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Upcoming Events

- Apr. 1 Monthly Tuition Due
- Apr. 2 **SCHOOL CLOSED - Good Friday**
- Apr. 15 - **SCHOOL CLOSED TO STUDENTS**
Apr. 16 **Parent/Teacher Conferences**
- Apr. 22 Coffee With the Head 8:45 AM
Victorian Farmhouse
- Apr. 23 Earth Day Celebration 5:30 PM
Potluck Supper in Victorian Farmhouse
RSVP to Nola Katinsky
- Apr. 30 Infant and Toddler Classrooms Closed
Summer Camp Registrations Due

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Headlines from Oak Farm Montessori School

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www.oakfarm.org

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Our mission is to provide a Montessori environment that inspires children to reach their potential through meaningful work.

FROM JUDITH CUNNINGHAM, HEAD OF SCHOOL

NY Times Bestseller on Motivation Praises Montessori Schools (with thanks to Oregon Montessori Schools)

Daniel Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind*, delivered the closing address at the American Montessori Association's National Conference in Boston last week. While researching his thesis for *A Whole New Mind*, Pink discovered that Montessori pedagogy is particularly well suited for the needs of children. His thesis that the world today needs people who think in fundamentally different ways led him to discover that Montessori was particularly well suited to the learning needs of the present and future world.

Pink's new book, *Drive*, describes recent discoveries about motivation. Pink has concluded that what most effectively fosters enduring motivation is that which leads a student to feel any of these three things: autonomy, mastery, and purpose.

Pink cites a variety of studies that lead to this conclusion, and describes several successful business corporations using innovative managerial methods that are consistent with this enlightened theory of motivation. Pink's evaluation contrasts the results of a traditional academic reward and punishment approach with a motivation approach, which he calls Motivation 2.0, to those achieved by the Montessori approach that promotes autonomy, mastery, and purpose, which he labels Motivation 3.0.

Many of the key tenets of a Montessori education resonate with the principles of Motivation 3.0—that children naturally engage in self-directed learning and independent study; that teachers should act as observers and facilitators of that learning, and not as lecturers or commanders; and that children are naturally inclined to experience periods of intense focus, concentration, and flow that adults should do their best not to interrupt. Although Montessori schools are rare at the junior high and high school levels, every school, educator, and parent can learn from its enduring and successful approach." (from *Drive* by Daniel H. Pink, 2009, p. 182).

"Rewards and punishments do work well in a narrow band of circumstances," Pink acknowledged, "but even then they produce a cascade of collateral damages. Many experiments have shown, for example, that the use of rewards tends to extinguish the desired behaviors, especially those that are creative or complex." Ibid

Pink is not arguing that "carrots and sticks" should be abandoned altogether. He makes a point, for example, that financial compensation necessarily plays a role in workplace motivation. It's simply been given too much emphasis in relation to other factors necessary to bring out the best in people.

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LETTER FROM JUDITH

Continued from page 1

Drive focuses largely on adults and the world of work, although it does include a chapter on education. Pink believes that educational systems continue to rely largely on assumptions about motivation that have been shown to be false and fail to prepare young people for the kinds of lives and careers that will serve them and society well. In his chapter on education, Pink describes several educational systems that support these ideas on motivation, including a paragraph on Montessori education.

“The vast majority of Montessorians know exactly what I'm talking about in this book. You practice what I call 'big-picture' learning. You understand that children, like adults, are engaged in their most meaningful learning when they achieve what has been called 'flow.' This is not only a deeply satisfying state of mind, but it is powerfully motivating of future efforts.” Pink noted that what Montessori education offers children is the chance to work and learn in a manner that often produces this state of mind because Montessori classrooms focus on the individual's sense of autonomy, mastery, and purpose.” Ibid

Daniel Pink is advocating Montessori practices to primarily business audiences. Isn't it grand that your children are benefitting everyday from cutting edge research that is part of a 100 year Montessori tradition?

