



**MONTESSORI**  
**TIDES SCHOOL**

# Parent Handbook

(Revised 2019)

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## **HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL**

Montessori Tides School is a for-profit, nationally recognized Montessori school. Its roots were established in 1986 as a Montessori environment for 3-to-6-year-olds. The current facility includes a full complement of ages, 18 months through 12 years.

Montessori Tides School was the first Montessori school established in Jacksonville Beach, and it has played a major role in the expansion of Montessori education in the public sector as a model school.

Keeping with the Montessori philosophy, the goal of Montessori Tides School is two-fold. First, we believe that each child should be allowed to experience the excitement of learning by his/her own choice, rather than being forced. Second, we help him/her to perfect natural skills for learning so that his/her ability will be at its height in future learning situations. The habits and skills that a child develops in a Montessori classroom are good for a lifetime.

We are licensed with the Florida Department of Child and Family Services, and a member of the North American Montessori Teachers Association and International Montessori Council. We also are affiliated with the American Montessori Society.

## **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

The Montessori Method of instruction is available through six levels: 0-3, 3-6, 6-9, 9-12, 12-15 and 15-18. This unique pedagogical philosophy set out more than 100 years ago by Dr. Maria Montessori aims for the fullest possible development of the human potential as a preparation for life. Learning is a dynamic process in which the whole personality of the child must be actively engaged. In order to educate the WHOLE child, we must give the child freedom to develop physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Dr. Montessori realized that the only value impulse to learning is the self-motivation of the child. The teacher prepares

the environment, directs the activities, functions as the guide and offers the child stimulation. The teacher then sits back and observes as the child begins to reveal him/herself through their “work,” which has become the motivating force, and not solely the teacher’s personality.

## **THE MONTESSORI APPROACH**

### **How it helps the child:**

- aids independence and problem-solving skills.
- creates a joyful learning experience.
- aids order, concentration and coordination.
- aids oral and written communication.
- teaches respect for oneself, other people and the planet.
- teaches social responsibility.

### **The classroom environment:**

- scientifically designed didactic materials.
- aesthetically pleasing.
- an atmosphere that encourages social interaction.
- schedule that allows for uninterrupted learning time.
- identifiable ground rules.
- outdoor environment to complement indoor learning environment.

### **Program organization:**

- ungraded three-year age span.
- commitment to a three-year cycle of attendance.
- individual and group instruction.
- observational records and progress reports of each child.
- regularly scheduled parent conferences.
- public observation policy.

**Program emphasis:**

- encourages intrinsic motivation, spontaneous activity and self-education.
- provides sensory education for intellectual development.
- encourages competencies through concrete experiences, helping the child toward abstraction.
- encourages cooperative learning through peer teaching and social interaction.
- provides learning opportunities through the exploration of the outdoors and the community.
- provides learning activities for creative expression.
- provides opportunities for cultural experience.

**Adult aspects:**

- certified Montessori teachers.
- continuing professional development.
- observational skills to match students' developmental needs and activities.
- strategies to facilitate the unique and total growth of each individual.
- leadership skills to foster a nurturing environment supportive of learning.
- partnerships developed with families.
- supervision and education of auxiliary personnel.

**THE CURRICULUM****THE TODDLER COMMUNITY (18 months through 36 months)**

Dr. Montessori's discovery of the absorbent mind of the child from birth through 6 years was a vital contribution to education. She realized that the child's mind unconsciously absorbs impressions from the environment. In this way, the children accumulate the material, which will later build up their conscious life.

In the Toddler Community, the major task of the adult is to help the child toward functional independence: physical, emotional, and intellectual. As the adult enables the child to recognize him/herself as separate from the adult, the child begins to gain a clearer sense of self. Through activities that help the child develop control, the child gains greater self-confidence.

The child at this age is especially sensitive to the acquisition of language and culture. Lessons involving stories, books, songs, picture cards, objects and contact with the natural world are all incorporated into the curriculum to help develop the child's oral language. Since this is usually the child's first contact with other children, this is also a time for them to learn how to participate cooperatively in a group. Social harmony is achieved through helping the children learn how to move purposefully, put materials away and not interfere with another's activity.

