

Parent Handbook

Serving children 6 weeks through 6 years

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2020-21

MAGNOLIA
MONTESSORI SCHOOL
JOYFUL HEARTS, PEACEFUL MINDS

MAGNOLIA MONTESSORI SCHOOL MEMBERSHIPS/AFFILIATIONS

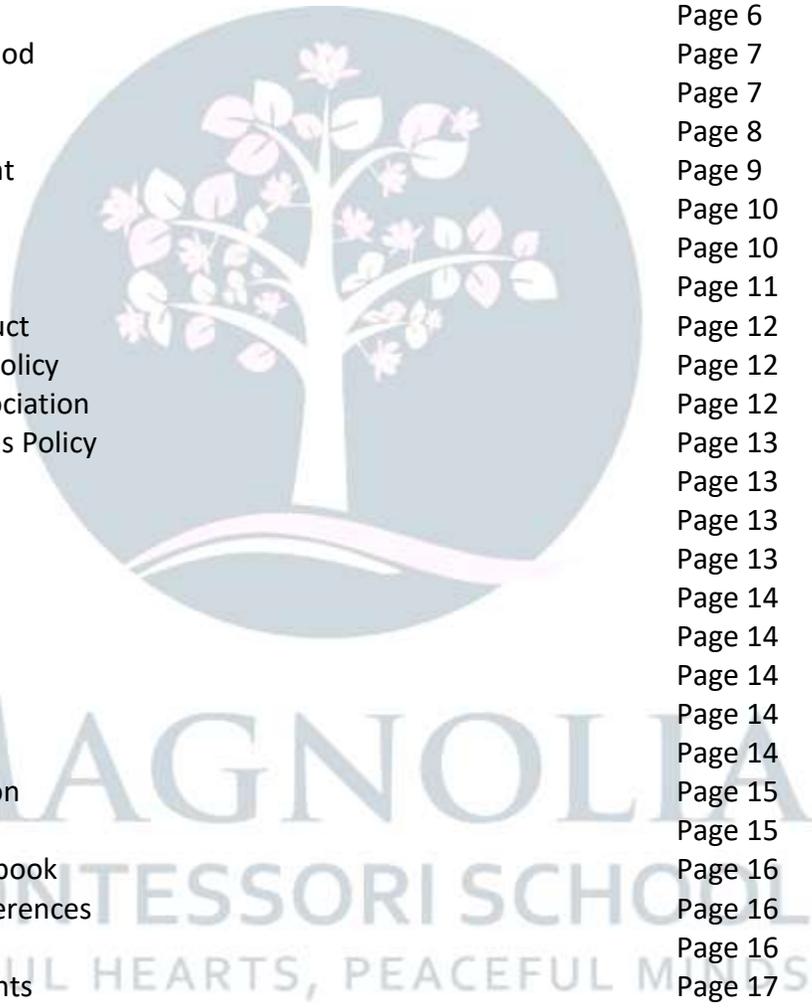
AMS – American Montessori Society

NAEYC – National Association of the Education of the Young Child

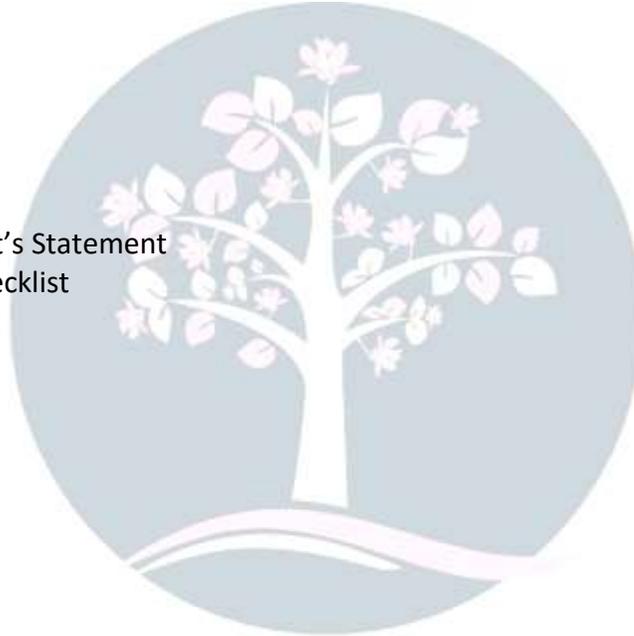
AMI – American Montessori Internationale

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MAGNOLIA
MONTESSORI SCHOOL
JOYFUL HEARTS, PEACEFUL MINDS

MISSION STATEMENT

The Magnolia Montessori School provides a nurturing, enriching, and peace-creating environment which embraces diversity and lays a foundation that encourages self-discovery, independence, a positive sense of self, and personal responsibility. Children, while embracing a profound respect for themselves, others, and the world in which we live, achieve academic excellence as they strive towards realizing their full potential.

Magnolia Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex or national origin.

VISION STATEMENT

Children develop an awareness of themselves and the world around them so that they can better appreciate the importance of peace and compassion.

A Covenant for Honouring Children

**We find these joys to be self-evident;
That all children are created whole, endowed with innate
intelligence, with dignity and wonder, worthy of respect.**

**The embodiment of life, liberty and happiness,
children are original blessings, here to learn their own song.
Every girl and boy entitled to love, to dream, and to
belong to a loving "village." And to pursue a life of purpose.**

**We affirm our duty to nourish and nurture the young,
to honor their caring ideals as the heart of being human.
To recognize the early years as the foundation of life, and to
cherish the contribution of young children to human evolution.**

**we commit ourselves to peaceful ways and vow to keep
from harm or neglect these, our most vulnerable citizens.**

**As guardians of their prosperity we honor
this bountiful Earth whose diversity sustains us.
Thus we pledge our love for generations to come.**

Taken from the book, "Child Honouring How to Turn This World Around". Homeland Press

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

Magnolia Montessori School is committed to Children and Families:

- Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the human life cycle. Our main priority is to provide care and education in settings that are safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive for each child.
- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle.
- Appreciate and support the bond between the child and family.
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community and society.
- Respect diversity in children and families.
- Respect the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual child.
- Recognize that children achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect.
- Maintain confidentiality in all regards.

Magnolia Montessori School's commitment to the Profession

- Respect diversity in colleagues.
- Respect the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual colleague.
- Recognize that one achieves their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect.
- Shall use honest and effective methods of administering duties, use of time and conducting business.
- Shall represent his or her own professional qualification with clarity and true intent.
- Maintain confidentiality in all regards.

American Montessori Society (AMS)

Magnolia Montessori School is an Initiate member of the American Montessori Society (AMS), which assures you that certain standards and qualifications are maintained at our school. In order for MMS to be a part of this organization, our teachers must hold recognized Montessori credentials, and we must follow guidelines based on Montessori philosophy and procedures.

National Association for the Education of the Young Child (NAEYC)

Magnolia Montessori School is in the process of pursuing accreditation with the National Association for the Education of the Young Child.

Historical Background

Montessori education, founded in 1907 by one of Italy's first female physicians, Dr Maria Montessori (b.1870 - d.1959), offers a comprehensive, internationally recognized education program for children ages 2 ½ to 16.

As a physician, Dr Montessori specialized in pediatrics and psychiatry. At the medical school

of the University of Rome, she came into frequent contact with the children of the working class and poor through its free clinics. Those experiences convinced her that human intelligence was not rare and that most newborns come into the world with vast potentials.

Dr Montessori witnessed the universality that occurred in human development while studying children throughout the world and developed an educational approach that met those developmental needs. In her observations as a scientist, Montessori concluded that children had an almost effortless ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings. She developed a curriculum with materials known as “concrete abstractions” to aid children in their quest for what she termed “self-education”. In her analysis, true and lasting learning occurs only when an individual makes his own discoveries through exploration and observation. Many elements of education as we know it today, were adapted from Montessori's theories. These include the development of the open classroom, individualized education, manipulative learning materials, and programmed instruction. In the past five decades, educators and child psychologists alike have begun to recognize the consistency between Montessori's theories and their own research into child development.

Montessori asserts that the educator's job is to serve the child by determining what each one needs to make the greatest progress. To her, a child who fails in school should not be blamed any more than a doctor should blame a patient who does not get well fast enough. She felt that it was the job of the physician to help us find the way to cure ourselves, and thus, the educator's job to facilitate the natural process of learning.

MAGNOLIA MONTESSORI SCHOOL HISTORY

Magnolia Montessori School was established in August of 2016 having formally been a traditional day care center. At that time there were 6 employees and 28 children enrolled. We spent that month of August converting the school into a Montessori program and as a result a wonderful Montessori program was created. Currently, the school has over 20 employees and approximately 80 students having maximized our current space.

