



# The River Current

January 2015

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear River Montessori Families,

Welcome Back & Happy New Year! Are you making resolutions? Planning for different discipline, strategies, and accomplishments this year? Want some inspiration? We only need look at the natural way the children focus and attend to their work at this time of year.

January holds a profound phenomenon in the Montessori classroom. When we observe, we see the children manifesting a beautiful independence, ambition, and synergy. It is as if everything has clicked~ all the information and experiences from the first half of the year have been internalized and they embrace their roles with relish and determination. The concentration is deeper, the work is more expansive, and because the love of work is cemented, the growth is extensive. This is a valuable time for the Montessori Guide to take advantage of the opportunities of curiosity and insatiability~ lessons abound and the children take to new heights.

If you'd like a closer look at how your child may avail him- or herself of these opportunities, be sure to reserve your spot in our Parent University Workshop, *The Montessori Journey & Discovery*. The positive feedback from this workshop consistently reflects the profound nature of the course for parents in understanding your own child as you learn about interacting in the Montessori environment

With this new year of 2015, may you all find your synergy and stride with the same approach that the children take: meaningful, deep affection for your work, whatever that may be.

Peace, peace,  
Kelly



## RMCS Montessori Journey and Discovery

February 27-28, 2015

\$25/ person\* \$35/couple

\*Scholarships available

RSVP early as space is  
limited.

To sign up, please email:  
[admin@rivermontessoricharter.org](mailto:admin@rivermontessoricharter.org)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### January

- 19<sup>th</sup> **Martin Luther King Day** (School and River Crew closed.)
- 20-30<sup>th</sup> **Schoola Children's Clothing Drive Fundraiser**
- 24<sup>th</sup> **Pancake Breakfast at Applebee's** 8 – 10 a.m.
- 26<sup>th</sup> **Move Up Meeting** TK/K 5p.m. 3<sup>rd</sup> Level 6 p.m.
- 27<sup>th</sup> **Community Conversation**—Middle School Forum 6 p.m.
- 30<sup>th</sup> **Ice Skate and Donate** – Snoopy's Home Ice 4-5:30 p.m.

### February

- 3<sup>rd</sup> **Prospective Parent Meeting** 6 p.m.
- 6<sup>th</sup> **RMF Playdate in the Park** 12:30 -3:30 p.m.
- 12<sup>th</sup> **Community Conversation:** 6-7 p.m.
- 13<sup>th</sup> **School Closed. River Crew open.**
- 16<sup>th</sup> **Presidents Day (School closed. River Crew closed.)**
- 17<sup>th</sup> **Prospective Parent Meeting (Spanish)** 6:00 p.m.
  
- 20<sup>th</sup> **RMF Morning Coffee** River Crew 8:15 a.m.  
**Walk-a-thon**
- 23<sup>rd</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> **Montessori Education Week**
- 24<sup>th</sup> **Open House** 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- 27<sup>th</sup> **Watch Me Work** (Lower Elementary 9:45 – 11:45a.m.)  
**Parent University: Silent Journey Part 1** 6-8 p.m.
- 28<sup>th</sup> **Silent Journey Part 2** 8a.m. – 1p.m.

## PROSPECTIVE PARENT MEETINGS

Thank you for sharing with others the benefits of an authentic Montessori Education at RMCS! We have heard that we are the best kept secret in town and want everyone to know about how much our children love their school and their learning. Please help us spread the word!

### Prospective Parent Meeting Schedule

February 3, 2015	6:00 p.m.
February 17, 2015 (Spanish)	6:00p.m
March 9, 2015	6:00 p.m.



## WISH LIST

Thank you for all of your generosity! We hope that moving things on to RMCS helps with a bit of your repurposing and re-using, we are always grateful for hand me downs! Here's what we are currently hoping will make it our way...

- Wooden Stools
- Hutches
- Bookshelves
- Ping Pong Table

Carpet Squares (samples which free from a carpet store- someone to please arrange for pick up. We use these for work and activities- invaluable!)



## MONTESSORI MATTERS

**Know Who Your Children Are**  
Summer nights, years ago, right before the news there was a public service announcement:



It's 10 o'clock, do you know where your children are?

What I'd like to hear today is this: Do you know who your children are?

When parents or grandparents contact me asking for advice about how to handle a child who is being defiant, lying, disrespectful...the list goes on...I usually respond first with, "Did you ask your child why they are behaving in this way?"

To understand our children, to know who they truly are, we have to watch, we have to ask questions, and we have to listen to those answers even if we might not care for the responses.

Usually children who are having difficulties feel a bond of trust has been broken with an important adult in their lives. This can be a difficult thing to hear in reply to our questions. A difficult child is a discouraged child. There are four key ways we discourage our children with negative expectations, focusing on mistakes, perfectionism and over protection.

If we can ask "why" five times we will usually uncover a fundamental truth or root cause of a problem. In the process we may also discover what our children are thinking and feeling. We might uncover our children's values, their hopes, their dreams, which may or may not be our hopes, values and dreams for them.

We also have to respect our children and their potential to learn and grow from the challenges they face. "I trust you will make a good decision," is a powerful statement of respect to our children. We have to have faith that our children will respond with ability when the time comes. We need to believe that our children are miraculous beings living on a planet that hurls through space at 1.3 million miles an hour in the Milky Way Galaxy. Our children's potential is cosmic in its proportions.

