Errors in child's work highlighted by teacher                                 |
| Child reinforces own learning by repetition of work and internal feelings of success                                | Learning is reinforced externally by repetition, rewards and punishment       |
| Child can work where he chooses, move about and talk at will (yet not disturb work of others), group work voluntary | Child usually assigned seat; required to participate during group lessons     |
| Multi-sensory materials for physical exploration organizes program for learning care of self and environment        | No organized program for self-care instruction - left primarily up to parents |