Magnolia Montessori School was established due to the belief that children should be afforded the opportunity to learn by way of Montessori pedagogy in an environment that values diversity, safety and honor. Our Montessori program is proud to follow a guidance system that marries its' philosophy to a “way of life” that is based on the values of Respect, Independence, Self-Esteem, Responsibility and Accountability. As a community, we believe that the Montessori philosophy benefits every child from the ages of six weeks through six years of age.

STAFF

We provide certified Montessori staff for each level of education that we offer. Our teachers hold a variety of diplomas and certifications, which include university degrees, ECE (Early Childhood Certification), AMI (Association Montessori Internationale), AMS (American Montessori Society) and First Aid certification. Criminal record checks and ongoing professional development classes are required for all adults working with children at our schools.

Reflective of our diverse community, staff at Magnolia Montessori School hail from such places and cultures from around the world. They have chosen to come together here, at Magnolia, to collaborate and support each other in a way that models the Montessori approach.

Through our staff and facilities, we offer an exemplary Montessori education that meets the American Montessori Standards of education as well as the National Association of Education for the Young Child standards for our students. Our staff prepares beautiful and enriching environments, presents appropriate lessons, and above all, respects and nurtures our students' holistic development.

THE MONTESSORI METHOD

Maria Montessori based her entire method on her observation and understanding of the child as she is, not as adults think she might or should be. She then devised a "prepared" environment and a teaching method to help the child develop herself as a total human being. The method is designed to take advantage of a child's sensitive periods - those times when she is keenly receptive to specific areas of learning.

OUR APPROACH

Dr. Montessori viewed education as an "aid to life" that fosters the total development of the child. We respect the intelligence and individuality of all children. Our classrooms are carefully designed to maximize exploration, independence, and co-operation. The children at our school are given the freedom to explore their world and to express themselves in a safe and loving environment within clearly defined boundaries. This allows them to trust their own understanding and experience, while developing their abilities with confidence.

Dr. Montessori felt that the goal of education should be to cultivate the child's own natural desire to learn, rather than to fill him with facts from a pre-determined course of study. In the Montessori classroom, this objective is approached in two ways:

- 1) By allowing each child to experience the excitement of learning by his own choice rather than being forced.
- 2) By helping the child perfect all his own tools for learning so that his ability to learn functions optimally.

The Montessori materials have dual long-range purposes in addition to their immediate purpose of providing specific information to the child. Dr. Montessori's observations of the kinds of "toys" that children enjoy and return to play with repeatedly, led her to design a number of multi-sensory sequential and self-correcting materials that facilitate the mastery of abilities and the learning of concepts.

For young children, the use of materials is based on their unique aptitude for learning that Dr. Montessori identified as the *absorbent mind*, a mind that indiscriminately absorbs information from a child's physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual environment. She emphasized that the hand is the chief teacher of the child. In order to learn, there must be concentration, and the best way for children to concentrate is by fixing their attention on some task they are

performing with their hands.

Another observation of Dr Montessori's was the importance of the "Sensitive Periods" for early learning. Occurring from birth to age six, Sensitive Periods are age periods when the child has intense fascination and unusual capabilities for acquiring particular skills. It is easier for the child to learn a certain skill during this Sensitive Period than at any other time in his life. According to Montessori, the easiest time for learning any particular skill is when the sensitive periods are in operation.

The following table identifies eleven Sensitive Periods. Approximate ages of the onset and conclusion of each one is indicated after the general description:

- (1) Order** - Characterized by a desire for consistency and repetition; a passionate love for established routines; and to be disturbed by disorder. The environment must be carefully ordered with a place for everything and with carefully established ground-rules. (2 - 4 years old)
- (2) Movement** - Random movements become coordinated and controlled: grasping, touching, turning, balancing, crawling, walking. (Birth - 1.5 years old)
- (3) Small Objects** - A fixation on small objects and tiny details. (1.4 - 4 years old)
- (4) Grace and Courtesy** - Imitation of polite and considerate behavior leads to an internalization of these qualities into the personality. (2.5 - 6 years old)
- (5) Refinement of the Senses** - Fascination with sensorial experiences (taste, sound, touch, weight, smell) resulting in the child learning to observe and in making increasingly refined sensorial discriminations. (2.5- 6 years old)
- (6) Writing** - Fascination with the attempt to reproduce letters and numbers with pencil or pen and paper. Montessori discovered that writing precedes reading. (3.5 - 4.5 years old)
- (7) Reading** - Spontaneous interest in the symbolic representations of the sounds of each letter and in the formation of words. (3- 5.5 years old)
- (8) Language** - Use of words to communicate: a progression from babble to words to phrases to sentences with a continuously expanding vocabulary and comprehension. (Birth to 6 years old)
- (9) Spatial Relationships** - Forming impressions about relationships in space: the layout of familiar places, able to find the way around the neighborhood, and increasingly able to work complex puzzles. (4 - 6 years old)
- (10) Music** - Spontaneous interest in and the development of pitch, rhythm, and melody. (2 - 6 years old)
- (11) Mathematics** - Formation of the concepts of quantity and operations from the uses of clear and concrete material aids. (4 - 6 years old)

The Montessori classroom takes advantage of the Sensitive Periods by allowing the child the freedom to select individual activities that correspond to her own periods of interest and ability.

Our classrooms also provide children with the opportunity to learn appropriate social

behavior as participants in a community. The three-year age span in our Primary Program (ages 3 to 6) and six-year span in our Elementary Program (ages 6 to 12) allows the older students to be role models and mentors for the younger students as well as for the younger students to aspire to those same positions. At the same time, our students learn that regardless of their age or tenure in the class, each of them is equally important and receives equal consideration.

Students are encouraged not only to be responsible for themselves but to also help others. For example, older students will often help a younger student tie his shoes or other work, facilitating social interaction at all levels.

In short, the children at our school are given the freedom to explore their world and to express themselves in a safe and loving environment within clearly defined boundaries. This allows them to trust their own understanding and experience, while developing their abilities with confidence.

The following goals are an integral part of our community and curriculum:

- To provide and maintain a happy, safe and healthy learning environment.
- To encourage and support the full development of each child.
- To provide a setting that nurtures the individual's self-esteem as an independent learner.
- To extend the child's awareness of his world and his community as well as to assist in the development of social values.
- To collaborate with parents in achieving developmental goals.

Montessori education aims to help the child develop his potential. It embraces all of the influences, the experiences, and the natural traits that prompt and enable an individual to develop fully his physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potentialities. It is a system in which everything relevant to the life of the child, at each of his particular stages of development, is provided in an appropriate, stimulating and sensitive environment. In this way, learning through discovery and self-direction is nurtured.

The Prepared Environment

The "teacher", says Montessori, "should be the guardian of the prepared environment." The skill, care, and devotion with which the teacher gets the environment ready is the very condition of the children's freedom. The staff is to provide the stability and guidance needed to make it possible for each child in the class to progress to his fullest social, creative and intellectual potential. The teacher's role is to nurture, guide, observe and direct the child's decision making. This is to be done through one-on-one lessons, small group explorations and large group activities. The teacher is expected to know the general function of the prepared environment and the nature and purpose of every piece of material in it and the age to which it is suited. The assistant is expected to be familiar with the philosophy and learn as much as

possible about the materials throughout the year. Any teacher who does not fulfill his or her duties in this respect cannot hope to be a successful Montessori teacher. The staff and faculty FIRST care must be to see to it that the environment is always kept in order, down to the smallest detail - always beautiful and shining and in perfect condition so that nothing is wanting. They are expected to work together towards this goal.

The Child

The Montessori child builds confidence and competence as he engages in activities appropriate to his development. Cooperation and a sense of community are fostered through independence and group exercises. The child develops mutual respect and responsibility for himself, others and the environment.

ROLE OF THE MONTESSORI TEACHER

The role of a Montessori teacher is that of an observer whose ultimate goal is to intervene less and less as the child develops. The teacher creates an atmosphere of calm, order and joy in the classroom. She is there to help and encourage the children in all their efforts, allowing them to develop self-confidence and inner discipline. When working with new students at each level, the teacher is more active, demonstrating the use of materials while presenting activities and lessons based on an assessment of the child's interests and abilities.

A Montessori directress or guide does not teach in the traditional sense. The child is introduced to learning experiences that answer the child's special needs and which allow the child to explore and learn at her own rate. The teacher in a Montessori class acts as a go-between (like a catalyst), and affirms the child's growth within the prepared environment of the classroom. The task of the teacher is to support the child and act as a resource, helping to guide the unique development of each individual child.

As a result, learning occurs through discovery, facilitated by the teacher. The curriculum is determined by the needs, interests and abilities of the child. The learning environment matches the child's needs, interests and abilities. The child is led to assume responsibility for their own learning. Finally, the child is helped to set meaningful goals that sustain interest and promote excellence. Knowing how to observe constructively - when and how much to intervene - is one of the most important skills a Montessori teacher acquires during their rigorous training at Montessori training centers throughout the world.

