

## You Hold the Key to Success

“Mom, this is my school!” I heard a young child say, pointing to the group picture at the entrance to the school. His mom turned from the front door where she was about to exit saying, “It sure is.” “Look over here mom, here is my school here, too!” he explained as he pointed to the aerial shot against one of my windows. That is family involvement – and that is integrating learning!

We firmly believe that this IS his school. And her school. And theirs. And it’s YOUR school, too!

Our family involvement is apparent in many ways at Community Montessori. Over the last two Fridays the building was full of activity during Parent Partner Conference Days, and it is not unusual for us to have 6 or 8 families volunteering in the building on a daily basis. We want you IN the building, IN the studio, and INVOLVED in your child’s education!

Getting you, the family, actively involved here at school is only part of the puzzle. In order for our learners to be

truly successful, we as a school need to help you be involved all the time—here and at home. As each of you know from our extensive family commitment forms, attending the recent Parent Partner



*Without YOU, we cannot unlock their full potential.*

Conferences are just the beginning. Although we all have a million things on our “plate” we must find a way to prioritize our parenting. It’s easy to take a “not-broke? -don’t-fix-it” stance on our children’s education. It’s easy to let the extent of our involvement become dropping our children off and picking them up. Our learners need us—and not just the young ones. Teens are in

just as much need, if not more, of your active presence. And we need you to build a partnership with us so that we can truly provide the best learning opportunities for your child/teen. Without you, we cannot unlock their full potential. You are your child’s first and best teacher. You have insight into them that we could never have, and that insight is invaluable to us.

*By Barbara Burke Fondren*

Again this year, I challenge each of you to “walk the walk” every day. Here are some pointers to increase our success now and throughout the year:

**READ** email – you should receive at least two emails each week from staff and teachers.

**RESPOND** to emails with any questions or concerns. **DO NOT** wait for Parent Partner Conferences.

**ATTEND** Parent Partner Conferences and share/discuss information with teachers/advisors consistently throughout the year.

**SPEND TIME** - attend child/teen work nights and visit your learner’s studio. 10 minutes a week is all it takes!

**STUDY** the Montessori Method – Purchase great books through our site at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

**GET INVOLVED** with PIP and/or become a frequent studio volunteer or assistant.

**SHOW UP!** Not just for school events, but at the dinner table, in the car in the morning, on the weekend. Be a constant presence for your child and help connect learning to life when they’re not at school.

It’s going to be a great year!

### September

- 5—No School Labor Day
- 6—PIP Workshop 7 pm
- 16—Fall Family Night  
at Montgomery Farms
- 19—NWEA Testing Begins
- 22—School Picture Day

### October

- 4—PIP Workshop, 7 pm
- 7—No School, Staff Personal/Prof Day
- 10-14—Scholastic Book Fair
- 12—PSAT Testing
- 13—Child’s Work Night/  
Teen Exploration, 5-7 pm
- 20-21—No School, Staff In-service Days

### November

- 1—PIP Workshop, 7 pm
- 4—Parent Partner Conference,  
No School
- 11—Parent Partner Conference,  
No School
- 23-25—Thanksgiving Break,  
No School

# new faces!

Welcome to our new staff members this year. Please be sure to introduce yourself to them!



**Holly Meredith**  
Ocean 6-9  
Co-Teacher



**Heather Brown**  
Diamond 9-12  
Co-Teacher



**Jonna Frakes**  
Cypress 15-18  
Support



**Janelle Lopez**  
Tundra 6-9  
Co-Teacher

★ Welcome Back!

Class of 2011! ★



**Sarah Gaudet**  
Acorn 0-3 yrs  
Educarer



**Jessica Valentine**  
Typhoon 12-15  
Advisor



**Matt McClain**  
Environmental  
Services

*Photos by DeLani Over  
Cypress Studio Learner*



## QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Our staff receive such great and varied questions from our families every day, we thought it might be helpful to share some here. If you have a question you'd like to see here, email Crystal at [cmcconnell@shiningminds.com](mailto:cmcconnell@shiningminds.com).

### WHY ALL THE EMPHASIS ON VOLUNTEERING?

Unlike other schools who may say they want parents involved, WE REALLY DO. Not only is it imperative for the success of your child, it is a core tenet of our school's belief system.

We believe educating children is a partnership between us, the school, you, and your child. We want you to visit the studio, attend Parent Partner Conferences, go on Going Out Trips, attend the Celebration for Education, and email or call us regularly with your questions. The more we hear from you and see you, the better we can know your child. His or her education can only benefit from our relationship with you.

