



## WESTPARK MONTESSORI SCHOOLS OF IRVINE NOVEMBER 2016



### **WHAT DO WE DO WITH ALL OF OUR EXCESS HALLOWEEN CANDY?**

It's not too late to donate your extra Halloween candy. Montessori Schools of Irvine will be collecting any excess Halloween candy you would like to donate. The candy donations will go to Operation Gratitude. Operation Gratitude sends Care Packages and Halloween candy to the U.S. Troops, Veterans, New Recruits, Wounded Warriors and Military Children. Please drop off your excess candy no later than: Friday, November 4, 2016. Thank you for your candy donations!

### **A TIME OF THANKSGIVING**

As we pause and reflect on what we are thankful for at this time of the year, we would like to say thank you for sharing your children and your families with all of us at Montessori Schools of Irvine!

### **PARENT CONFERENCES AND PROGRESS REPORTS**

Reminder: Parent-Teacher conferences for preschool, kindergarten and primary grades are scheduled for 20-minute sessions. Sign-ups were posted in the front office on Wednesday, October 26. We wish to remind parents that during conference times MONTESSORI CLASSES WILL NOT BE IN SESSION. Daycare activities will be provided.

**Wednesday, November 2**

All day conferences scheduled from 9 AM - 5:20 PM

**Friday, November 4**

Conferences are scheduled from 7 AM - 10:40 AM only.

On conference days, please check in at the front office before going to meet with your child's teacher for your scheduled conference. This will avoid the embarrassment of interrupting other parents' conferences. PLEASE arrive approximately 5 minutes early for your conference, so that all parents can stay on schedule. Parents who arrive late may miss their conference or have shorter conferences to allow the next conference to begin on time.

A copy of your child's progress report was put in your child's Friday folder on Friday, October 28. Please take the time to review this progress report BEFORE your scheduled conference time. Feel free to make notes or jot down questions to bring with you to your conference. With your child's progress report, you will receive a parent questionnaire to share your thoughts about your child's school experiences and ensure that the teacher is able to address these during the conference. Please complete this form and return it to the front desk for your child's teacher before conference day. Please see below for additional information on our semi-annual family survey, which will also be distributed in Friday folders.

This is a special time for you to share things that are important to your family with your child's teacher, as it is this partnership between parents and teachers that helps us to provide the best program for your child. All parents are encouraged to schedule a conference, as there *will not* be a scheduled make-up day.

### **A NOTE FROM - Cheryll Ruszat, The Executive Director**

#### ***Preparing for Conferences -***

Twice each year, parent/teacher conferences are scheduled to provide feedback regarding children's interests and their development. These important parent/teacher conferences provide feedback for both parents and teachers and can set the stage for good communication for your child's early childhood education years. A "**progress report**" which shows their **current interests** and **developing** skills is also provided for your information. These *ungraded* "progress reports" are distributed via your child's Friday folder the week prior to parent/teacher conferences to help you make the most of the conferences.

#### ***Here are some additional tips for conference day:***

**Check with your child** – What do they enjoy the most about school? Who are their friends?

**Come prepared** – Read your child's progress report before the conference. Make a list of questions or concerns you have about your child's school experiences.

**PLEASE - Be on time** – Your child's teacher needs to be able to have a quality visit with each child's parents. When you are late, you will shorten your visit as the teacher will have to end it on time for the next parent!

**Stay focused** – As time during the conference is short, stay focused on your child's progress and school experiences.

**Share** – Help the teacher help your child by providing feedback through your own insights and goals for your child.

**Keep an open mind** – Children are often different at school! The dynamics among a group of children with a teacher is very different from being at home with parents even if a sibling is included. Learn more about your child's "inner child" by listening receptively.

### **FAMILY SURVEY**

Congratulations! You have chosen a school accredited by NAEYC (National Association of the Education of Young Children).

