

What is Montessori?

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870 - 1952), a physician from Italy, used her ability to observe children in a different manner. Her acute observations of children as they are, opposed to the way adults wish them to be, led to the evolution of her philosophy of natural child development and the development of materials to promote learning. Her belief was that no human is educated by another person. It must be done by oneself or it will not occur. A truly educated individual continues learning long after the classroom experience has ended because there is motivation from within that is fuelled by a natural curiosity and a love for learning. Dr. Montessori felt that the goal of early education should not be to inundate children with facts from a direct course of study. Instead an objective of the education process is to cultivate the child's own natural desire to learn.

In a Montessori classroom this objective is approached in a variety of ways. By allowing children to experience the excitement of learning by choosing and by perfecting all the natural tools for learning that are developing in each child, abilities expand so that they will be at a maximum in future learning situations.