### **PRIMARY ENVIRONMENT (3 years through 6 years)**

It is between the ages 3-6 that the child most easily learns the ground rules of human behavior. These years should be constructively devoted to freeing the child through the acquisition of good manners and habits to allow him/her a place in society. The child who has had these opportunities in the Montessori environment is better prepared to devote more effort to the development of his intellectual faculties.

In an established Montessori class for 3-6 year olds, there are no timetables to regiment activities or a fixed syllabus to cramp the expansion of the mind. Here, in an orderly atmosphere of freedom, the children work independently at chosen tasks, working at their own pace and rhythm for as long as they wish in order to fulfill their needs. From the foundation of sensorial experiences, the child builds his mind in the world of abstract ideas.

The Primary years are filled with a wide range of factual materials. The whole world of culture-embracing subject areas, such as geography, history, science, music, art, language and mathematics, is open to the child. These early experiences will form a basis for the wide fields of inquiry and research during the 6-12 years.

### **ELEMENTARY YEARS (ages 6 – 12)**

By the ages of 6 or 7, the emerging powers of reason and imagination enable the child to explore and discover on a more abstract level. Children are, therefore, encouraged to research the answers to their own questions. Their research is not limited to the classroom, but includes opportunities for “going out” on field trips. They develop a better understanding of human life through this direct experience and begin to better appreciate the community in which they live.

Elementary studies include: geography, history, biology, language, mathematics (including algebra and geometry), science (including principles of physics and chemistry), music and art. The entire curriculum is integrated, meaning that all subjects are viewed as related. For example, when students study Africa in world history, they also will read African folk tales in world literature, create African masks in art, sing Swahili songs in music, make hieroglyphic calendars in math and study African animals in zoology. HOMEWORK is viewed as an extension of the work at school. Each assignment is based on individual needs and interests to foster the child’s natural desire to be challenged. Typically, homework involves some reading, research and writing. The program also includes physical education, computer technology, foreign language, practical life and social skills, and community service.



### **EXTENDED CARE (ages 18 months through 12 years)**

In keeping with the Montessori philosophy, the extended care program provides a carefully prepared environment geared toward the child's developmental needs. It is run by trained staff that is dedicated to creating a nurturing "home-like" atmosphere for the child. The curriculum includes games, arts and crafts, and lots of outdoor activities, all within a flexible format. There is also a rest period for children who need it.

### **PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE**

The school offers programs for children 18 months through elementary years. In addition, we also have early morning care for early arrivals and aftercare for children needing extended care.

TODDLER (18 months- 3 years)	8:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.
PRIMARY Half-Day Program (3-4 years)	8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
PRIMARY Full-Day Program (3 – 6 years)	8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
ELEMENTARY (6 –12 years)	8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES**

<b>Arrival Time:</b>	Toddler Community	8:45 a.m. – 9 a.m.
	Primary Classes	8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
	Elementary Classes	8 a.m – 8:15 a.m.

It is very important to be prompt. This cannot be overemphasized. Late arrivals upset the entire class, especially the child who is late. The child who is late misses a critical part of his class.

<b>Dismissal Time:</b> Toddler Community	11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**
Primary Half-Day Classes	11:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Primary Full-Day Classes	1:45 p.m. – 2 p.m.
Elementary Classes	2:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.

\*\*For parents who pick up Toddler and Primary children jointly after the morning session, the Toddler child must be picked up with the Primary child. Therefore, the dismissal time for the Toddler and Primary children who are siblings or part of a carpool is 11:15 – 11:30 a.m.

Please pick up your child promptly at dismissal time. Your child learns to expect you at certain times each day. Your promptness shows respect for this inner rhythm in the child.

LATE PICKUP CHARGE: \$ 5.00 for each 10 minutes past the pickup time

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

**Arrivals:** Pull up to where staff members are waiting to greet you and your child. Remain in the car with your child appropriately restrained in their lawfully required car seat, booster, or seat belt. The teacher will let your child out. Depart. All siblings are dropped off at the time of the earliest sibling’s arrival time.

If you come before arrival time, please wait in your car. Please do not walk your child to the classroom. Teachers are not ready to greet your child until the regular arrival time, since they are busy preparing the classroom.