The school reserves the right to refuse admission, re-registration and expel families who encourage teachers to breach these guidelines and policies. Our experienced and dedicated staff provides the stability and guidance needed to make it possible for each child to progress to her fullest social, creative and intellectual potential. In our child-centered environment, the Teacher's role is to nurture, guide, observe and direct the child's decision making. This is done through one-on-one lessons, small group explorations and large group activities.

PROGRAMS

The Montessori philosophy takes into consideration each child and his physical, emotional, cognitive and academic levels. While providing an environment that is steeped in the values of Respect, Independence, Confidence, Responsibility and Accountability, our teachers guide the children to reach their fullest potential while fostering a true love of learning.

The Nido/Fledglings

The Nido/Fledgling Classroom serving children 6 weeks through approximately 18 months with a staff ratio 1:4, is about establishing trust in a calm, peaceful, loving manner while addressing all of the developmental milestones that take place during this very important period in an infant's life. Children are given the time to explore freely whether it be an interesting mobile that hangs from the ceiling or a fascinating rattle that makes a wonderful sound. This critical period is about establish trust with families and their children while providing numerous opportunities for the children to flourish.

The Toddler Program

The Toddler Program for children 18 months through 36 months with a staff ratio 1:5 is the period in a child's life where they are appreciated for their blossoming personalities. This environment is rich in materials that enable a child to develop their fine and gross motor skills while maximizing his cognitive processes. Freedom of movement is essential at this age as children's growing bodies need to move and explore in order to reach their fullest potential. Language acquisition is also a specific need for children this age and our environments are rich in opportunities to advance their language while also producing their understanding of social cues and context.

The Early Childhood Program

The Early Childhood Program for children 2.6 to 6 years of age with a staff ratio 1:12 is the time to cultivate a child's innate desire to discover the world around him. Through these opportunities a child develops a love of learning that inspires his need to excel physically, cognitively, emotionally and academically. There are specific developmental needs within this time frame that we nurture the motivation to learn, solve problems and think for themselves. We enable problem solving and critical thinking skills that make children better future learners. Magnolia Montessori School encourages all children to reach their fullest potential in a safe, peaceful, and loving environment.

The Montessori program for primary and elementary children offers a curriculum that is designed to be covered in three- and six-year time spans. Children who enter or leave the program without the completion of a full three-year cycle run the risk of not fully realizing the full benefits of the program. We encourage all our students to complete each entire program in order to derive its maximum benefits. While all children benefit from Montessori, the earlier they begin and the longer they remain, the greater the benefit.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

We expect our parents to be supportive of and adhere to the mission, values, vision and directives of the school. This requires open communication and trust in the school. Parents with concerns regarding school policies and practices, student and/or staff conduct, or school values should contact the Head of School by email (jjannaconi@magnoliamontessorischool.net) directly. Concerns will be treated with strict confidentiality. Harassing or critical comments about other parents, the school and staff members including the promotion of unsubstantiated gossip that undermines the trust and professionalism of the School will not be tolerated. Magnolia Montessori School is committed to providing a safe and harmonious environment for parents, students, and staff.

Parents are expected to observe the following:

- Treat their children and other children with respect both verbally and physically.
- Treat each staff member with respect.
- Treat each other with respect at school and at school functions.
- Support opportunities that foster student success.
- Refrain from using inappropriate language or behavior.
- To speak to the Head of School immediately if you have a conflict with a staff member, parent, or student.
- Work cooperatively with and support the administration and staff of the school.
- Be accountable for your role as parents within the school system.
- Adhere to school's policies, guidelines, and directives.
- To openly support and uphold this code of conduct policy and take action and steps to ensure other parents follow and uphold this code of conduct and policy.

The school reserves the right to refuse admission, re-registration or expel students should a parent fail to comply with the above Parent Code of Conduct.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY

Parents are invited by the school to help assist special activities such as cultural celebrations, material making, arts and crafts, field trips, and the like, as supervised by classroom teachers and administration. Service and assistance to the school from parents must be in accordance with the Montessori approach as directed and approved by the Lions Gate Montessori Society, the school authority.

The **Magnolia Parent Association** aims to enhance the educational experience of our students by supporting and implementing events and activities that build community and enrich the school's learning environment. The Head of School's approval and direction is required for any parent group working or acting on behalf of the school. The conduct and activities of such parent groups and committees shall be in accordance with the policies and directives established by the school authority and administration.

This includes the following:

- 1) The Parent Association shall not be involved in the day-to-day operations of the school, which is the responsibility of the Head of School and her staff.

2) All fundraising projects and the disposition of funds raised for the school by the Parent Association shall be subject to the approval of the Head of School.

PARENT/STAFF RELATIONS POLICY

Our staff acts in conformity with the school's professional code of conduct. To support us in maintaining professional boundaries, parents are to refrain from:

- inviting school staff to birthdays or other parties. (Staff, students and families are given the opportunity to enjoy each other's company at school-wide celebrations.)
- inviting school staff to become social media friends/colleagues (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc)
- inviting or soliciting staff to babysit or otherwise attend to students outside of school hours and the school environment.
- Soliciting teachers to tutor.
- Soliciting staff for any outside work

PHASE IN

Our Phase In program is designed to benefit children new to the school or to one of our other programs. Phase In Schedules are developed based on each child's individual needs and during the Admissions process.

ELIGIBILITY

Children must meet the proper age for their age grouping by October 1st. For example, children entering our Kindergarten program must be 5 by October 1st.

CLOTHING

Children's clothing should be comfortable, washable, and easily managed by the child. We advise against the wearing of patent leather or "dress up" shoes, as the soles are usually slippery and encourage falling, particularly on the playground. Your child will be exposed to paint, stamp pads, and a variety of pouring activities as part of our commitment to provide him with a large base of experiences during the preschool years. A shoe box or zip-loc bag with your child's name boldly printed on it should be sent in when school starts, and it should contain a complete change of clothes (underwear, socks, tee shirt, and pants). This must be updated periodically as the seasons change and your child grows. Our students go outside ON MOST DAYS, so long as it is not raining or dangerously cold. Please dress your child appropriately: hats, scarves, gloves, and boots (if it's wet).

NUT ALLERGIES

Most allergies disappear as children mature, but nut allergies stick around for life and can cause reactions ranging from skin rashes to life-threatening shortness of breath and drop in blood pressure. We have some children at MMS for whom nuts present such a problem. We have decided as a staff that we will not offer nut work in the classrooms nor serve nuts as a snack food. We are requiring cooperation from all MMS parents to help make our school nut free. Nut allergies are usually severe and can be fatal. For some, even a tiny amount of nut residue touching eyes, nose or mouth can cause a strong reaction to the allergic child. For some, that

even means there's a danger if you eat nuts and pass the residue along through your breath! Without medical treatment, the child could die within minutes.

Avoiding nuts means we are requiring you not to send in any foods for snacks or lunches that contain nut products. We are a nut free school. Some child somewhere will thank you!

SNACK

Snack at Magnolia is provided by parents through the use of Sign Up Genius. Only nutritious snacks including fruits and vegetables will be provided.

LUNCH

All children who stay for lunch must have their own lunch and drink and all items should be labeled. We are a nut free school and all nut products are prohibited. Parents should only send in nutritious snacks and the child should be able to eat their lunch in any order because they have healthy choices. Ice packs should be provided to enable foods to maintain freshness. Food cannot be heated up at any time and should be sent in appropriate containers. We also ask that you send in proper cutlery to avoid waste of plastic etc. Please let us know if there are any dietary restrictions. All meals and snacks should meet USDA guidelines and there will be a zero-tolerance policy regarding sugar.

REST

All children will have a period of rest time after their lunch. The state mandates that children who are four and under are required to rest for a twenty to thirty-minute period of time. Please send in a crib sheet with a special "lovey" and these will be returned at the end of the week for laundering.

CELL PHONES

We respectfully ask that parents refrain from talking on their phones upon entering our school or on care line. Children are very happy to see their parents at the end of the day and deserve your full attention.

BREAST FEEDING POLICY

Magnolia Montessori School will provide a quiet space for any parent wanting to breastfeed her child while at the facility. In addition, we will provide refrigerated space for both frozen and freshly expressed breast milk for future use. We will make every effort to assist in facilitating any special arrangements or accommodations requested by the families.

SCHOOL RECORDS

New Jersey State Requirements for access to center records are as follows:

1. The center's records shall be open for inspection by authorized representatives of the Office of Licensing.

2. The center's records shall be open for inspection by authorized representatives of the Department's Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU), provided that they may only secure information about children under the Department's supervision.

