

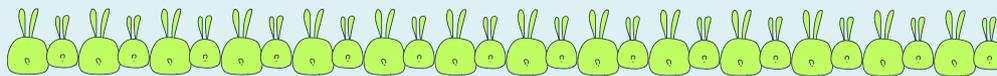


TRILLIUM BILINGUAL MONTESSORI

April 2021 Parent Newsletter



APRIL IS SPRING, EASTER PASSOVER AND RAMADAN



Celebrations

Regardless of what you celebrate this month, we hope that you have a wonderful time with your loved ones.

All the celebrations of new life, renewal and new beginning are themes that the children will be exploring during the month of April.

Saying Goodbye

This month, we will be saying goodbye to Mr. Greg our screener/runner since September. His contract is ending at the end of the month, so his last day will be Friday, April 30th.

Greg is looking forward to attending Fanshawe College in the fall to study Child and Youth Care. We wish him all the best in his studies!

Miss Christina

Miss Christina will be taking on the task of daily communication with the parents during pick-up. This will be part of her many responsibility as she takes on the role of Early Childhood Specialist for our program (starting May 1st). Her role is going to take her out of the classroom full-time, but she will be working with the children in various ways.

**PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING
WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME!**

REMINDERS

EASTER CLOSURE

We will be closed on **Friday, April 2** AND **Monday, April 5** for the Easter Holiday weekend. We will reopen at 7am on Tuesday, April 6.

RAMADAN

To the families who observe Ramadan, which is starting on April 13, we say Ramadan Kareem! As part of our culture units in our program, we will be reading books and looking at photos of Ramadan celebrations around the world.

PASSOVER

To the families who observe Passover, which started on March 28 we say chag sameach! As part of our culture units in our program, we will be reading books and looking at photos of Passover celebrations around the world.

SPRING CLOTHES

Now that the weather is getting warmer, please consider sending splash pants (windbreaker pants) for days where it is cooler or wet outside.

Also, a coat that is wind/waterproof with a thin liner.

Consider changing winter hats to thinner, lighter hats and thinner mittens.

We encourage children to dress according to the temperature unless parents require them to wear everything you send.

ITEMS GOING HOME DAILY

We continue to encourage you to bring the minimum amount of items daily. Please only bring what is necessary. With Covid, we want to restrict unnecessary items coming in and out of the school daily.



PLAYGROUND UPDATE

We are working on beautifying and updating our play spaces. With Covid restrictions, it is recommended that children play on hard surfaces (no sand, grass, mulch or rubber surfaces). For that reason, we are not going to be resurfacing the play areas this year or adding sandboxes or water tables. Depending on the guidelines, we may be allowed to do some gardening activities...hopefully!

Shade Structures

We are going to add some shade structures in each play area very shortly.



Playground Additions

We have also started adding benches and tables and more will continue to be added as orders come in in the next months. We have added tons of gross motor toys from riding toys that require various skills to balls and large wooden blocks... and yes, more to come!

Bugs, Bugs, Bugs!

I'm sure you have seen or heard about our 'Bug Hotels' that went up in the playgrounds last week? If you missed it, take a look on our fence, they look like large bird houses, but have tons of little crevices for bugs to make a home. The children are so excited and are anxiously waiting for insects to take up residency in them! That is just our Phase 1 of our outdoor learning program.



Outdoor Classroom

We are working on developing and putting together learning carts that can easily be taken outside for outdoor learning lessons.

Insects

We have bug catchers, jars, magnifying glasses, microscopes, binoculars, periscopes and so much more on our carts right now!



Chalk/Stencils

We have tons of colorful sidewalk chalk to use as well as stencils to encourage children to draw, write and color.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Somehow the March Newsletter was never sent out. Our apologies to the birthdays we missed!

