

## Grace and Courtesy for the Holidays

by Jana Morgan Herman, Learning Coordinator  
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This time of year is, perhaps, the best time to instill the importance of grace and courtesy, both at home and on the road.

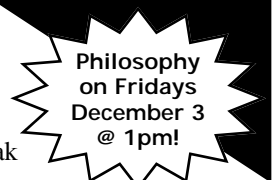
As I stated in last month's article, Montessori believed that most learning comes naturally, is built into the development of the child's sensitive periods. Social graces and courtesies however, are the exception, as social norms and mores vary from culture to culture. Here, we can offer our children appropriate guidance in how to interact with others.

### In your own back yard

The biggest most important factor in having gracious and courteous children, is setting a daily living example as a gracious and courteous adult. Too often, we do not extend the efforts to be kind to those closest to us because we are too busy, too angry, or maybe, just too tired! It requires more of us to consider elements of etiquette and utilize them all the time.

- When was the last time you introduced, formally introduced, your child to someone?
- When have you set the example of handwriting thank you letters for gifts or as acts of kindness?
- How often do you have conversations without media in the back (or fore) ground? Learning how to listen to someone and take turns in a conversation is an art, not something inborn.
- Do you refer to members of your family or your friends as "stupid" or "retarded" or "dumb" (or some other phrase or word I won't include in this article), even if you are playing around?
- Do you watch and laugh at movies or television shows where people are rude or mean to each other?
- When you see that something needs to be taken care of, do you ever say, "That's not my job"?
- Are you gracious to people out in the community, even when they are not gracious?

- Do your children see you acting in kind or helpful ways to strangers?
- Would you speak to your boss or significant other the way you speak to your children?
- Would you want your child's future spouse to speak to him or her the way they see you communicate to others?



### Make a plan to change

The upcoming holidays are THE perfect time to create new habits in grace and courtesy.

- Send out formal invitations, cards or letters to loved ones and friends. Children and teens will get to see you model how to address envelopes and write letters (opening, body paragraphs, closing, and signature).
- Prepare food by hand, from basic ingredients and serve meals to each other using napkins, setting the table properly, passing food, conversing, clearing the table, wash the dishes, dry and put away everything.
- Talk about conduct for visiting friends or family. Children need direction in what and how to ask for things in the homes of others.
- Practice conduct for being in public places (like movies).
- Practice formal introductions
- Discuss what to do in challenging or difficult situation (like when someone is rude or scary).
- Talk to your children about the importance of saying "Please", "Thank You" and "You're Welcome" and put it into practice every day.

These ideas may sound deceptively simple; they are not. The commitment to take the time to be truly gracious and courteous is no small one. Our society is so rushed that we skip the

(Continued on page 2)

November	December	January
Enjoy your Fall Break November 24-26!	7—PIP Workshop, 7 pm: Elementary Cosmic Curriculum  20-31—Winter Break. Classes resume on Monday, January 3rd!	3—Classes Resume from Winter Break 17—All Programs OPEN, Martin Luther King Jr. Day 21—All Programs Closed, Staff Inservice Day  NO PIP Workshop this month.

# Grace and Courtesy for the Holidays

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niceties. But the niceties are the glue that holds us together socially. What you don't use, you lose and it becomes more and more apparent that in our culture, we are less considerate, more selfish, and more self centered.

In Maria Montessori: Her *Life and Work*, E. M. Standing explained the importance of grace and courtesy saying, "We must teach children the elements of social behavior so that their interest is aroused; and as a consequence their attention is directed to these aspects of life. In this way, these little people who, before, only knew vaguely and half consciously what to do in any particular social situation, now have a clear and vivid idea how to react when the particular occasion arises." However, he notes (as did Montessori) that following a child around correcting or reprimanding them will not help them, for that is discouraging. *We must instead always model the behavior; the responsibility is ours and it is not as easy as it may seem.*

We have the perfect opportunity to begin to address these issues over the coming weeks. If you have time, I'd love you to join me on the first Friday in December for Philosophy on Friday at 1 on the Summit where we will discuss these ideas and solutions in depth.

**Want to Learn More?** Check out the Grace and Courtesy Blog at [Montessori for Everyone](http://Montessori for Everyone).

## WORK@HOME WORK@HOME

Work@Home is an important part of your learners' school success, whether they are three or seventeen! We believe that parent's are their child first and best teacher, and the activities you do with your learner at home are crucial to their success at school.

Sometimes Work@Home can look like school work - writing a paper or putting together a presentation - but sometimes, it's **JUST PLAIN FUN!**

Check out this suggestion for work at home from Ocean Studio:

Fall is apple season! Make applesauce to serve at your own friends feast. This Work@Home activity helps with practice in Math, Culinary Arts, and Practical Life, just to name a few.

### Easy Homemade Applesauce

Peel, core, and slice a bag of apples.

In a large pot, combine apples and 1 cup of water.



Cover and boil for approximately 10 minutes, or until the apples are soft enough to mash.

Mash the apples and enjoy! (Add sugar or cinnamon if you prefer.)



