



Diablo Valley Montessori School

December 13, 2023

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Message from Jayne

Happy Holiday Season!

The classrooms are filled with activities celebrating the season and many holiday traditions. No doubt your family time is full of the same.

One of my favorite Montessori blogs is Montessori Daoshi by Dr. Catherine McTamanev Ed.D. Here are some of her wise words to help our children navigate the season:

Between commercials on TV and the radio, streaming ads on your computer screens and the number of people asking your child, "What do you want for the holidays this year?" it's easy to confuse the Season of Giving for the Season of Getting.

If you live in the US, your child is likely overwhelmed with the mass commercialism of the season. Every store window beckons you inside. Music is playing to entice you to linger a little longer. Banners and signs holler for your attention (and for your dollars!) There's a lot to process if your hope was for a simple, family-centered holiday season.

In Montessori classrooms, we acknowledge each of the winter holidays with simple stories that introduce the children to the celebration. We avoid overwhelming the children with gifts or decorations. If the children are involved in preparing gifts for their families, they do so through hands-on, manipulative experiences that allow them to create something to share.

At home, think of the ways in which you can simplify the holidays to balance the overstimulation we all tend to feel these days. Your children may beg for the latest toy or the flashiest game system, but your family will benefit by avoiding those piles of stuff that

so often are discarded by January 1st, and choosing instead simple, family-centered experiences to share.

1. Look for vendors that don't market to children, and choose high-quality, durable gifts that allow your child to be intellectually and physically engaged. Think simple: the games you enjoyed as a child may be the perfect match for your little one this year. Wooden blocks, a dollhouse, a set of new books, a cooking basket: think of the things that your child can use as a foundation for play he or she designs herself.

2. Be careful of your child's diet during the holidays. These are sugary times, and for children who are already trying to keep it together in environments that are more brightly lit, louder and more chaotic than usual, holiday diets filled with candy and cakes can make the insides of their bodies feel as out of sorts as the outsides.

3. Look for gifts that are activities rather than things: make your own coupons for special outings. Fill a colander with child-sized kitchen utensils and a recipe for your favorite dish to make together. Put together a basket with all the things you'll need for a living room campout. Write a list of things to hunt for in your neighborhood and go on a community scavenger hunt. Your child will remember these adventures with you more than the toy that kept his attention just long enough to wear out the batteries. When you're preparing gifts for others, think about ways in which you can offer time instead of things. Ask your children what they'd like to do with their cousins or grandparents, and let them make adventure cards describing the outing they'll host together. Prepare a set of sleepover cards to present to good friends (and their parents!) for a night at your house.

4. For large family events at which children can often be underfoot, think of something special your children can contribute to the celebration. Maybe your children can prepare one of the desserts for the table, or roll the crescent roll dough to bring to the table. Let your children take ownership for as much of the hosting as they are able to accomplish with gentle support. Children can write out name cards for the table. They can create small flower arrangements to decorate the house. They can string popcorn or cranberries for garland, or collect pine cones from outdoors to frame the mantel. Instead of trying to keep your children out of the way as you prepare for and host holiday events, think of the ways in which you can involve them throughout the process.

5. Share your ideas with your family members, especially those ones who love bringing the loud toys with all the bells and whistles. Ask instead for them to choose an activity they loved from their own childhood to share with your child. Remind them that, while you are grateful for the generosity of top-dollar gifts, what you really want is time to make a meaningful connection between your family members and to create memories with your children. Encourage vintage, child-powered games that family elders can teach your children: marbles, card games, board games and puzzles are just some examples of simple activities that give an opportunity for your family to come together. Getting rid of the stuff-centric holiday focus means we make space for the people and relationships we really should be celebrating. The Season of Giving, after all, isn't really about the things in the boxes, but the time we give to each other, the kindness we offer and the love we share. Make time for those.

Wishing you joy and peace during this busy holiday time!
Jayne

Learning about & celebrating winter holidays in our classrooms this week.



Coin Drive - Two More Days



DVMS is delighted to host our annual coin drive this week, December 4th - December 15th. This is a long-standing DVMS tradition to raise money for the Contra Costa County Food Bank. Bring your coins directly to your child's classroom. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Annie Myers at annieb@gmail.com.

Enrichment Classes: Kinderdance, Spanish, and Music



Jump, Dance, Move and Groove

WINTER SESSION- ENROLL NOW :)

Please see our Winter dates below (and Spring Session as an FYI). You are only enrolling for Winter Session currently. Please Enroll NOW at:

<https://kinderdanceeastbay.com/classes>

Winter Dates:

Jan. 11, 18, 25,

Feb 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

8 Classes

Spring Dates:

Mar 7, 14,

April 11, 18, 25

May 2, 9, 16

8 CLASSES

WANT TO LEARN SPANISH?



Spanish classes offered by Ms. Alma Topete

Quién - Who
Qué - What
Cuándo - When
Dónde - Where
Cómo - How

Pre-School Spanish Classes (Ages 3-5) will be held Wednesdays after school between 3:05 PM and 3:55 PM starting January 10th – May 22th 2024.

Curriculum (17 classes):

- Kids will learn Spanish vocabulary
- Introduction to conversational Spanish
- Spanish Games
- Spanish Songs

Registration @ www.mi-escuelita.com or



 Register

Music with Andrea



Full semester 1/8 - 3/25 10wks

No class 1/15, 2/19 (holidays)

For discount pay in Full \$200 or

Session I - 1/8-2/12 \$115

Session II - 2/26-3/25 \$115

To register, bring a check with your child's name and classroom to the DVMS office.

Thank you for creating Harmony with me
One child, one note, one song at a time ☐

Parent Education Event



**FREE PARENT
WORKSHOP**

**January 23rd
7-8:30pm**

**Register on
Eventbrite**

Diablo Valley Montessori School presents...

The 3 Keys to Navigating Meltdowns, Tantrums, & Power Struggles with More Calm & Confidence

In this workshop, experience how to...

- COACH your child through their big emotions
- TEACH your child self-regulation tools
- KEEP your cool during tough moments
- AVOID the biggest mistake parents make during tough parenting moment



Learn how to stay calm, kind, and connected, even during the most challenging moments.



Vanessa Callaghan, MEd. is a proven educator known for her refreshingly honest, hands-on, and personal approach. She empowers parents struggling with their children's challenging behaviors to find the calm, confidence, and tools they need to build lifelong relationships based on love, respect, and appreciation.



Kathryn Dunn is an experienced educational occupational therapist with expertise in executive functioning, interoception, and visual perception related to dyscalculia and dysgraphia. She also specializes in comprehensive behavioral intervention for Tourette and Tic disorders. She Resides in Richmond with her family.

Important Dates!



December 4 - 15: DVMS Coin Drive

December 21: Last Day of Classes before Winter Break

January 3: IT House reopens. PreK/K Extended Care days by reservation only

January 8: All classes reopen after Winter Break

January 15: Martin Luther King Jr. Day DVMS Closed

January 16: DVMS Board of Directors Meeting 7:30pm

January 23: Parenting Workshop with Vanessa Callaghan 7:00pm

February 6: What's Next for My Two-Year-Old Parent Education Evening 7:00pm

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