As a part of our ongoing self-study and accreditation requirements, a **SIMPLE** survey is distributed to all of our parents twice each year to provide feedback on our program. It is imperative that we receive more than 50% of these surveys back, thus we ask you to complete them and bring them with you, or complete them here at school on conference day **while you wait**.

These surveys are formatted by NAEYC and we must use it as it is. Sometimes you will find a question where the wording is confusing, or you do not know how we do this. As we have many procedures affecting different aspects of our program, you may not be aware of all that we do! **PLEASE – if you do not know** (DK) or (NA), first **ask us** how it is handled and we will share examples with you. **Then answer as you feel you should**. Asking us also gives us feedback that we have not made that procedure well known to our families!

When completed, you can then drop your **ANONYMOUS** survey in the drop box on the desk before going into your parent conference. They will not be taken out of the box until the end of conferencing at the end of the week. If you have additional comments or feedback please feel free to share these as well. If you would like us to contact you, please include your name as these are anonymous and we would not otherwise be able to follow up.

Thank you again for your support in helping us uphold the higher standards required for being an **NAEYC accredited program!**

# FAMILIES FORWARD

DIGNITY • EMPOWERMENT • HOPE

Our "Canned Food Drive" for Families Forward has begun! Each Thanksgiving season our schools sponsor a canned food drive to help those who are less fortunate. This year Montessori Schools of Irvine will be coordinating our donations with "Families Forward". The goal of Families Forward (based in Irvine) is to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency. Families Forward does this through housing, counseling, education and other support services. We are collecting canned food items (see list posted in front office) as well as toiletries. We are collecting from Friday, October 28 through **Monday, November 14**. ***THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!***



Join Discovery Cube at Cal State Fullerton on **Saturday November 5, 2016** from 10 am to 2 pm for their annual Pumpkin Launch event!

- Participate in hands-on activities and challenges
- Witness flying pumpkins launched by giant trebuchets
- Bring a carved pumpkin for our pumpkin carving contest (must be pre-carved)
- Enjoy food from your favorite gourmet food trucks
- For more information and registration (to attend the event): [www.discoverycube.org](http://www.discoverycube.org)

## **FALL BACKWARDS, SPRING FORWARD**

Reminder: Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. Please be sure to set your clocks "BACK" one hour!



## **VETERAN'S DAY**

Montessori Schools of Irvine will be **CLOSED** on **Friday, November 11** in observance of Veteran's Day, a legal holiday. Thank you to ALL of the Veterans who have served our great country!

## **HEALTHY MORNING SNACK REMINDER**

We want to remind parents that morning snack is a part of the day's nutritional component for each child and is NOT a "treat". We thus ask parents to be aware of sending healthy foods from the snack grid and suggestion list compiled by the school. These suggestions are whole foods, whole grains, low sugar. Serving sizes are also shown at the top of each food group. Please note that we cannot serve foods containing nuts and that "treats" that contain no nutrition may be sent home at the end of the day without having been served. (A healthy alternative will be served.)



### **HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

In observance of the Thanksgiving Holiday, Montessori Schools of Irvine will be **CLOSED** November 24 and 25. Happy Thanksgiving!



### **CRAFT FAIR INVITATION**

Our annual craft fair will be held on **Wednesday, November 30 from 3-5:30 PM** in the school atrium. **We invite parents** to join our staff in selling their special hand crafts, toys, books or other items during this time. Those participating will need to supply their own table (card table size) and are responsible for their own set up and clean up. See Miss Pennee with any questions.

### **NUTCRACKER BALLET**

Academy of Dance, the studio which provides our ballet classes at our schools, in conjunction with the American Pacific Ballet Company, proudly presents NUTCRACKER. Come see many Montessori Schools of Irvine alumnae in this beautiful classical ballet production at the Plummer Auditorium in Fullerton. Performances are on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Please see the flyer in the front office for more details, or visit [www.showclix.com/event/nutcracker2016](http://www.showclix.com/event/nutcracker2016) to purchase tickets.