March Birthdays:

- 02-Erika
- 13-Naila
- 16-Huxley
- 21-Vienna

April Birthday:

- 19-Alyssa

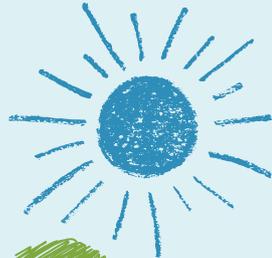
REMINDER: HIMAMA APP

A few things to remember about Hi Mama:

- Pictures are real time, comments/reports posted by teachers are not (Only in the final report 6:00)
- Teachers cannot always answer/respond to messages in a timely manner. Their first and main priority is the children. If you need immediate assistance, please contact the office.
- Don't forget to use the contactless pick-up option!

SOCIAL MEDIA ARE YOU FOLLOWING US YET?

We are active on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Follow us @tbmontessori. Our FB Parent Group page can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tbmontessoriparents>





SECOND PRE-CASA ROOM-OPENING SOON

We are excited to announce the opening of our second pre-casa room Monday, May 03.

We will be shuffling our staff a bit as we welcome some new members. As you know, we are anxiously waiting Mr. Ricardo's return to the program (after a year away caring for his own children) on April 20th in Casa 2.

Casa 1

Miss Amanda
Miss Carmen
Miss Sara

Sara is a university student who will be working with us from May until September as our 'regular' assistant teacher (another Miss Christeena) will be joining our team after completing a maternity leave.

Casa 2

Mr. Ricardo (April 20)
Mme Élodie
Miss Carly (Depending on how many children are in the room)??

Pre-Casa 1 New** Room Opening May 3rd

Mme Stéphanie
Miss Carly (Depending on how many children are in the room)??

Pre-Casa 2

Miss Pamela
Miss Samantha
Ms. Arti



School T-Shirts



You may have seen some of us wearing colorful school shirts lately?

We made a TeeSpring shop to have TBM school clothes and accessory printed. We thought we would open it up to you. There are some toddler and preschooler sizes. We don't have any examples for sizing, but judging from the adult collections, it is better to order a larger size if you're unsure since there is some shrinkage on 100% cotton shirts/sweatshirts.

All orders are made/paid online. Please be advised that all items are listed at cost price, the school is not making any profits on these orders. Shipping is pretty slow, anywhere between 3-5 weeks.

You can find the TBM collection [HERE](https://teespring.com/stores/trillium-bilingual-montessori) or (<https://teespring.com/stores/trillium-bilingual-montessori>)



Scholastic Books

If you are looking to buy children's books at reasonable prices, please visit www.scholastic.ca or [HERE](#)



Scholastics have a wide selection of books of various topics and they also have 'des livres en français' for children of all ages.

The best part of ordering from Scholastic Books is that shipping is free when you use the school code: **RC148880**

AND the school gets Scholastic \$ that TBM can use to purchase books for the school!

It doesn't cost anything extra, simply use our code.



P.A.W.-Petting Away Worries

Studies have shown that children need to be in contact with nature and with animals in order to develop a balanced life.

Here at Trillium Bilingual Montessori, like in all Montessori program, we encourage children's interaction with nature daily by allowing them to do the plant care in their classroom and by exposing them to classroom pets.

Currently, TBM has guinea pigs living in the front office area. You may have seen or heard of Squeaky and Sushi the guinea pigs?

We use the guinea pigs to help children ease the transition at drop-off, especially during the first few days where tears and separation anxiety may be elevated. Sometimes, children just need a little 'break' from the group and will independently decide to visit the guinea pigs on their own.

They are an amazing tool to calm, refocus and regulate emotions in children. Sometimes, they feed them vegetables or fruits or help refill their water bottles. Nothing stops a tantrum faster than telling a child the guinea pigs are scared of their yelling... because they have little ears and big loud noises hurt their ears.

Children are sometimes allowed to pet them under adult supervision and guidance. In non-covid times, we have the children hold them on their laps while they use a baby brush to brush their fur.

We have noticed an increase in separation anxiety and children are more emotional than usual due to the increase stress of the adults in their lives, the many restrictions that Covid has and continues to put on all our lives. Children social skills have also been affected by the long isolation periods or the lack of social interaction with other children.

