

The “Magic” word of Montessori

Author Unkown

The behavior of Montessori children seemingly can only come about by magic. There hardly seems that there can be another word for it. Children so respectful, so at peace, so focused – how does it happen except by magic?

Your Montessori teachers (the wizards) can only smile at the thought of how easy “Abracadabra” would be. They know (and you should too) the tremendous amount of work and patience that goes into the outcome you are viewing in a Montessori classroom.

The first word that they’d like to share with you (it is not the magic word) is “Respect.” This is a foundational concept of Montessori and not usually found in other educational settings. This respect looks at the child as an individual. It does not compare him to anyone else, make him be like anybody else or act like anyone else. It does not expect him/her to keep up or hold back. It looks at the child as a unique human being.

The second word (kind of magic but not the magic) is vision. Believing that children are so much more capable than we think possible.

The third word is independence (kind of magic to teenagers.) But in Montessori Independence does not mean just doing what you want but it describes the actions of being self-governed, self-directed and self-responsible. The curriculum from its very beginning has as its goal independence. This is practiced every day by making choices, choosing goals, being responsible for the results of those choices.

Patience is another word on the road to magic (not there yet!) Both the student and the teacher practice patience. The outcome that you see in a Montessori classroom is not spontaneous – it doesn’t just happen. It is envisioned, planned for and practiced patiently.

Now we come to the magic. You might be disappointed after all of the high-dollar words like respect, vision and independence. Now we come to a very pedestrian and common word from which all the magic flows. Ready? Training! Training? Right, training. Every good thing you see in a Montessori classroom, every virtue that makes Montessori children so unique is ultimately achieved by “training.” It is the common word training that starts your child on the road to excellence.

Every champion, no matter what the endeavor goes through training. A Montessori child is given a vision of what their powers may be. They are given a path to follow that vision. They are given the time to practice the skills of independence. They are given the coaching to succeed. All of this has one purpose – the independence of your child on the road to success. Every “failure” (there is no real failure in Montessori because failure is when you quit – not when you make mistakes) every mistake is part of the success process. Montessori children are trained to pick

themselves up and move on because success is always in front of you. And that success is achieved by training.