

Everything You Need to Know About the Infant Community

Welcome to the Infant Community! We are a community of infants who come together to learn, grow, love and explore the world.

There is so much depth behind each aspect of our room. If you think about all of the work that the child does from before they reach 18 months you see the need for a very prepared environment that is suitable and ready to meet the developmental needs of the child, as well as prepared adults who know how to serve each child and their individual needs.

The Materials

At this stage in the development, the child is absorbing all aspects of the world around them. He is learning the ways in which his culture interacts with one another through movement, language, and social interactions. We have prepared the environment and the materials to assist the child as he develops his abilities and preferences and becomes independent in each.

Movement

We offer lots of space for movement, from safe areas for tummy time, to areas that provide opportunity to challenge crawling, cruising, and walking. We also offer materials that call to the child, enticing her to move. The child observes the care provided to them and in turn wants to explore these skills, therefore infant sized utensils and tools are offered. These give them the opportunity to succeed in their early attempts to feed and care for themselves. Through practice, the child leaves the Infant Community with the confidence to move about their environment independently and explore the world, ready for the Toddler Environment, which will work to refine and offer challenges for their movements and skills.

Language

Children come into this environment with varying levels of communication. She leaves with a vast knowledge of vocabulary and experiences that reinforce the meaning and understanding of these words. To serve the child in her development of language, we offer experiences that will enrich and develop the child's language skills. You will see many different real objects and language cards that we use for enriching the child's vocabulary. We give the child as much experience with the objects as possible. This deepens the child's knowledge and gives the child a better understanding of the word.

The adults in the environment are constantly giving proper names for everything in the environment and inviting each child to explore the objects with all of their senses. We consider the adult to be the main language material and therefore, we prepare each adult

for this very important task. Adults converse with the children, providing rich language and listening patiently to attempts at language and other forms of communication.

Freedom within Limits

We offer a prepared environment for the child to develop their will freely; in our classroom, limits are established by the environment. Before children develop object permanence (around 9 months), distractions and removing an object from sight may be the best discipline solution. Maria Montessori teaches us about levels of obedience. From 0-3 years old, the child is in the first level of obedience; his choices are unconsciously following his needs of exploration to learn. They can't always understand the consequences of their actions, and calling out negative attention to an unwanted action/behavior usually backfires with more curiosity towards it.

Through the absorbent mind, babies are learning the way to behave unconsciously; therefore, modeling behaviors, movements, language, manners and limits is the most effective way to teach the very young child.

Eating

The child is intensely drawn to food and its preparation. We have a formal sit down lunch with tablemats, flowers, real plates and cups for those ready to use them. The child feels honored by such a lovely presentation and develops great table manners as a result. There is a great deal of language and movement that goes along with eating as well. Due to the specific foods each child is being introduced to at this new and explorative time, each parent provides a meal that fits their child's needs. This brings comfort to the child when they have a meal that is so familiar. For those within close proximity to the school and with a regular schedule that allows visits, you are welcome to come in to nurse or feed.

Diapering and Toileting

Cloth diapers are used in the class to help the child develop a sense of their body and how it functions. The child can more easily feel the wetness of the cloth diaper after they have gone, and they soon associate the two feelings of urinating and being wet together. We change the child right away when he has eliminated to give him the understanding that he is supposed to be dry and clean. We give him the proper names of the changing and toileting tools so that he has the knowledge and language to go along with the experience.

Toileting is done from the minute the child is walking. We know that the child can control the sphincters because he can control his legs for walking! We see the child holding his urine longer and going all at once instead of the urine trickling out all day. We offer the child cloth underwear so that he feels the consequence of urination and the movement of

the bowels. We offer the child much experience in the restroom with child sized toilets and sinks, so that he can access them easily. With all of this work, you can imagine how much time we spend in the bathroom! In the beginning we change clothes all day! We have fun flushing the toilet over and over (even when there is nothing in it) and then washing hands over and over again!

To keep things orderly, we supply the diapers and cloth underwear that will be used during class time. In this way, we do not have to keep up with which underwear goes with each child. We have a regular diaper service that provides us with sanitized diapers each week; all you bring is the diapers your child will go home in. Tidee Didee Diaper Service: 510-549-1133.

I am looking forward to working with you all and serving you child! You have chosen a holistic approach for education and I hope your experience with Montessori Country Day is as fulfilling as mine as been! You can always contact me with any questions by email Carmen@BergamoSchools.com.

What to Bring on the First Day:

- 5 changes of clothes, appropriate for current weather
- 1 hat, appropriate for current weather
- 4 pair of socks
- 1 pair of shoes, if walking
- 3 pair of knee pads, if crawling
- 1 5x7 family photo
- 1 2x3 portrait
- 2 fitted crib sheets, solid colors
- 1 blanket
- Diapers for the trip home, 1 for each day
- Diaper cream
- 200 water wipes, brought 1st Monday of every month

Warm regards,

Carmen Diaz