In order to help children with their interpersonal skills and emotional wellness, we are bringing our dog Aspen for occasional visits with the children. She is a gentle, patient dog who reacts and interacts well with a group of children and with individual children. (Dogs interacting with children must be up to date on vaccination, have a clean bill of health and have their rabies vaccine).

- Animal interactions always take place under adult supervision.
- When interactions are finished, children must wash their hands.
- If animals or children are stressed by an interaction, it is immediately stopped.
- Children or animals are never forced or pushed to interact with each other.
- Children choose to approach as close as they want or touch if they want.
- All animal activities are optional for the children.
- Interactions and activities with animals are always positive.
- Visits and petting sessions are kept short and end when the child or the animal walks away.





CHILDREN AND ANIMALS: A NATURAL FIT

Written by: Mélanie Tremblay, April 2021

THE BENEFITS OF ANIMALS IN MONTESSORI PROGRAMS

Children of all ages can benefit from having interactions with animals. In the early years, before the age of 7 years old, it is especially important and beneficial for children to have exposure and interactions with pets and with nature daily in their environment.

Pet Interaction Program

- Having pets accessible to children during their time in childcare can be a good alternative to full-time pet ownership for some families.
- Animals are neutral beings to the child, always available and ready for interactions.
- Children learn to understand and appreciate the interdependence between people and animals.
- Children observe, interact and learn to care for an animal, developing their sense of importance, belonging and empathy for other living beings.
- Animals promote language in children, as a silent, non-judgemental presence, children often make a greater effort to use words and develop their communication skills.
- The animal is the fourth teacher (Bone, 2013): the first being the parent, the second is the educator and the environment is the third teacher.

Outcomes

- Children develop a strong sense of identity by learning to interact with others with respect, care and empathy.
- Children become connected and become socially responsible as they show respect for the environment.



GUINEA PIGS ARE GREAT PETS

They are calm, not too fragile,
small enough for children to
easily handle are cute and gentle.



Immediate Impact:

- When an animal enters a classroom, children immediately start following instructions, use a calmer energy to interact with each other and become more easily focused.
- Emotional outbursts are reduced and behaviors become positive.
- Focus; children can settle down and keep their bodies still in the presence of a dog.
- Learn responsibility, respect and empathy towards classmates quicker when a dog is present.
- Petting a dog immediately reduces feelings of anxiety and stress in children, lowering their cortisol level (stress hormone).
- Social interactions are easier and seamless.
- The presence of a dog and its effect on lowering children's stress even surpasses that of having a parent present.
- Petting a dog has direct effects on emotional and physical effects on children.



Life Skills Acquired in Children

Respect: learn how to treat animals with care and respect and will transfer those skills to human interactions.

Empathy: children become the caregiver for the animal, learn to respond when the pet may be stressed or scared, developing their empathy skills.

Responsibility: children should never be expected to be the sole caregiver of a pet and should be supported by parents or adults, but even with limited abilities to care for the pet, simply by helping, children learn accountability and dependability for a living being. This helps children develop a conscience.





Self-Esteem: Pets are non-judgemental and children know that they can always count on a pet to 'listen' and give them affections. Children will often share secrets with a pet. By being able to have a pet 'look up to them' the child builds their self-esteem.

Overcoming Fears: Children can find comfort and a source of bravery in an animal. It allows them to be less anxious when facing the 'unknown'

Circle of Life: Children learn about caring and love and eventually they learn about death. When a pet passes away, the child learns how to grieve and appreciate life and loved ones even more.

Nature Warrior: Through their connections with animals, children gain insight in other living beings. This may develop a curiosity in wildlife or plants and the environment.

Children learn how they can impact other species with their actions in a negative or positive way and that they can make good environmental choices.

"Children have an anxious concern for living beings, and the satisfaction of this instinct fills them with delight. It is therefore easy to interest them in taking care of plants and especially of animals. Nothing awakens foresight in a small child such as this. When he knows that animals have need of him, that little plants will dry up if he does not water them, he binds together with a new thread of love today's passing moments with those of the morrow."

~ Maria Montessori