**Late Arrivals:** If you arrive late, please park your car in a regular space and proceed to the office with your child to sign him/her in. An office staff member will escort your child to his/her class.

Punctual arrival is important for classroom management and the child's sense of order. Late arrivals can disrupt learning activities for the children who are already present and delay classroom involvement for the child who is late.

**Dismissals:** Pull up to where the teacher is waiting to greet you. Remain in the car (unless the teacher asks for additional help). The teacher will be sure that your child is safely buckled in. Depart. If you need to speak with another parent during dismissal, please park your car in a parking space.

Only people authorized by the parent/caretaker are allowed to pick up a child. This information is kept in your child's file on the Emergency Index Form. Any changes to the Emergency Index Form must be authorized in writing. Any person authorized to pick up a child and who is not recognized by the teacher will have to produce a driver license or other form of picture identification before we will release a child.

**Late Pickup:** To maintain safety standards and staffing requirements, please be present to pick up your child during his/her designated pickup time. If you are late, park your car in a parking space and walk to the office to pick up your child. This applies to both regular dismissal times and Aftercare schedules.

## **EXTENDED CARE**

### **EARLY MORNING CARE**

Montessori Tides School provides early morning care for parents who need childcare prior to the regular arrival time. Please complete an "Extended Care" Application to enroll your child in this program if you need this service. This is a full-time program. There is no part-time care.

If you arrive at school prior to the scheduled arrival time, please remain in your car until a staff member comes to greet your child. Children who are brought to the classroom before the regular drop-off time will be sent to the Early Morning

Care room. The charge is \$10.00.

### **EARLY MORNING CARE SCHEDULE**

Toddler: 8 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.  
Primary: 7:45 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.  
Elementary: 7:45 a.m. - 8 a.m.

### **AFTERCARE**

Montessori Tides School provides after-school care for parents who need additional childcare. Enrollment (an Extended Care Application) is required to maintain safety regulations and staffing standards. This is a full-time program. There is no part-time care. Parents may not use Aftercare in lieu of late pickup. Montessori Tides School charges a \$5.00 fee for every ten (10) minutes a child is in Aftercare past the child's pickup time.

### **AFTERCARE DISMISSALS**

The dismissal time is during the period of ten (10) minutes before the hour. (For example, the 2 p.m. pickup is 1:50 – 2 p.m.). The last pickup time is no later than 5:30 p.m. The location for all dismissals is at the front entrance. Please follow the DISMISSAL PROCEDURES (pg. 10) for picking up your child. If you arrive late for pickup, please park your car in a parking space and go to the office to get your child and sign him/her out.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **PARENT EDUCATION**

**Library:** The school library is located in the school office. Parents are urged to expand their knowledge about Montessori education and child development, and should feel free to check out books, audiotapes or videotapes at any time. Books may be checked out for one month at a time. Audio and videotapes are checked out for one week.

**Parent Education Series:** A series of informal talks will be presented throughout the school year. These talks give us a chance to better understand the developmental needs of children and to improve our parenting skills. They also provide an opportunity for all of us to get to know each other better in a casual setting.

### **OBSERVATIONS**

Because our philosophy includes promoting a better understanding of Montessori, we strongly encourage parents to observe our school. Observations of the classrooms begin after the first six to eight weeks of school. If you wish to make an appointment, please call the school office. Observation days are Monday-Friday.

### **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS**

**Formal Conferences:** Regularly scheduled conferences are held in the fall and spring. Please respect the time allotted for your appointment. If additional time is needed, another conference may be scheduled. If you wish to talk to the teacher at any time, kindly write the teacher a note or call the office to arrange an appointment. If the teacher feels she needs information from you or wishes to give you information, she will call you for a conference. All conferences are highly confidential conversations between the school and you. **PLEASE DO NOT BRING YOUR CHILD TO THE CONFERENCE.**

**Note:** We aspire to foster an open environment for communications with our parent community. If there is an issue you wish to discuss, please send a note, send an email or make an appointment for an after-school conference. **For your child's benefit, please do not try to communicate concerns during arrival, dismissal, class time, or scheduled school events.** Please be

assured that a teacher will notify you if your child exhibits any behavior of concern in the classroom.