### **EXTRA CLOTHES**

As we finally "breeeeze" into fall please remember to check your child's extra clothes supplies. Each child should have at least TWO complete sets of clothing: underwear, socks, shirts and long pants. Younger children should have THREE sets. Extra clothes should be put in a Ziploc bag and all pieces of clothing should be labeled with your child's name. Please remember to bring a jacket for your child to wear as the weather cools in the afternoons. Due to limited space on the classroom coat racks, we ask each child to have only ONE jacket at a time. Thank you!!

### **HELP US SAVE PAPER AND TIME!**

We are more than happy to provide receipts for the families who need and pick one up each month. We do ask you to continue requesting a monthly receipt and to save it in a safe place if you will need receipts for tax purposes next year. Thank you for your assistance.

### **HOLIDAY SHARING**

It is almost that time of year when people around the world begin a wealth of holiday celebrations. Please help us enrich our children's lives at school by sharing special traditions and customs that are celebrated within your families. Parents who wish to visit their children's classrooms to demonstrate or share cultural or religious celebrations, special songs, stories, etc. for November and December celebrations are invited to schedule a time with their child's teacher. Presentations will be on a first come, first served basis. The schedule and title of the presentation will be posted outside of your child's classroom door.

## **DECEMBER TOY DRIVE FOR THE CAMP PENDELTON MARINES**

This year Montessori Schools of Irvine will assist the Marine Corps for our annual "Toy Drive" during the beginning of December. We will be collecting NEW toys and gifts for children ages newborn to age 18. Look in the December newsletter for more information.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The American Montessori Society is having their 2017 Annual Conference in San Diego. The conference will be held March 9<sup>th</sup> through March 12<sup>th</sup>. Early bird registration ends November 18, with registration available for the full conference or a single day. For more information, please visit the AMS website at [amshq.org](http://amshq.org).

### ***Extra News for One's and Two's***

#### **MORNING SNACK**

A big THANK YOU to all parents signing up for the toddler morning snack program and for the healthy nutritious snacks! We LOVE fresh fruits and veggies, low salt crackers, and greek yogurt. We will wash and cut all fresh fruit and veggies.

#### **NOVEMBER TEACHING THEMES**

The One's and Two's will be learning about Farm animals and Thanksgiving this month!

### **Chef Cyndi's November – Chef's Table Recipe**

#### **Fall Pumpkin Bake**

1 medium pumpkin  
1 red, 1 green and 1 yellow apple  
1 ½ cups frozen cranberries, 1 cup raisins, 1 t. cinnamon  
2 T. brown sugar and 3 T. white sugar, to taste

1. Scoop out insides of pumpkin and throw away (save the seeds for roasting!)
2. Slice apples into bite size pieces.
3. Mix together all ingredients. Put mixture into pumpkin shell.
4. Bake in 350-degree oven for 3-4 hours, until mixture is soft.
5. Serve with vanilla ice cream.



## DATES TO REMEMBER

November 2 & 4	Parent-Teacher Conference Days- DAYCARE ACTIVITIES ONLY
November 6	Daylight savings time ends
Friday, November 11	<b>SCHOOL CLOSED-</b> Legal Holiday – Veteran’s Day
November 17	Children’s Thanksgiving Feast
November 24 & 25	<b>SCHOOL CLOSED **</b> Thanksgiving Holiday
November 30	Craft Fair in Westpark’s atrium
December 14	Holiday Open House – School CLOSSES at 5:00 PM
December 15	Children’s Holiday Party
December 16	Last day of school
December 19-January 2, 2017	<b>SCHOOL CLOSED/Winter Recess-Happy Holidays!</b>
January 1, 2017	Happy New Year!!
January 3, 2017	School Resumes



### STAFF BIRTHDAYS!

November 1	Miss Barbara
November 5	Mr.TJ (our Mr. Fix-it)