Requirements for maintenance of center records are as follows:

1. Children's records shall be maintained on file for one year after the child is no longer enrolled at the center.
 - i. Records for children currently enrolled at the center shall be maintained on file at the center, unless otherwise specified.
 - ii. Records for children no longer enrolled at the center shall be maintained on file either at the center or at a central administrative office.
2. Staff records shall be maintained on file for one year after the staff member is no longer working at the center.
 - i. Records for staff members currently working at the center shall be maintained on file at the center.
 - ii. Records for staff members no longer working at the center shall be maintained on file either at the center or at a central administrative office.
3. All other records shall be maintained on file at the center for one year after the record is made or received, unless otherwise specified in this handbook.

Children's Individual Files

All children's files are immediately accessible to: administrators and teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian, the child's parent's and/or legal guardians and all regulatory authorities/agencies.

PARENT COMMUNICATIONS

Policy on Methods of Parental Notification:

All lead teachers may be contacted through their school email address and parents can contact them at any time. Parents will be contacted either through e-mail, telephone call, Facebook page, Magnolia web-site.

Observations

Magnolia Montessori School's open-door policy encourages you to visit the school anytime. New Jersey law prohibits any parent from being prevented from visiting his child's class. To avoid overcrowding however, we ask that an appointment be made in advance. In this way, only one observer will be scheduled at any given time. Observations will not be available until November so that we may set up Montessori policies and environments within the class itself. If you are at all uncomfortable with this, you may of course speak to the staff and advise that you would like to visit. On occasion there may be other adults observing our classes. This may include teachers from other schools, Montessori trainees and potential new families.

Email

All lead teachers have access to email and this is a wonderful tool to use at your convenience. Staff are required to respond within a 24-hour period but will most likely respond sooner than that.

SCHOOL WEB-SITE

The school's web-site has a great deal of information on it including, "Montessori in the Home", enrollment forms, parent resources and calendars. www.magnoliamontessorischool.net.

FACEBOOK

"Like" us on Facebook! In addition to images of our program and the children, many good articles are posted on our Facebook page. Please become a member of our on-line community. There is also a pass word protected Facebook page for parents only and accessible is via invitation only.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Formal parent/teacher conferences will be offered twice a year along with written assessments to allow the opportunity for teachers to provide updates on the developmental progress each child is making. Teacher assessments are made by using input from families' responses to the ASQ-3's, current curriculum and material checklists, Transparent Classroom's on line record keeping system, and the milestone tracker recommended by the CDC. Our staff and faculty are updated and trained on these assessments on an annual basis.

Parent/Teacher conferences are the best time to address any questions in regard to written assessments and/or progress reports distributed by the faculty. However, the staff and faculty are always willing to schedule time to speak with parents any time it is needed.

PARENT EDUCATION

Fall Orientation

All parents are required to attend our fall orientation which provides an overview of the school's practices and policies.

Back to School Night

This is the perfect opportunity to hear about your child's day/year and to his/her environment and to meet the teachers.

Parent Education Workshops

Several workshops will be presented throughout the year on topics such as: parenting, toilet learning, and the Montessori philosophy among other things. Parents are highly encouraged to attend these workshops.

Parent-Child Visitations

Parents are invited to come in and visit with their child to gain the full Montessori experience and to live the life of your child for a day.

Magnolia Parent Association (MPA)

As a private school, Magnolia relies on input and volunteerism from its families. The Magnolia Parent Association encourages all families to participate in MPA. The primary focus for MPA is to provide social opportunities for our families, show staff appreciation and participate in the organization of fundraising events.

CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS**HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS**

The Magnolia Montessori School is a non-sectarian institution. We do not support or teach any religion. However, there is a difference between teaching a religion or tradition and learning about it. We believe that lack of knowledge is often the basis of distrust, dislike, prejudgment or prejudice. We want our children to understand that to believe or to be different is not wrong. We hope they learn from us at home and in school that we all have our differences, but that the ways in which we vary makes each of us special and unique. And it is these special differences that enable each unique individual to contribute to the strength of our society and to realize the potential in us all.

We recognize the reality of the major holidays celebrated by our students and encourage the staff and students to learn about the customs and traditions among us. We ask the staff to explore the aspects of our different celebrations, while distinguishing between them without criticism. To the best of our abilities, we will deal with the non-religious aspects of these events.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

At MMS we understand that your child's birthday is one of the most, if not the most, important day of the year, and it is always a pleasure to celebrate this event with the rest of the class. Every class has its special traditions and rituals associated with birthdays. In some we describe the child's life story. In others we light candles and sing special songs. The Teacher will inform you of the procedure in your child's class. We ask you to understand that there will be a celebration but no "party." Therefore, hats, noisemakers, favors, etc. are not appropriate. We assume there will be a party at another time. In this vein, please do not distribute invitations in the classroom, even if everyone is invited. Too often, in the event everyone does not get one, those not asked are hurt badly when others receive them. Therefore, invitations must be mailed.

Often parents want to send in "Goody Bags" to be given to the children in the class. We ask that you save this option for the party you will have outside of school. Again, we are delighted to celebrate your child's special event, but we want to keep the "party" separate. We will not send home anything in celebration of your child's birthday.

A large part of the birthday celebration is the birthday snack brought in and shared by the birthday child. This lets her experience the joys of giving and being a host. Sharing food together has always been an important way to mark holidays. We ask that you ***do not*** send in cupcakes, candy, or other sugary foods. We believe that it sends the wrong message to children who are still learning about nutrition. After all, it is the *joy of sharing*, not the sugar content that makes the snack special!

For the older children, parents may be invited to attend the celebratory “walk around the sun” that each child has on their birthday. We ask that you are mindful of any photos that are taken and to please respect the rights of other families by not posting images to Facebook or any other means of social media.

Therefore, we encourage you to network with our staff for ideas about nutritious foods to send in. We have cookbooks for your reference and many suggestions to share. Instead of cupcakes, cookies, and frosting, why not make:

bread	muffins	pasta
fancy sandwiches	mini bagels	pitas
fruit	vegetables	melons
berries	cheese	yogurt

Please remember also that we are requiring that peanuts, peanut butter or any peanut product not be included in your selections.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

We are required by law to advise you of the following policy on the release of children:

- A. Each child may be released only to the child's custodial parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the custodial parent, to take the child from MMS and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the custodial parent(s) cannot be reached.

A child may not be visited by or released to a non-custodial parent unless the custodial parents specifically authorizes us to allow such visits or release in writing. This written authorization, including name, address and phone number will be maintained on file.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access to a child by a court order, we must be given documentation to that effect, and we will maintain it on file.

- B. If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick up a child by 6:15 we will follow this procedure:
1. The child will be supervised at all times;
 2. Our staff will attempt to contact the parent(s) or authorized person(s);

3. If we are unable to reach any authorized person(s) by 7:30, the staff member will call the DCP&P's 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-792-8610) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick up the child
 4. For each 5 minutes after closing \$15.00 will be applied to your bill
- C. If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appear to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgement of the Head of School and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the following procedure will be followed:
1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual;
 2. Staff members will attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternate person(s) authorized by the parent(s);
 3. If we are unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member will call DCP&P's Hotline to seek assistance in caring for the child.

PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Respect is key to proper conduct at our school. Teachers and administrators respect students and their families. Students are expected to respect our teachers, each other, and the school environment. Ground rules are established very early in the school year in order to give students clear understanding of what is appropriate behavior in the classroom. Montessori philosophy understands that children have a natural inclination to learn and get along with their community.

Students and their families are expected to comply with the school's vision and implementation of the Montessori method and philosophy. Therefore, the first response to inappropriate behavior is to redirect the child to an interesting task or help him/her develop cooperative abilities. Should the child continue to find it difficult to respond to redirection, the child may be asked to work close by the teacher. Students at all times are given the opportunity to experience the natural consequences of their behavior as oppose to being "punished".

Teachers will contact parents should concerns arise, discuss and implement follow-up consequences.

At the elementary and adolescent levels, the focus is on building a sense of community. Students assume more responsibility by creating their own classroom guidelines and consequences based on their own philosophy of respect for themselves, others, and the environment.

BEHAVIOUR POLICY – CLASSROOM GUIDELNES

Child's Right Child's Responsibility

Child's Right	Child's Responsibility
1. The child is free to work with any material displayed in the classroom that has been presented to him.	1. The child must use the materials respectfully, not abusing it. He may not use it in a way that disturbs others' activities.
2. The child may work on a table or on a rug, as is most comfortable and appropriate to the task.	2. The child may not work at a display shelf as his presence there would obstruct free access for others.
3. The child may use the environment as his own.	3. The child restores the environment to its original condition, ready and attractive to others to use. He is responsible for returning all work to its proper shelf and cleaning up.
4. The child has the right to work undistracted by others. He may initiate, complete or repeat an exercise on his own.	4. No child may join the work of another without permission or an invitation to do so. Each child's right to privacy and concentration is respected.
5. The child has the right to not join a group activity. He may continue working with individual activities or he may stand apart as an observer of a group activity without taking an active part.	5. The child is not allowed to interfere or disrupt an activity which he has chosen not to join, and this is his responsibility to the group.
6. The child has the right to work alone if he wishes.	6. A child is not forced to share work. Generosity develops from within as a child matures and gains self-security. To rush this trait often produces the reverse attitude, that of the possessive "MINE".
7. The child has the right to do nothing at times during the day.	7. The child may be learning by observing others; he may be thinking, or simply relaxing. Again, he may not disturb others' work.
8. The child has the right to speak with others freely, to share experiences and to socialize	8. The child needs to be respectful of those in quiet work, and is encouraged to use a soft tone of voice rather than shouting.
9. The child has the right to move freely around the room whenever he needs to.	9. The child needs to be respectful of others' work while walking about.
10. The child has the right to ask for help if he needs it.	10. The child must not disturb another's presentation, but must wait for an available teacher. Others are learning too.