Some lead teachers provide cellphone numbers to parents. Text messages should be limited to questions that can be answered quickly and not during school hours. Also, please respect our teachers' personal time.

**Weekly Folders:** Every week, except for the Toddler Community, parents will receive the child's work folder. His or her folder will contain completed work and, occasionally, handouts from the office. However, some of the children's work will remain in the classroom on file.

## **RECORDS**

All student records are confidential. Parents have the right to review, comment on and release their child's records upon request.

## **SCHOOL DIRECTORY**

A Student Directory is distributed to each student who enrolls at Montessori Tides School. All student names, parent names, addresses, and phone numbers are included in the Directory.

To ensure the privacy of our students and families, the information included in the Student Directory is intended for school use only. Please do not use the directory for anything other than personal information or contact.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

1. **Room Parent:** This position requires the volunteer parent to act as a liaison between the teacher and classroom parents. This is a management

- position that entails coordination of school events and communications with classroom parents.
2. **Classroom Volunteers:** Some classrooms have opportunities for parents to help out in the classroom. Sign-up sheets are provided at the beginning of the year.
  3. **The Montessori Tides Children's Foundation:** MTCF sponsors various events throughout the school year to foster community and raise money for the school. MTCF is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that welcomes parent volunteers to help plan and organize events.

### **CHANGES AT HOME**

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please inform your child's teacher or the Director as soon as possible. All information will be regarded as confidential. We will accept your judgment as to the kinds of changes that may affect your child's behavior, security and general well-being. Common causes of distress include: either one or both parents being away from home for any reason for an extended period of time; a new person living in the home; illness of either parent; illness of sibling; any hospitalization, accident or death in the family; a new caretaker; moving; or a new baby. The teacher/Director will keep you informed of any significant changes in the school environment that may affect your child.

### **CLOTHING: TODDLER AND PRIMARY**

Self-care is an important Montessori principle. Therefore, clothing should not only be comfortable, but also allow the child to dress him/herself independently. When choosing clothes, take care to pick clothes that are comfortable and easy to clean to encourage independence. Clothes that are too good to risk stains should not be worn to school. (Aprons are provided for messy jobs, but this is by no means foolproof!)

We also recommend that you NOT send your child to school in over-the-shoulder straps, stiff or small zippers, and small buttons, which are frustrating to the child. Elastic waistbands are preferred over pants with zippers and belts.

### **CHANGE OF CLOTHES AND TOILETING: TODDLER INFORMATION**

Please send a complete change of clothing (socks, shirt, shorts and diapers/underwear) to school in a labeled plastic shoebox. (Also include 2 family photographs to keep in the child's box). If your toddler has not yet toileted, it is essential that diapers be on hand. If your toddler is "working on" toileting, the preferred step after diapers is underpants, and not pull-ups. Self-toileting is most successful when it is child-directed. Cues for readiness begin with: 1) the child's ability and interest in dressing oneself; 2) the child says that he/she urinated or needs to; 3) the child's diapers are dry for a long period of time; 4) the child has the physical ability to get on and off the toilet and; 5) the child asks to use the toilet/potty seat.

### **CHANGE OF CLOTHES: PRIMARY**

Please send your child to school with a complete change of clothes (socks, underwear, shirt and shorts). Your child's teacher may provide additional instruction, such as whether to send clothing in a labeled plastic shoebox or if slippers are needed for the classroom. (NOTE: Please send an extra pair of underpants if your child is still occasionally soiling his/her clothes).

### **DRESS CODE**

Montessori Tides School has established a dress code for children in the **Primary and Elementary** classes. This policy has been set up to ensure a safe, peaceful and less distractable learning environment. First, please do not send your children to school in clothes that are difficult to manage—too small, too large, or too "dressy." Loose, casual, comfortable clothing is recommended.



Specific clothing may include: appropriate length shorts or skirts, pants (not too tight or too baggy), dresses (not too short and no spaghetti straps), T-shirts and sweatshirts (no cartoon characters), shirts (no spaghetti straps, no see-through fabric, no midriff exposure), and sweaters (loose fitting). Secondly, we request that footwear be limited to only tennis shoes or oxford-type shoes or strapped sandals and socks—no party shoes, heels of any kind, boots, strapless/backless sandals or clogs. **Shoes suitable for physical activity (playground and physical education) are required for safety.**

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Please have your child keep all toys, jewelry, money, gum and candy at home.