## Helping Hands

Your opportunity to get involved!

Please contact PIP at [pip@shiningminds.com](mailto:pip@shiningminds.com) if you'd like to help with these projects:

### Media Center

- There are several labeled containers in the Media Center of material preparation work that the studios need to have done. If you are able to spend an hour or so at school after dropping off your child or before picking them up, consider grabbing one of these projects to work on!

## MARKET DAY!

December orders due online by December 29th. Pickup is January 3rd from 3-4 pm in Fitness Room 1.

Visit to [www.marketday.com](http://www.marketday.com) to view the catalog and order. Our school code is 27012.

\*Try the Apple Berry Bowl for a fast, low cal, high fiber breakfast!\*

# Delving into Dual Credit

By Debbie Jinks, Teen Transition Coordinator  
djinks@shiningminds.com \* ext. 1150

If you have a teen in the 15-18 Studios, chances are that you have heard someone mention Dual Credit Courses, which are college courses taken in high school that allow teens to earn high school credit and college credit at the same time. At this time, the Dual Credit provider for Community Montessori is Ivy Tech. Dual Credit courses at Community Montessori are taught by Ivy Tech instructors and are equivalent to the courses taken on campus. The credit for the course, as well as the grade earned, is recorded on an Ivy Tech transcript and is transferable to any college in Indiana.

Last Spring, we offered our first Dual Credit course, College Algebra, to a small group of qualified teens. This semester, we currently have 15 teens enrolled in English Composition. For the Spring 2011 Semester, we plan to offer Trigonometry and Analytic Geometry, Introduction to Psychology, and Medical Terminology.

In order to qualify to enroll in a Dual Credit Course, teens must meet the same criteria that would be necessary to enroll on campus at Ivy Tech. Teens must be in "11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade", have completed the necessary prerequisites for the course, have the written approval of their advisor and family, and achieve minimum test scores on either the PSAT, SAT, ACT, ASSET, or COMPASS. The minimum scores vary by course, so teens should see Debbie to see if they qualify.

The ASSET test will be administered at Community Montessori on Thursday December 17<sup>th</sup> for teens who need it. The COMPASS is a computer-based test teens can take at Ivy Tech. There are limits to how many times a teen can take the ASSET or COMPASS, so please see Debbie for details.

Dual Credit Courses at Community Montessori do require a highly reduced fee of \$125 per course, and the teen's family is responsible for purchasing any required textbooks and materials (CM pays a portion of the fee in order to offset the cost for families.). More importantly, teens and their families must be committed to meeting the demands of college-level work. Consistent attendance is also a must. A teen who has successfully completed a dual credit course shared that in order to be successful, teens need to be highly motivated, have fully completed the prerequisites, and be able to commit to keeping up with assignments and deadlines which are not often flexible. Another teen commented that Dual Credit courses are by no means easy, but with effort comes the ability to succeed. Also, it must be remembered that the grade you earn in a Dual Credit course taken in high school does affect the college grade point average.

Why do teens take Dual Credit Courses? Some teens take them to meet the requirements for the Academic Honors Diploma, to get ahead on college coursework, or to ease the transition from Community Montessori to the college classroom. As teen Kate Frakes puts it, "The challenge of a Dual Credit course is both exciting and intimidating, but the realization of being able to meet that challenge is nothing short of thrilling. A good experience with a Dual Credit course provides not only college preparation and in-depth instruction in a subject, but also a degree of confidence."



"The challenge of a Dual Credit course is both exciting and intimidating..."  
- Kate Frakes

Spring 2011 Dual Credit Courses start the week of January 10<sup>th</sup>. Pre-registration will be due on Friday December 10<sup>th</sup>. Interested teens and families should watch for more information coming soon!

Encourage your learner to discuss their options with their advisor and Debbie, and read more about the benefits of Dual Enrollment programs at [inside-highered.com](http://inside-highered.com).

# Pennies for a Peace Pole Project

By Rainforest Studio

Rainforest Studio is fundraising – one penny at a time—to purchase a Peace Pole for our school. Kirsten thought of the idea after reviewing the International Peace Project site which states:

“A Peace Pole is an internationally-recognized symbol of the hopes and dreams of the entire human family, standing vigil in silent prayer for peace on earth. A Peace Pole bears the message “May Peace Prevail on Earth” in different languages on each of its sides. There are tens of thousands of Peace Poles in nearly every country across the globe, dedication as monuments to peace.”

We thought it fitting that our school join those thousands, supporting peace around the world, and holding true to the very foundation of the Montessori philosophy.

Our learners are counting the pennies as they come in – most studios were given a presentation and a Pennies for Peace container to collect the pennies. The estimated cost is \$200, and our goal is to have the pole purchased or made by the end of the school year.



**Stop by the Curved Desk to drop off YOUR pennies!**

Learn more about Peace Poles at [www.peacepoleproject.org](http://www.peacepoleproject.org).

## SPIRIT WEAR!

NEWCommunity Montessori  
Sprit Wear items are coming  
to PaySchools!