"To let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control is to betray the idea of freedom"

– Dr Maria Montessori

According to the dictionary, the word "discipline" means "training" rather than "punishment". Maria Montessori writes that, *"The undisciplined child enters into discipline by working in the company of others not by being told he (or she) is naughty."* Discipline, if appropriately handled, is primarily a learning experience rather than a punitive action. Our aim is to cultivate self-discipline in each student and, at the same time, to protect the interests of all students in the classroom.

The goal of our policy is to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence and, ultimately, self-discipline and sensitivity in their interactions with others. We believe, and it is our experience, that by treating children with fairness and respect, they will react in kind.

Adults in the classroom model a positive, caring attitude at all times. When conflict arises between two or more children, the adult will encourage the child or children to talk about it and find solutions peacefully. If one child hurts another, the first child may be momentarily removed from the situation, while the adults check to see that the hurt child is all right. Then the adult will return to the first child, discuss the issue(s) and look for a more appropriate solution. Very often, young children do not have words to express their feelings, and this frustration often leads to conflict.

We encourage children to talk through their own problems and conflicts, and to make appropriate choices. However, if a child seems unable to cope with a situation, the staff will intervene. The staff will reinforce appropriate behaviors and consequences in order to maximize opportunities for desirable individual and social behavior. In the event a child makes a choice that infringes on the safety and protection of self, others or the environment, the staff will employ various strategies such as:

- Setting clear and defined guidelines/limits that are consistently enforced.
Example: "We walk in the environment."
- Redirecting.
Example: "I can see you really miss your mommy. Let's make a picture to give mommy when she arrives so she knows how much you miss her."
- Helping the child express feelings verbally.
Example: "This is how we ask for things. Ms. Vivian, may I please have the sponge? Can you say that?"
- Offering appropriate choices.
Example: "You may sit quietly in the library or you may choose an activity to do. You may decide."
- Modeling problem-solving skills.

Example: "You are crying. John has the binomial cube exercise and you want it. When he is finished working with it, you can have a turn. You may watch him quietly until he is finished."

- Limiting use of materials.

Example: "I have to take the string and beads away because you are using it unsafely."

- Using logical and reasonable consequences.

Example: "The water dripped on the tray. We use the sponge to wipe it up."

No Child Will Be Subject To:

- I. shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking or any form of corporal punishment
- II. harsh, belittling, or degrading treatment, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that would humiliate the child or undermine the child's self-respect
- III. a form of punishment, confined, physically restrained or kept, without adult supervision, apart from other children, or
- IV. as a form of punishment, deprived of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary use of toilet.

AT ALL TIMES, the staff will gently guide the child, either physically and/or verbally, in assisting the child towards self-control and self-discipline.

In accordance with NJ State requirements, any form of corporal punishment, hitting, shaking, abusive language, frightening treatment, withholding food or emotional responses, or making children stay silent for lengthy periods will not be allowed at Magnolia Montessori School. This applies to even a parent with his/her own child.

WITHDRAWAL OF A CHILD FROM SCHOOL (Expulsion Policy)

If a parent must withdraw the child for any reason, she is required to arrange to discuss this with both the Teacher and the Head of School and give the office reasonable 60 days' notice and adhere to the provisions of the Enrollment Contract.

MMS reserves the right to remove any student from enrollment at MMS for any reason at any time. MMS will consider the interests of the individual child, the interests of the class in which the child is enrolled, and the interests of the school itself in deciding to remove any student from enrollment. Should it become necessary for MMS to request that a child be removed, the following procedures shall be implemented unless circumstances are emergent requiring more immediate action.

Removal of a Child

We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to remove or suspend a child from Magnolia Montessori School.

Causes for Removal:

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members

- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff
- Any child whose continued presence is detrimental to himself and others

Parental Actions for Child Removal:

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records
- Habitual tardiness when picking up a child

Child's Action for Removal:

- Failure of a child to adjust after a reasonable period of time
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children
- Excessive biting

INCLUSION PROTOCOL

In the event the issue is behavioral or suspected to be a learning issue:

The Classroom team identifies the challenge and documents their observations using formal and informal observation tools.

The Inclusion Coordinator and Head of School will also conduct several observations over time.

The classroom team with Administration will meet to discuss their observations.

The Teacher confers with the parent(s) seeking the home's support and cooperation towards consistency in dealing with the issue. It is recommended that children should not be disciplined by the parent for infractions occurring at school. However, there should be discussion about the issue.

After the initial meeting with the parent(s) a second conference may be scheduled for no later than one month hence for further evaluation. A second conference will be arranged for a time in the not too distant future to compare observations. If appropriate, the parent(s) will be advised to seek an outside expert. In the event the parent has not agreed to an outside evaluation, the matter will be discussed and a possible outcome may be that the Head may require such a procedure to be done if the child is to remain at MMS.

The Teacher will share the evaluation with the Head of School and they will discuss how to best implement the suggestions made by the evaluating team within guidelines realistic to the Montessori environment. The Teacher will continue to document and observe the child's performance in class. She will share the plan with the parent(s).

In the event the proposed plan does not start to produce a satisfactory environment for the child within a reasonable time, there will be another meeting with the parent(s), the Teacher,

and the Head of School, at which time alternate plans may be discussed. If possible, an alternate plan may be implemented.

If, after all options have been explored, the situation is not satisfactorily being resolved, the Head of School may take appropriate action which may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Require the child to attend only a shortened school day or week
- Suspend the child from school for a time period deemed appropriate to allow correction of the problem.
- Dismissal of the child from the school with a proportional rebate of tuition less expenses
- Removal of the child from the next year's enrollment
- Suggestion of appropriate alternative schools

**** Documentation is put into a child's file. It is to be stressed that this information is PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL and will not be forwarded in any form to anyone without a parent's consent.

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

According to NJSA 9:6-8.9, "Abused Child" means a child under the age of 18 years whose parent, guardian, or other person having his custody and control:

- Inflicts, or allows to be inflicted, upon such child physical injury by other than accidental means which causes or creates a substantial risk of death or serious or protracted disfigurement, or protracted impairment of physical or emotional health, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ; or
- Creates, or allows to be created, a substantial or ongoing risk of physical injury to such child by other than accidental means which would be likely to cause death or serious or protracted disfigurement, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ; or
- Commits, or allows to be committed, an act of sexual abuse against the child; or
- A child whose physical, mental, or emotional condition has been impaired or is in imminent danger of becoming impaired as the result of the failure of his parent or guardian, or such other persons having his custody and control, to exercise a minimum degree of care (1) in supplying the child with adequate food,
clothing, shelter, educational, medical or surgical care though financially able to do so or though offered financial or other reasonable means to do so, or (2) in providing the child with proper supervision or guardianship, by unreasonable inflicting or allowing to be inflicted harm, or substantial risk thereof, including the infliction of excessive corporal

punishment; or by any other act of a similarly serious nature requiring the aid of the court;
or

- Who has been willfully abandoned by his parent or guardian, or such other person having his custody and control

WHAT TO DO IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED:

- Any suspicion must be immediately and factually documented.
- The issue must be discussed with the Head of School.
- The Head of School will investigate the matter and will document these conversations factually. The Head of School will confer with staff members and will decide if the report should be made to Department of Children and Families/DCP&P Department of Child Protection and Permanency formally known as DYFS. It will be documented.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the school or not, is required by State law, to report the concern immediately to the Department of Children and Families/DCP&P Department of Child Protection and Permanency formally known as DYFS, toll free at **(877) 652-2873** or to any District Office. Such reports may be made anonymously. A staff member who reports suspicions of child abuse/neglect at Magnolia Montessori School are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone, unless it is proven that the report was intended to do harm.

Information about child abuse and neglect is available by contacting: Department of Children and Families. Address is: P.O. Box 717, Trenton, NJ 08625-0717

BITING

In the event that a child has been bitten or is the biter the following will take place:

- The bitten child is cared for
- The biter is to be isolated while the staff member explains that this behavior is unacceptable

Depending on the severity and frequency of the incident, if the child chooses to bite again, s/he will be excluded from the class – by which the parent will be called immediately to come and pick him/her up. In the event the parent is not available, the child will be sent to the Head's office. The staff member must make sure to advise the parent about the policy.