### **SHOW AND TELL**

When the child wants to bring something to school, we welcome age-appropriate books, records, tapes, pictures, items the child made him/herself or objects related to foreign culture, science or nature on the child's designated snack day. If they are to be returned, please label the item. We encourage parents to assist us by keeping toys out of the classroom.

### **SNACKS**

Parents provide snack for the entire class on a rotating basis. Each month, your child's teacher will send home a snack calendar indicating which day you will be responsible for snack.

Montessori Tides School has an **ORGANIC SNACK POLICY** that corresponds with Montessori values that emphasize the care of self and the environment. When choosing a healthy snack to send to the classroom, please look for the USDA organic label on packaged foods, such as whole grain crackers, rice cakes and carrots. Individual produce items, such as fruits, will have a "9" at the start of

the price lookup code, or PLU, on the sticker. Packaged foods that carry the “made with organic” ingredients label also are acceptable.

Our school also is a **NUT-FREE ENVIRONMENT** for those with nut allergies, so please choose soy- or seed-based products to send for snacks and lunches.

**Please, No Grapes or Popcorn.** Grapes and popcorn are choking hazards in the Toddler and Primary classrooms. While your child may eat these foods at home, we ask that you not send these foods for snacks or in lunchboxes.

### **Organic Snack Suggestions**

**Fruits:** peaches, pears, apples, oranges (sliced, no seeds), melons (cubed), bananas, strawberries. (Please do not bring grapes for the Toddler and Primary classrooms.)

**Vegetables:** celery, sliced carrots, cucumber slices.

**Grains:** whole grain crackers, tortillas, flavored rice cakes, small bagels, raisin bread. (Please do not bring popcorn for the Toddler and Primary classrooms.)

**Sides:** hummus, guacamole, salsa, cream cheese, or a soy or seed butter.

**Quantity:** Measure ½ cup per child for each student in your child’s classroom (number will vary in each classroom).

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Children like to share this special day with their classmates. Our birthday celebration allows each child the joy of sharing some of his/her life’s more exciting and meaningful moments. Parents are invited to this celebration, as well. You may bring a special treat for the birthday celebration. We suggest organic homemade cookies of natural ingredients. Please **DO NOT SEND CAKES, CUPCAKES AND FOODS WITH A HIGH SUGAR CONTENT.** If

you are not sure of the appropriateness of the treat, please consult the teacher before bringing it to school.

**Please do not send PARTY INVITATIONS or BIRTHDAY GIFTS** to school to be distributed to other children. We feel birthday parties are private home affairs, and distributing invitations at school interferes with the rhythm of the child at work in school.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS**

**HALLOWEEN:** Costumes are NOT permitted for Toddler or Primary students. Elementary students participate in Historical Halloween, which has the students researching and dressing up as a person who has contributed to society, such as a scientist or explorer. Guidance for Historical Halloween will be provided by the Elementary lead teachers.

**THANKSGIVING:** This is a “sharing feast” for the children. Each child will be asked to bring a special food to share with their friends at school.

**WINTER HOLIDAY PARTY:** Parents are invited to attend and help support the party with needed supplies, such as food or drinks.

**VALENTINE’S DAY:** Primary and Elementary children may bring UNADDRESSED valentines for all the children. (Please make sure that there are sufficient cards for the entire class.)

**SPRING FESTIVAL:** Parents are invited to attend and help support the party with needed supplies, such as food or drinks.

**SPECIAL NIGHTS:** Outside of the school day, there are special events that take place where parents/grandparents and the child can enjoy the experience of school together. Parents’ Night and Grandparents’ Night are always treasured

moments for the child and adult. Other special events include Graduation and the School Picnic in May.

### **SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND HEARING TESTING**

A certified speech and language pathologist is available for testing once a year at Montessori Tides School. These tests are administered in the fall. Parents are notified of specific date(s). If you wish to have your child tested, the school requires parental permission, as well as a nominal fee.

### **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Individual and class pictures are taken at Montessori Tides School. These pictures usually are taken in the fall.