We know you're busy—that's why PIP and your child's teachers often have activities that you can take home to do. We also have activities on evenings and weekends that you can help with.

Because we believe so strongly in the importance of your involvement, parent involvement hours is one area of our accountability to Ball State. That's why we ask you to log your hours—those numbers are reported to BSU each year as part of our annual accountability plan.



## 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:

### Book Fair

- October 6th, appx 8:45 am for an hour or two to help set up
- Afternoons all week (appx 1-4 pm)
- October 13th, 5-7 pm (during Child's Work Night/ Teen Exploration)

### School Picture Retakes

- Four volunteers are needed to assist with picture re-take day on November 8th from 8:15 am til about noon.

### Market Day

- Volunteers are needed to help organize and give out the food delivery.

### Celebration for Education

- Many hands are need to help plan this years' event

# I'm Sorry— WHAT Did You Say?

## Understanding Montessori Terminology

Dr. Maria Montessori introduced many new terms and concepts to describe how children grow and learn. For families just starting at Community Montessori – or even for those who've been here for years – this list of widely used Montessori words and phrases might come in handy.

We also encourage you to read more about Maria Montessori, the Montessori philosophy and how you can bring Montessori into your home and provide that important home/school consistency. You can visit our Amazon Store for some book recommendations, or our director, Barbara, keeps a lending library in her space in the Cupola.

**Absorbent mind** – From birth through approximately age 6, the young child experiences a period of intense mental activity that allows her to “absorb” learning from her environment without conscious effort, naturally and spontaneously.

**Concrete to abstract** – A logical, developmentally appropriate progression that allows the child to come to an abstract understanding of a concept by first encountering it in a concrete form, such as learning the mathematical concept of the decimal system by working with Golden Beads grouped into units, 10s, 100s, and 1,000s.

**Cosmic education** – Maria Montessori urged us to give elementary-level children a “vision of the universe” to help them discover how all parts of the cosmos are interconnected and interdependent. In Montessori schools, these children, ages 6 – 12, begin by learning about the universe, its galaxies, our galaxy, our solar system, and planet Earth—everything that came before their birth to make their life possible. As they develop respect for past events, they become aware of their own roles and responsibilities in the global society of today and tomorrow.

**Didactic materials** – Didactic meaning “designed or intended to teach,” these are the specially designed instructional materials—many invented by Maria Montessori—used in Montessori classrooms.

**Grace and courtesy** – Children are formally supported in social skills they will use throughout their lives, for example, saying “please” and “thank you,” interrupting conversations politely, requesting rather than demanding assistance, and greeting guests warmly.

*Article excerpted from amshq.org*

**Montessori** – The term may refer to Dr. Maria Montessori, founder of the Montessori Method of education, or the method itself.

**Normalization** – A natural or “normal” developmental process marked by a love of work or activity, concentration, self-discipline, and joy in accomplishment. Dr. Montessori observed that the normalization process is characteristic of human beings at any age.

**Normalizing event** – Within the prepared environment of the Montessori classroom, children experience a normalizing event every time they complete a basic work cycle, which includes 1) choosing an activity; 2) completing the activity and returning the materials to the proper place; and 3) experiencing a sense of satisfaction.

**Planes of development** – Four distinct periods of growth, development, and learning that build on each other as children and youth progress through them: ages 0 – 6 (the period of the “absorbent mind”); 6 – 12 (the period of reasoning and abstraction); 12 – 18 (when youth construct the “social self,” developing moral values and becoming emotionally independent); and 18 – 24 years (when young adults construct an understanding of the self and seek to know their place in the world).

**Practical life** – The Montessori term that encompasses domestic work to maintain the home and classroom environment; self-care and personal hygiene; and grace and courtesy. Prac-

### Help Offered

Part-time opening for Nanny Services in my home, Charlestown area, days/times are flexible.

I practice AP Parenting and enjoy using sign language to enrich a child's vocabulary. I have 2.5 years of experience as a Nanny. I am trained in CPR but not certified. Your child will have individual care and enjoy outings to the zoo, playgroups, parks, etc. I have excellent references and would love to hear from you!

Rates vary on the needs of the child. Range is \$5-\$10 an hour. You supply the diapers and other needed items. Lunch and snacks can be provided.

Contact Rachel Isbell, mom to a CM Kindergartener, at 502-292-7067 cell

## What Did You Say? *Continued from Page 3*

tical life skills are of great interest to young children and form the basis of later abstract learning.