This procedure should be followed for no more than 2 more times. If sending the child home does not seem to be working, we will conference with the parent and see what's happening at home. Is the behavior observed at home? What are the consequences if so? How do parents redirect misbehavior? Between the parent and the staff, we will try to set up consequences

that will deter the behavior. The situation will be monitored until the behavior is stopped. Once this level is reached, the Head of School must be involved in the problem and its solution.

In extreme cases, where the biting does not stop, the child may be suspended or asked to leave the school.

SECURITY SYSTEM

Our doors are locked at all times. In order to enter our building, you must use your access fob. You will receive your individual fob when your child begins school. Only one fob per family will be distributed. Please keep it in a safe place and share it only with the person who will be consistently picking up your child. *If you lose your fob, you may purchase a replacement for a \$15 fee. Fobs will only be active during the regular school year.*

When you visit for any reason other than to pick up or drop off your child, you will be required to visit the office and sign in so that we know you are in the building.

REPORTING ABSENCES

In the instance where your child will be absent or late to school, please call the school to let us know.

LATE ARRIVALS for Classrooms

Children must arrive by the start of their school day which is at 8:30. This enables each child to begin his/her day with his/her peers in a comfortable and meaningful way. Please do not make morning appointments with the intention of dropping your child off late. This is disruptive to the class, your child and is disrespectful to the program as well.

SNOW DAYS

We will use Readington Township's decisions as a guide for closings or delayed openings. However, if the Head of School feels a closing or delayed opening is warranted, we will not follow their lead. There may be times when MMS is open or closed and those schools are not. When we close due to weather and alter our regular schedule, there will be an email. When in doubt, feel free to call us. The message on our voice mail system will indicate if there is a closing or delayed opening.

*****When we decide to have a delayed opening, we will open at 9:30 AM.

When we close early, we will close at 3:00 unless weather conditions warrant an earlier closing.

IN-SERVICE/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

In-Service and Professional Development days are set aside for the teachers to partake in continuing education, which is a requirement both of Magnolia and the NJ State Department of

Licensing. In-Service days are also set aside to enhance the learning environment. These days are outlined on the calendar.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS

Magnolia is mandated by NJ State Law to practice fire drills monthly and emergency drills eight times a year.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

In the case of a true emergency evacuation, Magnolia students will be escorted to Giovanni's Restaurant in Bishop's Plaza.



MAGNOLIA
MONTESSORI SCHOOL
JOYFUL HEARTS, PEACEFUL MINDS

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

Medical Forms/Administration of Medication

A health form must be completed and on file at the school by AUGUST 15, or if attending camp, before it starts. All immunizations must be up to date as of September 1 or the beginning of camp as well.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Magnolia Montessori School has adopted a new policy regarding immunizations, and is following the standards and recommendations of The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the American Academy of Pediatrics. These organizations recommend vaccinations from birth through adulthood to provide a lifetime of protection against many diseases and infections. Immunizations have had an enormous impact on improving the health of children in the United States. Vaccination is one of the best ways parents can protect infants, children, and teens from 16 potentially harmful diseases. Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious, may require hospitalization, and can even be deadly – especially in infants and young children, particularly those with compromised immune systems.

As a result, Magnolia Montessori School will no longer permit religious exemptions from vaccinations from new families seeking to enroll their children. Families with students who were already enrolled in the academic year 2018-2019 with religious exemptions will be the only exception and considered “grandfathered in”. This exception will be extended only to new students from those same families.

Properly documented medical exemptions will be allowed. Those requiring medical exemption must provide current documentation, signed by a family physician or a pediatrician, prior to the child's start date.

According to Chapter 14 of the State Sanitary Code (NJAC 8:57-4.1 to 8:57-4.17. “Immunization of Pupils in Schools”) the State of New Jersey requires all children entering Magnolia to be age appropriately immunized.

IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE

Up to age 5:

- 4 doses of DTap
- 3 doses of IPV
- 1 dose of Hib (one dose administered after 1st. birthday)
- 1 dose of MMR (administered after 1st birthday)
- 1 dose of Varivax or Varicella (administered after 1st birthday)
- 1 Flu shot annually between September 1 and December 31

Entering Kindergarten:

- 4 doses of DTaP (administered on/or after 4th birthday)
- 3 doses of IPV (administered on/or after 4th birthday)
- 2 doses MMR (administered after the 1st birthday)
- 1 dose of Varivax or Varicella (administered after the 1st birthday)
- 3 doses of HEPB

Our Universal Health Form reflects what the State of NJ requires, so please have it filled out completely.

THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY WILL NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO ATTEND CLASS OR CAMP IF THIS FORM IS NOT RECEIVED BY US BY THE DATE SPECIFIED AT THE TIME.

Emergency forms having phone numbers and names of persons to be contacted MUST be on file. If medication is sent, please make sure you follow our procedures:

1. Medication MUST BE LABELED WITH CHILD'S NAME AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE.
2. Medication MUST be accompanied by a doctor's note and permission note from the parent instructing the staff to administer it.
3. Medication must be HAND DELIVERED to the staff of your child's class or to appropriate staff in Extended Day if it is to be administered there. DO NOT put medicine into a lunch box and assume that we will know what to do.
4. Let a staff member know if the medication is to be refrigerated.
5. Make sure the office is aware and has copies of all pertinent medical information regarding the administering of medication to your child.
6. Please advise us of any side effects caused by the medication. Be sure to ask your pediatrician.

*******We will not administer any medication if the above procedures are not followed.**

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, DO NOT bring your child to school when he shows evidence of any of the following symptoms:

fever	uncovered bleeding or weeping wound
enlarged glands	coughing
headache	earache
sore throat	vomiting
	running nose
	irritated eyes
	diarrhea

If your child will be absent from school for any reason, please call us between 7-8 a.m. to advise us. We are required to document absences in order to track the spread of communicable diseases. To aid us, we have an "illness log". We are further required by law to document any unusual occurrence or significant change in a child's personality or behavior. Examples of this might include: sudden withdrawal or passivity, unusual violent or destructive behavior, etc.

If your child has any limitations or special needs, please notify us.

INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

To protect every child and adult at Magnolia Montessori School from potentially contagious infections, staff will wear appropriate quality medical gloves when changing diapers, treating open cuts, or caring for a child in any situation in which there may be contact with bodily fluids or excretions. Staff will be required to follow proper hand washing

techniques both before and after the use of gloves. This means washing vigorously with soap and water and drying carefully.

Every staff member must have an annual physical exam before beginning employment at MMS. Staff members should continue to monitor their health on an on-going basis and will be responsible to immediately inform the Head of School of any medical condition or disease which may be potentially contagious. Staff members are further required to be alert to and immediately inform the Head of School of any child's behavior which is felt to be suggestive of illness.

In addition to the implementation of the above policy, our staff has been instructed to ask you to take your child home if she appears ill when she is dropped for class. When in doubt, you will be asked to talk to the Head of School, so that we may evaluate if the child is well enough to spend the day at school. In the event a child becomes ill at school, we will call the parent and ask that she be picked up. When she is returning after having had a fever, we will ask how long it's been since her temperature has returned to normal. **A child must have had no fever for at least 24 hours before returning to class.** This doesn't mean coming back in 24 hours; it means being fever free for 24 hours and then returning. We will ask you to take him home if less than 24 hours has elapsed since the time the fever first appeared.

When a child has been retching or has diarrhea, the same guideline applies: He must have a period of 24 hours without symptoms before returning to MMS.

This policy is not meant to inconvenience you. It is meant to stop the outbreak of infections. Your child will benefit from the rule as well as the others ... he'll be protected from others infecting him when he's well but classmates aren't.

REPORTABLE/EXCLUDABLE/COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend school. If such symptoms occur at the school, the child will be removed from the group, and the parents will be called to take the child home.

- Severe Pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea
- Episodes of acute vomiting
- Elevated oral temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Lethargy

Severe coughing
 Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
 Red eyes with discharge
 Infected, untreated skin patches

Difficult or rapid breathing
 Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes
 Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
 Mouth sores with drooling
 Stiff neck

The following provisions relate to excludable communicable diseases:

We shall not permit a child or staff member with such a disease to attend until:

A note from the child's or staff member's physician stating that she has been diagnosed and presents no risk to herself or to others or;

In a case when a child has chicken pox, a health care provider's note is not required for re-admitting the child to the center. A note from the parent is required, stating either that at least six days has elapsed since the onset of the rash, or that all sores have dried and crusted or;

We have called the State Department of Health's Communicable Disease Program or local health department pediatric health consultant and are told the child or staff member poses no health risk to others.