### **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

#### **ADMISSIONS**

Admission is open to all children without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. Placement is available throughout the school year depending on the current enrollment and the child's readiness.

Children are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis. However, preference is given, in order or priority to:

1. students returning to Montessori Tides School.
2. sibilings of students returning to Montessori Tides School.
3. sibilings of former Montessori Tides School students.
4. Montessori transfer students.
5. other applicants.

Pre-admission requirements:

1. **Toddler Program:** The child is at least 18 months old by Sept. 1. The child is not more than 36 months by Sept. 1. The child is showing signs of growing independence and a need for separateness.
2. **Primary Program:** The child is at least 2 years and 9 months by Sept. 1. The child is not more than 6 years by Sept. 1. The child is fully toilet-trained and mature enough to benefit from the Primary environment.
3. **Lower Elementary:** The child is at least 5 years and 9 months by September 1. The child is not more than 9 years by Sept. 1. The child is mature enough to take on a longer school day and the responsibilities of the Elementary classroom.
4. **Upper Elementary:** The child is at least 9 years by Sept. 1. The child is not more than 13 years by Sept. 1. The child is mature enough to accept the responsibilities of the Upper Elementary classroom.

A parent classroom observation and meeting with the Administrator to answer questions and discuss the child's readiness for school also is required. Children with special needs may require assessment or testing (at the parents' expense) to make an admissions decision. In addition, Elementary children require a teacher-child interview (including prior school records review, if available) to determine developmental and performance level, and a child visit for a day to the classroom to orient the child to the program.

### **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

**FEES:** A registration fee is due with the child's application. In addition, there is a supplies fee due upon the child's acceptance. Both fees are NON-REFUNDABLE. The Field Trip fee applies only to Elementary students.

**TUITION:** Please refer to the current TUITION & FEE SCHEDULE for rates, payment options and dates. There is a 10 percent (10%) sibling discount for each additional sibling.

**TUITION DEPOSIT:** A deposit of \$500.00 is due upon the child's acceptance. This NON-REFUNDABLE deposit is **APPLIED TO THE TUITION** with the balance due either by May 15 or paid out over 9 months from May 15 until Feb. 15, using the full, semi-annual, quarterly or monthly payment schedule.

**LATE CHARGES:** A \$ 15.00 late charge will be charged for any payments after the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. Additional charges will be applied for payments after the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month, as per the agreement on the TUITION CONTRACT. Any payments later than 45 days will require full payment of the tuition balance per the TUITION CONTRACT.

**REFUND POLICY ON TUITION:** Financial obligations are in no way lessened by the withdrawal of a student, and no part of the money paid in advance will be refunded. (Special exception is given only to business transfers where a student must move out of town. A minimum of a 45-day notice will be required to alter the terms of the TUITION CONTRACT.)

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Though the school does not provide transportation, we will supply parents with a list of children enrolled and their addresses to help you organize a carpool among school families. This is usually quite effective when all parties involved can adhere to some basic rules of safety and courtesy.

**Note:** The school is not authorized to release any child to a person without written permission from the parent given on the Emergency Index Form, or a written note.

## LUNCH

Children who are enrolled in the Toddler or Primary Full-Day program, Elementary program, and the Extended Care program will bring their lunch to school. We recommend a CLOTH INSULATED BAG labeled with the child's name on the outside.

Montessori Tides School is a promoter of healthful habits in children. As nutrition is an important part of a child's development, we encourage parents to pack only wholesome foods in their lunch bags.

From our perspective, excessive sweets affect the child's disposition and, therefore, their ability to learn. We encourage children to learn that wholesome food tastes good, but it's awfully difficult for a little one to enjoy eating a slice of apple and a handful of raisins when a neighbor is munching on sugary treats.

Please do not give in to the many pressures in our society, which try to defeat good nutrition. Help us make the time your child spends at Montessori Tides School healthy and productive.