SCHEDULING PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION REGARDING APRIL PARENT AND TEACHER CONFERENCE

School-wide conferences will be held on Thursday, April 15 and Friday, April 16 from 8:30 AM through 3:30 PM.

To schedule the conferences for your children:

- Call Sarah Shanton-Cox (Ext. 25200).
- The conferences are for parents only, with the exception of Middle School. See below.
- Every attempt will be made to schedule sequential conferences for parents with more than one child.
- The conferences will be held in the student's normal classroom.

Childcare

Childcare services will be provided for the length of individual conferences only. For example: if you have 2 children and, therefore, two conferences to attend, your children may participate in the childcare service for the length of those two conferences only. Please let Sarah know if you need this service.

Childcare will be available in following locations:

Toddler: Solarium (Victorian Farmhouse)

Primary: Primary 3 Classroom

Lower and Upper Elementary: Victorian Farmhouse Recreation Room & Multi-purpose Room

For parents of Primary students, please escort your child to the Primary 3 entrance using the porch, then enter through the main Victorian Farmhouse entrance, and continue through the hallway to your child's classroom. Chairs will be available outside each classroom for those arriving early and needing a place to sit and wait.

Middle School

Middle School students are expected to attend the conference which they will help to lead.

School is closed to students April 15th and 16th with the exception of conference childcare.

SECOND-ANNUAL EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

By Nola Katinsky, Sustainability Expert

Join us April 23, 2010 for a potluck supper and a variety of participatory activities to get us moving together on cleaning up and caring for our planet.

The program will start with a carry-in meal at 5:30 PM and proceed with a variety of interactive stations for everyone – students, staff, and families – to enjoy. No need for childcare because we want everyone to come and share our evening.

We need volunteers to help with set up, take down, and clean up.

Set up: 3:30 - 5 PM Take down: 7- 8 PM Clean up: 7- 8 PM

Please RSVP and sign up to help by contacting Nola Katinsky by phone at (260) 897-4270 or email ndkatinsky@gmail.com

PLAN TO INCLUDE OAK FARM CAMPS IN YOUR SUMMER SCHEDULE

A reminder as you make summer plans, Oak Farm offers a variety of summer-camp options for toddlers through middle school students. All camps are open to the public with the exception of camps for 3-6 year olds which are open to currently enrolled students. Camp descriptions and enrollment forms can be found on our website www.oakfarm.org. Registrations will be accepted through April 30th.

LIVING IN THE MOMENT

By Vanessa Olsen, Infant Teacher

(The following is the fourth article in the "Creating Connections" series.)

Living in the moment means to be aware of what is going on around us. We can spend so much of our time thinking about activities and events that have happened in the past or will happen in the future. Sometimes these thoughts trouble us, consume us, and steal our joy. Whenever we spend too much time in the past or future we risk not living in the moment.

Every day is filled with teachable moments that we might overlook if we are not aware of our thoughts and actions. Living in the moment allows us to see, with clarity, the opportunity for those teachable moments. It is in these moments that we will build connections with others. Teachable moments are also important because they build a foundation of trust for those around us. Living in the moment creates a special connection between you and your child. Because of this connection, there is a greater chance that your child will turn to you for advice when problems arise.

The parenting phase of your life that you are in at this time may seem never-ending. I just want to tell you that this phase of your life is fleeting.

Living in the moment takes self-discipline for many of us. At first you may have to schedule time to be in the moment with your child until it becomes a natural part of your life.

I challenge you to make time every day to do something that you and/or your child enjoy. This may include preparing dinner together, playing at the park, or reading a story.

There are so many things in today's world that can distract us from our purpose. Dr. Maria Montessori states, "To influence society we must turn our attention to childhood. . . for it is the little ones who are building mankind, and they can work only on the materials we give them." Remember that you have the one material to give that will cost you nothing. . . and that is to give others your time in the present moment.