Staff members are to notify the Head of School of having or knowing that a child has a reportable disease. She will then report this to the Health Department and the Bureau of Licensing.

Staff members are to be familiar with our illness log and keep track of the children's removal and return to school.

EXCLUDABLE COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Respiratory Illnesses

Chicken Pox
 German Measles*
 Hemophilus influenzae*
 Measles*
 Meningococcus*
 Mumps*
 Strep Throat

Gastro-Intestinal

Giardia Lamblia*
 Hepatitis A*
 Salmonella*
 Shigella*
 Escherichia coli*
 Campylobacter*

Contact Illnesses

Impetigo
 Lice
 Scabies
 Shingles
 Covid-19
 Flu

Tuberculosis*
Whooping Cough*
Covid-19
Flu

*reportable diseases that must be reported to the health department by the center.

Please Note:

When a child is suspected of having a contagious illness (conjunctivitis, throwing up, diarrhea, etc.), the State requires that the child be isolated until an authorized adult picks him up. That means he will be in the office or a secluded portion of one of our rooms. When this occurs, we make every attempt to reach a parent or an authorized contact person.

OTHER ILLNESSES

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, the child should not attend school. If these symptoms occur at school, the child will be removed from the group, and the parents will be called to take the child home. Once the child is symptom free, and it has been a minimum of 24 hours, or has a health care provider's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, the child may return to the school unless contraindicated by local health department or Department of health.

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Lethargy
- Severe Coughing
- Acute diarrhea
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Stiff neck
- Episodes of acute vomiting
- Red eyes with discharge
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior changes

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MEDICAL AND/OR EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

MINOR INJURIES: (bloody nose, simple cuts, bruises, etc.)

1. First Aid techniques will be used (washing, band-aid, etc.)
2. Documentation will be made in the "Accident Book".
3. The parent will be notified what happened.

SERIOUS INJURIES: (reaction to an insect bite, serious fall, broken bone, etc.)

1. The child will be made safely comfortable.
2. One or both parents will be called for instructions and pick up.
3. In the event a parent cannot be reached, the child's doctor will be called and his instructions will be followed.
4. In the event the doctor is unavailable, the Rescue Squad will be called for assistance. The Head of School or staff member will stay with the child as necessary
5. At all times, if the process of notifying the parent has been unsuccessful, staff members remaining at school will continue to try to alert them of the incident and its status.

TOILET LEARNING

Children who are in diapers will be changed every two hours unless otherwise warranted. We will assist when a parent advises us that the process of toilet training has begun (at home). We will do our best to remind the child to use the toilet. There will be role modeling by the others who have learned to use the toilet, but we are unable to take the responsibility to toilet train any child. That remains the task of the parent.

ORAL HEALTH CARE

Oral health care is extremely important for your children. Having children brush their teeth at school is not logistically feasible, so we would encourage brushing teeth before and after school each day.

TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS/Social Media

If you are planning to take photos in our school for any reason (your child's birthday, memory book, etc.) please make sure to notify the office before any pictures are taken and that no other children are photographed in the process.

We will not publish any photos of your child on our web-site, Facebook, Instagram or any other Social Media without written permission from parents.

TECHNOLOGY

We will not and do not use any televisions, i-pads or computers in the classroom for the purpose of showing videos, movies etc.

ASBESTOS

We are required to advise all parents that Magnolia Montessori School is asbestos free.

GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION AND PROCEDURES

If a family member is experiencing a problem or has a concern in relation to something affecting his/her relationship with the school:

- Family member will attempt to resolve the concern by directly approaching the staff or faculty member involved. If the Family member does not feel the matter has been resolved, they should then schedule a meeting with the Head of School

Step 1 – Conciliation

The family member will submit a written complaint to the Head of School including remedy sought.

The Head of School will investigate the complaint and propose a resolution.

Does the family member consider the matter resolved?

- Yes
 - Grievance procedure discontinued.
 - No
 - Move to Step 2.
- ◆ **Step 2 – Investigation**
- The family member will provide a written copy of the complaint to the Head of School of the person who attempted to resolve Step 1.
 - Head of School will investigate the complaint and propose a resolution.
 - Does the family member consider the matter resolved?
 - Yes
 - Grievance procedure discontinued.
 - No
 - Move to Step 3.
- ◆ **Step 3 – Review**
- The family member provides a copy of the written complaint to the Head of School
 - The Head of School reviews the grievance.
 - Substantive grievance exists?
 - Yes
 - Head of School proposes a resolution.
 - ◆ Does the family member consider the matter resolved?
 - Yes
 - Grievance procedure discontinued.
 - No
 - Move to Step 4.
- ◆ **Step 4 – Final Determination**
- The family member and the Head of School meet to discuss possible resolutions. Whatever is decided is then documented for all parties.

ADMISSIONS

Our Admission's process is based on the belief that every child should have the opportunity to experience the Montessori classroom.

- Children who are enrolled in our school are automatically offered a spot for the following school year. The next priority will then go to their siblings. The placement of our currently enrolled children signifies where and how many openings remain from year to year within each of our programs.
- New families are asked to submit an application and application fee in order to secure a spot and/or to be placed on our waiting list.
- Upon acceptance, the child will be asked to come in for a classroom visit
- Within a month of enrollment all forms and fees are due.
- Financial contracts must be signed and returned before the child begins school.
- A Home Visit will be scheduled by the child's teacher
- Tuition payments are the responsibility of the parent and payments are expected on time through TADS, our tuition management software.
- Application fees are non-refundable
- If a child is withdrawn in breach of the contract, the initial deposit is non-refundable

TUITION:

Tuition is paid one month in advance and due on the 15th. For example, October tuition is paid for on September 15th. Upon enrollment, one month's deposit is required and will be applied to the last month the child attends our school. A 5% late fee will be added if tuition is not received by the 20th of the month. Annual tuition may be paid in full, bi-annually at a discounted price.

Please take note that days and weeks cannot be swapped, replaced or changed if a child has been out ill, going on vacation or schedules have changed. Magnolia costs are fixed and staff is paid to be present whether children attend or not. Tuition costs remain the same in spite of any school closings, child absences or holidays.

We do offer a 10% sibling discount off of the lower tuition.

LATE FEES

To ensure that our staff may attend to their own matters after 6:00 PM, Magnolia Montessori School has a late fee: \$15 FOR EACH 5 MINUTES AFTER CLOSING

Please be advised that payment of tuition is due by the 15th of each month. In the event payment is not received by the 25th, there will be a \$30.00 late fee added to the account each month on any balance remaining.

PANDEMIC POLICY

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. A flu pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges that people have little or no immunity to and for which there may be no vaccine. The

disease spreads easily person-to-person and causes serious illness. It can sweep across the country and around the world very quickly. It is hard to predict when the next flu pandemic will occur or how bad it will be. Many studies have demonstrated that school children are responsible for most of the disease transmission. They have a high attack rate of influenza infection because they have limited pre-existing immunity and once infected, transmit influenza viruses to many others even before they themselves have recognizable symptoms.

In the event that the CDC or WHO identifies the presence of a potential pandemic virus (such as Human Avian influenza A, SARS, H1N1 Swine Flu, Ebola, Zika, Covid-19), Magnolia Montessori School will monitor CDC and local government recommendations, as well as, guidance from the medical community in order to ensure the safety and well-being of our school community. Magnolia Montessori School will adhere to all mandates including school closures and safe operating procedures. Such closures may be deemed necessary even if there are no confirmed cases in our school or local community.

In addition, Magnolia Montessori School will undertake the following practices:

- Any child who has returned, or whose immediate family member has returned, from a trip to an area for which the local, state, and/or national governments have travel advisories due to a pandemic situation, or any child who has an immediate family member who has been infected, will be excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours (or the incubation period for the virus as defined by the local, state, and/or national governments).
- Any child with a suspected or confirmed case of the disease will be excluded from school until they have been asymptomatic for a minimum of 72 hours (or as long as is deemed appropriate by the local, state, and or/national health departments) without the aid of medication. The case will be reported to local authorities who will oversee the child's re-entry.
- Magnolia Montessori School will notify parents and staff of any confirmed or suspected cases.
- Magnolia Montessori School will comply with all state or local health department guidelines regarding school closures, cleaning and sanitization practices, safe practices (increased hand washing, face coverings as appropriate, physical distancing, smaller group sizes, alternative schedules, temperature checks, and increased disinfecting protocols), reopening, and re-entry of students after infection with the disease.