### LUNCH BOX SUGGESTIONS

<b>Fruits</b>	<b>Vegetables</b>	<b>Drinks</b>
Peaches	Carrots	Milk
Pears	Celery	Fruit Juices
Apples	Cucumber Slices	Water
Oranges	Tomato Slices	
Plums	Potato Salad	
Nectarines	Pickles	
Applesauce	Cole Slaw	
Bananas	Olives	
Melons (cubed)	Bean Salad	

<b>Sandwiches (or equivalent)</b>	<b>Snacks</b>
Cheese	Taco Chips
Chicken	Raisins
Meats	Wholegrain Crackers
Deviled Eggs	Tapioca
Tuna Fish	Fig cookies
Chili	Pretzels
Soup	Graham Crackers
Rice and Beans	Yogurt

**PLEASE: NO NUTS, SEEDS, GRAPES, CANDY OR SODA.**

**REMINDER: WE ARE A NUT-FREE SCHOOL, SO PLEASE DO NOT SEND ANY NUTS OR NUT BUTTERS.**

### **SEPARATION ENVIRONMENT FOR TODDLERS**

To enable the child a smooth transition from home to school, it is essential that adequate time is given for the child to separate from the security of the home environment. This adjustment is possible through a process call SEPARATION ENVIRONMENT, where the parent is able to remain with the child at school until the child feels he/she is able to trust the new caregivers in the environment. During this time, the parent comes for an indefinite time (usually 1-5 days) and stays with the child for an hour, and then leaves with the child. This process continues until the child is comfortable in the environment and is able to fully separate from the adult.

**SEPARATION ENVIRONMENT BEGINS THE FIRST FULL DAY OF SCHOOL.**



## **PHASING-IN FOR PRIMARY AND ELEMENTARY**

Children enrolled in the Primary and Elementary programs go through a phasing-in process at the beginning of the school year. The reasons for doing so are many. First, it is apparent that children of all ages benefit a great deal from the “shortened” days of the school routine. Secondly, since only certain children come on certain days during this process, the smaller number of children gives the teacher more time to spend with the children who may need special guidance in the beginning. Fewer children also allows the children to become more acquainted with one another, especially for the children entering the program for the first time. Lastly, this process seems to start the beginning of the school year off on a more positive note!

The phasing-in schedule begins two (2) days before the first full day of school. All Primary and Elementary students go only a half-day. Regular school hours, including Extended Care, begin the first full day of school.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN**

Children with special needs who apply to the school will be considered for enrollment. Consideration must be based on the current class enrollment and the teacher’s ability to effectively meet the child’s needs as well as the needs of the class as a whole. Montessori Tides School has no specific special education teacher to administer a program for children with special needs. However, the Montessori approach often can benefit a child with special needs. The full cooperation of the parents is required and test results/evaluations (if any) need to be submitted, or obtained (at the parents’ expense) if indicated. Any professional recommendations (tutoring, therapy, a tracker, etc.) must be provided (at the parents’ expense) to ensure the child’s success.

**Note:** If it is decided by the school after a period of time (usually 4-6 weeks), that the child has not benefited from the classroom experience, then the school reserves the right to dismiss the child.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION**

It is mandatory by state of Florida law that no child be permitted to attend school unless a health form and a record of immunization are on file within 30 days of enrollment. These forms are only available at your physician's office. A child may submit a religious exemption form instead of the health form and record of immunization. Religious exemption forms also must be on file within 30 days of enrollment and are available from a county health department.

Please report all absences due to contagious diseases to the school office.

Please keep your child at home if he/she is coughing, sneezing, has a temperature of 100 or more, has a runny nose or an upset stomach. This is a matter of courtesy toward the other children, parents and teachers. The child may return to school when symptom-free.

If your child is not feeling well at school, parents or a responsible adult will be called to take the child home. Please be certain that the office has an up-to-date list of parents' business telephone numbers and emergency numbers (friends/relatives).

We request that your child receive an adequate amount of sleep. If your child has been up late at night for special reasons, we ask that you keep the child at home from school.

Any child present at school will be assumed fit to play outside. If your child is not well enough to go outside, please keep him/her at home.

No medication, including sunscreen and bug spray, will be given, except upon written permission of the parent. The school provides a state-required form for this purpose.

**Note:** Whenever possible, please give medication at home, as keeping track of correct time and dosages is a difficult responsibility for the staff.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

In accordance with state law, fire drills are held once a month. Since it is not possible to run all drills under ideal conditions, parents should be aware that the children would be asked to exit the building without coats. Children stay outside no more than five or six minutes. During fire drills, all children and adults **MUST** leave the building.