**Practical life activities** – Children/teens in Montessori classrooms learn to take care of themselves and their environment through activities from hand washing, dusting, and mopping to sewing, gardening and cooking. These activities help toddlers and preschool-age children learn to work independently, develop concentration, and prepare for later work with reading and math; older children/teens participate in more advanced activities.

**Prepared environment** – The teacher prepares the environment of the Montessori classroom with carefully selected, aesthetically arranged materials that are presented sequentially to meet the developmental needs of the children/teens using the space. Well-prepared Montessori environments contain appropriately sized furniture, a full complement of Montessori materials, age appropriate resources, and enough space to allow learners to work in peace, alone or in small or large groups.

**Sensitive period** – A critical time during human development when the child is biologically ready and receptive to acquiring a specific skill or ability—such as the use of language or a sense of order—and is therefore particularly sensitive to stimuli that promote the development of that skill. A Montessori teacher prepares the environment to meet the developmental needs of each sensitive period.

**Sensorial exercises** – These activities develop and refine the 5 senses—seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling—and build a foundation for speech, writing, and math through the use of sensorial materials. The exercises also bring order to the barrage of sensorial impressions the child experiences from birth onward.

**The 3-period lesson** – A 3-step technique for presenting information to the learner. In the first—the *introduction* or *naming* period—the teacher demonstrates what “this is.” (The teacher might say “This is a mountain” while pointing to it on a 3-dimensional map.) In the second—the *association* or *recognition* period—the teacher asks the child to “show” what was just identified (“Show me the mountain”). Finally, in the *recall* period, the teacher asks the child to name the object or area. Moving from new information to passive recall to active identification reinforces learning and leads to proficiency.

**Work** – Purposeful activity. Maria Montessori observed that children learn through purposeful activities of their own choosing; Montessori schools call all of the children’s activities “work.”

*List modified from amshq.org.*

## Child’s Work Night/ Teen Exploration

Thursday October 13  
anytime between 5 and 7 pm

Bring your learner and visit his/her studio on this night. It’s a great opportunity to see first-hand what your child has been working on so far this year.

## October PIP Workshop Tuesday October 4th at 7 pm

Choose between two workshops  
this month:

Teen’s Program: Portfolio  
Graduation Requirements  
or Early Education 101 .

## ~ Fall Testing ~

NWEA (“grades 2-8”)  
September 19-30

ECA’s (some teens)  
December 13-16

Make sure your learner gets lots  
of rest and has a nutritious  
breakfast everyday!

# College Road Trip

By Debbie Jinks, Teen Transition Coordinator

Quick, can you name all seven public universities in Indiana? (Answer: Ball State, Indiana State, the Indiana University system, IUPUI, Ivy Tech, Purdue, the University of Southern Indiana, and Vincennes University). Which public university has the highest enrollment statewide? (The answer is actually Ivy Tech, with campuses all over the state.) How about naming all 31 of the Independent Colleges in Indiana? (No, I'm not going to list them all here). The point is that going on to post secondary education in Indiana means more than choosing between IU, Purdue, IU Southeast, and Ivy Tech.

Let's start with two of the less well-known public universities. The University of Southern Indiana, in Evansville, is the fastest growing public institution in the state, and the least expensive 4 year residential college in Indiana. Check it out at [www.usi.edu](http://www.usi.edu). Just an hour or so north is Vincennes University, primarily a two year college with a few four year programs. The two year programs are designed to stand alone, or students can transfer credits to another university. Vincennes has an open admissions policy, and currently is the least expensive of any public residential college in Indiana (2 or 4 year). Find out more at [www.vinu.edu](http://www.vinu.edu).

Among the independent (sometimes referred to as private) colleges in Indiana, enrollment can range from a few hundred students on campus to more than 8,000 at the University of Notre Dame. Wabash College is one of only four remaining men's colleges in the country. Tuition at the independent colleges is pricey, but many have generous merit scholarship programs to help make up the difference, and some students are drawn to the smaller class sizes that are the norm at the independents.

Wouldn't it be great if there was a way to compare all of the colleges and universities in the state without searching all over the internet? Check out [www.triptocollege.org](http://www.triptocollege.org) to do just that! Click on the link, click on Indiana Colleges, and then browse all you want. You'll find enrollment data, estimated costs, admissions criteria, etc., and you can do a side-by-side comparison of

up to four institutions at a time. If you choose to follow the link to a particular school, you can find information about campus visit days and deadlines for scholarships and admissions.

So, if a trip to college may be in your learner's future, start planning your college road trip today!