- Magnolia Montessori School will utilize email and text messaging as the primary methods of communicating school closures and other information. In the event of an extended closure, we encourage parents and teachers to utilize email to keep in touch. In addition, every effort will be made to engage students and families in a combination of work pick up and remote learning platforms. Magnolia Montessori School reserves the right to close the school at any time that such action is deemed appropriate to minimize the transmission of disease. Tuition that has been collected will not be refunded for closures related to a pandemic. This is to preserve the integrity and longevity of the program and retain essential staff. Such closures may be deemed appropriate even if there are not any confirmed cases of the disease in the school. Additionally, at the discretion of the Head of School and the newly formed Parent Advisory Board, a closure may be deemed appropriate even though local school district or other local authorities have not undertaken similar action or issued a similar recommendation in order to minimize the transmission of the disease.

At times, primarily due to weather or widespread health-related challenges, often accompanied by official directives from governmental agencies, Magnolia Montessori School must close its programs until danger is passed or the governmental directives are lifted. When this occurs, Magnolia Montessori School will implement home learning protocols appropriate for every level of its learning programs so that students can continue to progress through school. Consequently, Magnolia Montessori School will not refund tuition already paid when its programs are closed due to these circumstances and families will be individually contacted regarding subsequent tuition payments

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FORCE MAJEURE:

Should events beyond the control of the School, including, but not limited to, any fire, act of God, hurricane, tornado, flood, extreme inclement weather, explosion, war (including armed conflict), governmental action, act of terrorism, risk of infectious disease, epidemic, pandemic, shortage or disruption of necessary utilities (water, electricity, etc.), or any other event beyond the School's control, occur, the School has the discretion to close the School and/or modify its curriculum, schedules, length of school day, length of school year, and/or means of learning and teaching methods. The Parent's financial obligations under this Contract remain in full force and effect. Should the School close, the School's duties and obligations under this Contract shall be suspended immediately without notice until such time as the School, in its sole and reasonable discretion, may safely reopen. If the School cannot reopen due to a force majeure event under this Paragraph, the School is under no obligation to refund any portion of tuition paid.

Covid-19 related only:

In the event our onsite program is closed for an extended period (more than 5 school days) due to an event under this subsection, alternative programming will be held at the discretion of the Head of School. Alternative programming offered will be charged at a rate of 50% of the original monthly tuition. Payment will be due before the alternative programming starts. If you decide not to participate in the alternative programming during this school closure, a minimum \$100 fee per month will be charged to maintain your child's space at the School. If either the alternative programming tuition or the \$100 monthly fee is not paid, enrollment will be discontinued. Services will resume when all past and present invoices are paid in full. Tuition Deposits do not get applied to the alternative programming during a School closure. See Parent Manual for more details of the alternative programming during a School closure.

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(Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing) INFORMATION TO PARENTS

The center shall give to the parent(s) of every enrolled child and to every staff member, a written Information to Parents document designated by the Office of Licensing and indicating that the center is required to:

1. Be licensed by the Office of Licensing, Department of Children and Families;
2. Comply with all applicable provisions of this chapter;
3. Post its license in a prominent location within the center;
4. Retain a current copy of this chapter and make it available for parents' review;
5. Indicate how parents can secure a copy of this chapter and obtain information about the licensing process from the Office of Licensing; 15
6. Make available to parents, upon request, the Office of Licensing's Life/Safety and Program Inspection/Violation and Complaint Investigation Summary report(s) on the center, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the center's current licensing period;
7. Post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas that have been approved by the Office of Licensing for children's use;
8. Comply with the inspection and investigation functions of the Department, including the interviewing of staff members and children;
9. Afford parents the opportunity and time to review and discuss with the center director, sponsor, or sponsor representative any questions or concerns about the policies and procedures of the center or whether the center is in compliance with all applicable provisions of this chapter;
10. Advise parents that if they believe or suspect that the center is violating any requirement of this chapter, they may report such alleged violations to the center sponsor, sponsor representative, or director or to the Office of Licensing;
11. Afford parents of enrolled children an opportunity to participate in the center's operation and activities and to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements;
12. Afford parents of enrolled children the opportunity to visit the center at any time during the center's hours of operation to observe its operation and program activities without having to secure prior approval;
13. Provide parents with advance notice of any field trip, outing or special event involving the transportation of children away from the center, and, for each event, secure the written consent of the parent(s) before taking a child on such a field trip, outing or special event;
14. Post a copy of the center's written statement of policy on the disciplining of children by staff members in a prominent location within the center, and make a copy of it available to parents upon request;
15. Indicate, through this document, that any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or is being subjected to child abuse or neglect is required by N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10 to report such allegations to the State Central Registry Hotline (1-877 NJ ABUSE/1-877-652-2873) immediately, and indicate that such reports may be made anonymously;

16. Indicate through this document how parents and staff members may secure information about child abuse and neglect from the Department;
 17. Inform parents of the center's policy on the release of children;
 18. Inform parents of the center's policy on administering medication and health care procedures;
 19. Provide parents with a copy of the center's policy on management of communicable diseases;
 20. Provide parents with a copy of the center's policy on the expulsion of children from enrollment;
 21. Inform parents that the center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. §§12101 et seq.), and indicate that anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 or (800) 514-0383 (TTY); and
 22. Inform parents that the center is required to maintain and update, at least annually, a list from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) regarding unsafe products and make the list available to staff and parents or provide parents with the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov/Recalls.
- (b) The center shall distribute a copy of the Information to Parents document to each child's parent(s) upon enrollment and to every person upon becoming a staff member and secure and maintain on file a record of each
- (a) parent's and staff member's signature attesting to receipt of the document.
 1. The center shall maintain on file a copy of the Information to Parents document.

SURVEY PROGRAMS

Magnolia Montessori School will offer opportunities to provide feedback by sending surveys throughout the year to its community.

Dr Montessori felt that the main purpose of education is to help each child reach his or her highest potential and to be a contributing member of society. To this end, we aim to inspire our students to reach beyond the boundaries of conventional education standards by helping them pursue the path that makes us all human—the desire to learn, discover, explore, create and manifest beyond our wildest imagination!

We are very pleased to be working with your child and your family!

Communications Checklist – A resource for Magnolia Montessori School Parents, Families and Staff.

This checklist has been compiled to help enhance the ease of communication among all of our MMS family. The purpose is to help assure that you have a clear map that will help you contact the right person for most any school-related questions, observation or concern.

To receive the most direct and timely answers, it is important that you first contact the staff member who is most directly involved with the issue at hand. You will find these persons listed under **Step 1**. Should you not receive an adequate or timely response within the timeframe noted in this list, you may then move forward to the next step.

AREA OF CONCERN	STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3
Behavioral difficulties	Lead Directress	Inclusion Coordinator	Head of School
Classroom and playground procedures	Lead Directress	Head of School	
Cognitive difficulties	Lead Directress	Inclusion Coordinator	Head of School
Curriculum	Lead Directress	Head of School	
Special Needs (of children)	Lead Directress	Curriculum Coordinator	Head of School
Supervision of Classroom Assistants/Aides	Lead Directress	Curriculum Coordinator	Head of School
Supervision of Directresses		Head of School	
Professional Development	Assistant Head of School	Head of School	
Admissions and reenrollment	Head of School	Head of School	
Budget Issues	Accountant	Head of School	
Buildings and Grounds	Assistant Head of School	Head of School	
Emergency Procedures	Assistant Head of School	Head of School	
Health and Medical Issues	Assistant Head of School	Head of School	
Licensing Criteria	Assistant Head of School	Head of School	
Policy		Head of School	
Policy Reinforcement	Classroom Assistants/Aides	Head of School	
Parent Education	Lead Directress	Curriculum Coordinator	
Web-site/Administration	Media Director	Head of School	
Marketing, Public Relations, Social Media	Media Director	Head of School	

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

- **The Absorbent Mind** by Dr. Maria Montessori
- **The Discovery of the Child** by Dr. Maria Montessori
- **The Secret of Childhood** by Dr. Maria Montessori
- **A Montessori Handbook** by Dr. Maria Montessori
- **The Child in the Family** by Dr. Maria Montessori
- **The Montessori Method** by Dr. Maria Montessori
- **Education for Human Development** by Mario Montessori Jr.
- **Maria Montessori: Her Life and Her Work** by E.M. Standing
- **The Montessori Revolution in Education** by E.M. Standing
- **Montessori and Your Child** by Terry Malloy
- **Endangered Minds** by Dr. Jane Healy
- **Failure to Connect** by Dr. Jane Healy
- **Scattered: How Attention Deficit Disorder Originates and What You Can Do About It** by Dr. Gabor Mate
- **Hold on to Your Kids: Why Parents Matter** by Dr. Gabor Mate
- **The Science Behind the Genius** by Angeline S. Lillard
- **Kids are Worth It!** by Barbara Coloroso
- **Free Range Kids: Giving Our Children the Freedom We Had Without Going Nuts with** **Worry** by Lenore Skenazy
- **Unconditional Parenting** by Alfie Kohn
- **Two Thousand Kisses a Day** by L. R. Knost
- **he Whole Child: 12 Revolutionary Strategies to Nurture Your Child's Developing** **Mind** by Daniel J Siegel

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