### **ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY**

If your child has an accident at school, you will be notified in person and a report will be given to you on a state-regulated form. Forms need to be signed and returned to the school. In the event of an emergency, you will be notified as soon as possible by phone and the course of action will be taken according to the EMERGENCY INDEX card. Staff members instructed in FIRST AID/CPR will assist the child in need.

### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

The state of Florida requires that all members of childcare facilities be on the alert for and report to the state, any and all cases of suspected abuse to the child. Montessori Tides School is, therefore, obligated to report to the state any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

### **SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE AND TELEPHONE CALLS**

School correspondence and telephone calls will be handled through the school office only. Office hours are 8 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

## **PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES**

All payments brought to Montessori Tides School, either cash or checks, should be taken to the office. Teachers will not be expected to handle any financial transactions. Please do not put any payments in a child's lunchbox!

## **EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

In case of severe weather, listen to any local TV or radio stations for reports of public school closings. If Duval County schools are closed due to weather, Montessori Tides School will be closed. For any unusual school closing (eg. due to fire, theft, contaminated water, and heat or air-conditioning loss), a text and email system will be used.

## **DISCIPLINE STATEMENT**

Montessori Tides School is committed to help every child achieve inner-discipline through the philosophy that "Discipline must come through liberty..." (MONTESSORI) Discipline is, therefore, possible by allowing the children the necessary freedom for their development. Under no circumstances shall any type of excessive discipline measures ever be applied (for example, corporal punishment or verbal abuse). Children do not learn positive behavior from punishment, which disregards one as a person.

Four kinds of freedom (with limits) are allowed in the Montessori-prepared environment:

1. **MOVEMENT** - The children are free to move about at will providing they do not disturb the work of other children or harm themselves. If a child is still learning to develop inner control, the teacher will help redirect the child to a more appropriate activity.
2. **CHOICE** – In the Toddler and Primary environments, the children are free to choose whatever work they desire, providing they know how to

use the materials, respect the materials and replace the materials on the shelf when they have completed the activity. Elementary students work from a work plan that is created based on lessons they've had and assignments they've been given. They organize their time, choosing the order in which to complete their work.

3. **AMOUNT OF TIME** - The children are free to work on any activity as long as they wish because it is the WORK that is helping the child develop inner-discipline. If the child is not using his time purposefully, he will be redirected to another space or activity.
4. **TALKING** - Freedom of talking encourages the spontaneous desire to help one another as they work together. This then creates a non-competitive atmosphere. If the communication between peers becomes ineffective, then the teacher will help facilitate the language.

### **DISENROLLMENT POLICY**

There is more success in school, as well as in the home, when parents follow the same pedagogical approach as the school. The school can best help children and parents when a good relationship is maintained. The school and parents must have a mutual trust and respect for each other if they are to work together effectively for the education of the child.

When the child encounters obstacles in the classroom, the help of the parent is essential to assure the child's adaptation. We have found that by keeping the lines of communication open, the child has a greater chance for success. The following steps will take place to make every attempt possible to help the child before withdrawal of a student is necessary.\*\*

1. A conference will take place between the parent(s) and the teacher/Director regarding the specific concern. At this conference, strategies will be discussed to come up with possible solutions.

2. After a period of time (usually 1-2 weeks), the teacher/Director will inform the parent on the child's progress. If a second formal conference is necessary to discuss further options to assist the child, then the teacher/Director will arrange to meet with the parent(s).
3. After a period (usually 1-2 weeks) following the second conference, when the school has made every effort to help the child, and the child continues to display behavioral problems that may endanger him/her and/or classmates, or is disruptive to the learning environment, then the school reserves the right to dismiss the child from Montessori Tides School.

\*\* The school reserves the right to immediately dismiss any student for cause, depending on the nature and severity of the situation.

### **ADA Compliance Statement**

Montessori Tides School does not discriminate in its education and employment programs on the basis of religion, age, race, color, national origin, gender, marital or parental status, and disability. Montessori Tides School complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Montessori Tides School  
1550 Penman Road  
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250  
904-241-1139