### Old Favorites

pullover hooded sweatshirts  
and long sleeve shirts

### New Choices

A lightweight “layering” tee,  
A zipper hoodie,  
and open leg workout pants!

Visit PaySchools November 29th!



## NEWS FROM THE CLASS OF 2011

We are excited to share the news  
that a member of Community  
Montessori ‘s first graduating class  
received official word of acceptance to  
Indiana University, Bloomington  
for the Fall 2011 semester. In addition,  
the teen has been awarded an  
IU Automatic Academic Scholarship  
of \$16,000 over 4 years (\$4,000 per year).

A few more applications have been sent  
out in the last few days, so watch for  
more updates!

# Community Montessori Protects YOU From Pesky Fundraisers!

by Brandy Worster, Expansion Development Coordinator

School fundraisers are a tradition, right? Don't we all enjoy sending our kids door-to-door to sell magazines, candy, wrapping paper and cookie dough? Ironically, most schools these days actually tell you NOT to let your kids go door-to-door, so parents are forced to resort to begging coworkers and extended family members to buy over-priced and unwanted products.



**Oh wait! As a Community Montessori Family you haven't had that opportunity yet?**

I often get questions on what we do to fundraise to pay off our Dream School or suggestions of different fundraisers to participate in. As the Expansion Development Coordinator, I want to take a moment and share our fundraising rationale with our families.

**NO SALE!** *As a CM Family, we don't have to send our kids out to be salespeople!*

As a school, we work very hard to not have "annual" fundraisers or ask our children/teens to compete for prizes. Many schools send students home with things to sell such as candy, wrapping paper, or magazines and ask their students to compete to sell the most products for that gold star and prize. Locally one family shared with me that this fall they have already sold Entertainment books, coupon peelers, wrapping paper, chocolate, candles, advertising for the yearbook, held a silent auction, and an ice cream social. These fundraising items keep getting higher in price and the quality of the items continually gets lower.

As a Community Montessori family we don't have to send our kids out to be sales people, or beg our coworkers and family members to purchase even more. Yes, we do collect box tops and have a few other traditional fundraisers for families that like to participate in that way. However, we try very hard not to get caught up in the marketing of products as part of fundraising for the needs of our school.

Many schools participate in the Pepsi challenge, and market their families to vote for their school project on a website surrounded by advertisement of soda. Instead of participating in these product-marketing and competition based fundraisers, we prefer that YOU decide what works best for your family.

This year we initiated the "Help Us Grow" program in which families can choose how they can best commit to paying off our Dream School. For some families that's a monetary donation. For others it's sharing a possible business partnership. All we ask is that when you are considering what works best for your family, please take a moment to remember all those fundraisers you aren't being asked to participate in. If you're willing to pay \$50 for some chocolate and wrapping paper you really don't need (just so the school can make **50%** of that sale) consider just giving the entire \$50 to the school, and see the return on your investment when you pick your child up each day! You can email me at any time for more information on the "Help Us Grow" program at [bworster@shiningminds.com](mailto:bworster@shiningminds.com), or make an Instant Donation on [PaySchools](#) at your convenience.

**December PIP Workshop**  
**Tuesday December 7th at 7 pm**  
**Elementary Cosmic Curriculum**  
Our Elementary Staff will discuss this aspect of the elementary curriculum and families will have a chance to ask questions.

## WINTER GIFTING

Our tradition is to forgo 'personal' holiday gifts for gifts for our studios. These studio gifts both show your appreciation to staff while directly supporting the growth of your learner!

If you feel compelled to give, take a moment over the next few weeks to select an item from your studio's Winter Gifting display!



[www.pipshiningminds.com](http://www.pipshiningminds.com)

Please contact us anytime to ask about how you can get more involved at CM:  
[pip@shiningminds.com](mailto:pip@shiningminds.com).  
Visit [www.pipshiningminds.com](http://www.pipshiningminds.com)

The PIP Council wants to thank you for helping to make our fall events a booming success! It is only with your support that we are able to continue to schedule family events, provide grant money for studios and put books and other needed materials in our studios.

If you don't already participate, consider trying the Market Day program this month, or get involved in the planning for Celebration for Education. Also, be sure to pick a Winter Gifting Snowflake from the display outside your learner's studio. This is a quick easy way to support your studio during the holidays.



Tracy Pickman-Yates, PIP Council member, serving the smores trail mix. Good food, good friends and good fun!

**Fall Family Night at Deere Farm** was all about family fun! Whether you played in the Pumpkin Bounce House, took a hay ride or lost yourself in the corn maze game, fun was had by all.



Karen Heishman, Desert Studio teacher, and her daughter Katie, get ready to hit the corn maze.



We have participated in the **Harvest Homecoming Kids' Tent** since it's beginning. This year we sponsored miniature golf, a pencil craft and "Mercury" the snake.



## PIP MISSION STATEMENT

*"We believe that family involvement is the best foundation for school and personal success. We support the continued growth of each member of our school community through opportunities of involvement at the school and with its activities."*