**Where ya headed?**

## VISIT THE FOLLOWING LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION ON COLLEGES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

[College Board](#)

[Indiana College Choices](#)

[Peterson's Guide Online](#)

[College View](#)

[Fast Web](#)

[Sallie Mae](#)

[Scholarships.com](#)

## UPCOMING COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM DATES

### ACT

Test Date 10/22, Register by 9/16

Test Date 12/10, Register by 11/4

Test Date 2/11, Register by 1/13

### SAT

Test Date 11/5, Register by 10/7

Test Date 12/3, Register by 11/8

Test Date 1/28, Register by 12/30

## Teen Perspectives

*contributed by Teen Program Learners*

*The following contributor asked to remain anonymous, however he is a teen who is going through the Core 40 planning process for the first time this year. We asked him to share a little about what that process is like.*

The beginning of the year is always an odd time. On one hand you're working hard at planning and adjusting yourself socially. On the other hand you find yourself not doing much school work before seminars start and the time when you get your computer assigned.

For me, as a returning student, the planning process wasn't foreign but, there were some changes to it and they did take some adjustment. For some reason, I was pretty apprehensive about Core 40 planning. It was like the bogeyman. Last year I heard so much about how hard it was. I heard some begging here and there, quite a bit of whining, and some attempted bribery with literally nickels and dimes as learners tried to get into the seminars they really wanted to take. As it turns out, it really wasn't anything to be afraid of. The advisors help you every step of the way as you set your path and choose your seminars and other work to meet your goals.

After we obtain our computers, the year picks up speed with the finalization of our plans and our first steps towards implementing them. This includes LiveBinders (which is new this year and takes the place of iClasses), seminars, independent projects, and various other tasks. I expect to have a challenging year and, hopefully, a fun, successful one.

*Our next contributor, Alex Rose, is new to Community Montessori this year, transferring here from a local public school. We were interested to get her take on the differences in the two learning environments:*

Traditional public schools are a lot different from Montessori schools. Traditional schools have a whole lot of benefits but there are a lot of downfalls, too. For example, you have to do what the teacher tells you and learn how everybody else learns. If you don't understand then there isn't really anything you can do about it; you just have to act like you know what's going on.

At Community Montessori you can have personal connections with all your teachers and you can talk to them about anything, whether it's about something at home or if it's about school work.

In a "normal high school" you have so much to do. You know where to go based on the bell and when it rings, also you have so much homework to do at home. Half the time you don't even know what's going on, you just do it to get it done and over with so you won't get in trouble or yelled at. To be completely honest I don't remember half the things I did on those papers and when I don't know what to do I normally don't get time to ask the teacher because they're too busy or I just don't have time to talk to them.

At CM you don't do all that work you just do stuff that is meaningful to you and your future, not stuff that won't matter in a couple of months.

## MARKET DAY!

October Orders due online by October 24th.  
Pickup is October 31st.

November Orders due by November 21st.  
Pickup is November 28th

Pickup is 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.

# MEET YOUR 2011-12 STAFF



**Natural Disasters & Woods  
(Teens Program)**

Back Row: Jessica Valentine, Jennifer Clifton, Abby Kerns, Allen Frantz, Debi Cline, Kyle Herman.

Front Row: Danielle Manzo, Jonna Frakes, Emily Ross, Debbie Jinks, Ryan Higgins, Hannegan Roseberry, Mandy Hartman.



**Biomes (6-9)**

Standing: Teresa Grim, Holly Meredith, Beth Kinlaw, Jana Morgan Herman, Karen Heishman, Leslie Gossett.  
Sitting: Janelle Lopez, Natalie Schelling



**Gemstones (9-12)**

Back Row: Kyla Marvel, Anjila Gaudet, Heather Brown.  
Front Row: Jessica Philpot, CC Woodard, Michael Sylvester.



**Cupola Staff**

Back Row: Kim Nieter, Barbara Burke Fondren, Glenn Fondren, Melissa Frey.  
Front Row: Linda Kueber, Joanne Kiefer, Crystal McConnell.

Back Row: Terri Raynor, Janie Wampler, Faith Stout, Becky Wilson, Sarah Gaudet

Front Row: Jessica Hartman, Teresa McClain.



**Early Education (3-6)**

Kathy Tribble, Heather Powell, Diana Gaddis, Cindy Calilung, Nicki Prince, Ashley Spray, Liz Smith (not pictured)



**Developmental Specialists**

Entirely too busy to have their picture taken: Mike Sarles and Matt McClain, our amazing Environmental Services team.