Eight year-old Sarah lied to her parents. Sara didn't tell the truth about taking a bath, eating her breakfast, turning

in her homework and other things. Jim and Martha used the five why's technique to try to discover what Sarah was thinking and feeling.

"Sarah, your teacher called and said you hadn't turned in your homework all week long," Martha said. "Why would you tell me that you did your homework and turned it in?"

"Because I didn't want to turn it in," Sarah said.

"Why wouldn't you want to turn in your homework if you had finished it?"

"I just didn't," said Sarah.

Seeing that this line of questioning wasn't productive, Jim said, "Did you realize that by telling your mom and me that you turned in your homework when you didn't, that you lied?"

"I didn't lie."

"Why would you say you didn't lie?" said Jim.

"Because no one asked me if I turned in my homework. I didn't lie. I didn't say anything," Sarah said.

"Why wouldn't you tell us about your homework?" Martha said.

"Because you'd get upset."

"Why do you think we'd get upset?" Martha said.

"Because I don't want to go to mean old Mrs. Jones class next year. If I don't turn in my papers I'll flunk and I can stay in my class."

In a few minutes Jim and Martha had uncovered some of Sarah's thinking and feelings in a way that a lecture or punishment could never do. Know who your children are by using respectful methods of watching, questioning and listening to understand their hopes, dreams, values, thoughts and feelings.

**Reprinted from Kid's Talk Newsletters**  
Maren Schmidt, M. Ed.  
April 2013

## COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

*Community Conversations* are monthly discussions for parents, guardians, staff, and the occasional expert to take time to talk candidly, reflect, and support each other with child

development, Montessori philosophy, and supporting a child in growth and learning. For our adult-only meetings, we are piloting the option of child-care this year. An RSVP is required so we can arrange staffing and activities. We'll have a topic of interest and also have time for questions about other subjects as they arise.



### 2014-15 Schedule and Topics

**January 27, 2015** *Life After RMCS- Middle School Perspectives from RMCS Alumni Students & Parents* 6 – 7 p.m.

**February 12, 2015** *When is Misbehavior Bad Behavior?* 6 – 7 p.m.

**March 31, 2015** *How Much is Enough? (Sleep, Nutrition, Down-time, Play, Media)* 6 – 7 p.m.

**April 28, 2015** *Self Esteem is Over-rated* 6 – 7 p.m.

**May 19, 2015** *Wholehearted Parenting* 6 – 7 p.m.



## PARENT UNIVERSITY

Join us for an invaluable parent series this year! We have tailored this list based on feedback from parents and look forward to working together and learning more about how to best serve our children in their growth!

February 27-28, 2015 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Friday  
8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Saturday

***Special Two Day Workshop Experience!\****

**The Montessori Journey: Tour Transitional kindergarten through Upper elementary through the Eyes of a Student**

(\*Space is limited; registration required.)

\$25/ person\* \$35/couple

\*Scholarships available

April 9, 2015 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

**Cell phones, video games, and labels:**

*What Does a Child Really Need?*

thank  
you!

## WITH GRATITUDE...

**Dana Adams** for helping out in the office  
**Maureen Buckley** for picking up burritos and organizing burrito lunches every Wednesday  
**Haven, Josie, Cat, Joe Campbell, and Montessori**

**Services-** donations after building flood and for San Lorenzo and Yuba wish lists

**Dee and Tristan Christensen-McElroy-** regular delicious treats for faculty and staff, and fulfilling the wish lists in River Crew and Kaweah

**Jen Friesen-** cooking with Copper Creek and Kaweah

**Foundation leadership and families** for increasing donated funds

**The Hartley Family** for making adult stools into child size~ *perfect* for Copper Creek and our Lower Elementary Classrooms

**Ginny Hautau-** volunteering for Art in Klamath

**Elizabeth Huang** – volunteering in San Lorenzo

**Scott Nielsen-** IT volunteering & assistance

**Paulina Telderer-** Art in San Lorenzo

**Erin Ayers, Dana Wade, Betty Li, and Becky Kreutz, and Leslie Fredericks** for volunteering on Foundation Pizza Mondays

**Sara Peracca** – helping make the school more energy efficient

**Shimitri Perera and Elizabeth Berkowitz** – art in Shasta

**Maria Rodriguez** – art in San Lorenzo

**Kathryn Schmidt-** pasta facilitation (and work!) with the children

**Courtney Wolfe** – cooking with Copper Creek

**Gary Guest, Jana Leon, Dee Christianson-McElroy, Megin Hallinan** for their assistance after the flood.

**Erin Ayers & Steve Twyman** for their help drying out the carpets.

## RIVER MONTESSORI FOUNDATION NEWS

**Pancake  
BREAKFAST!**

RIVER MONTESSORI  
CHARTER SCHOOL

Tickets available at  
rivermontessorifoundation.org  
\$10 in advance  
\$12 at the door

Pancake breakfast  
served up right!

**Saturday  
January 24, 2015  
8:00 – 10:00 am**

Presented by  
**RIVER  
MONTESSORI  
FOUNDATION**

Applebee's 5301 OLD REDWOOD HWY.  
PETALUMA

## Ice Skate 'n' Donate at Snoopy's Home Ice! January 30, 4-5:30 p.m.

Join us Friday, January 30<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 – 5:30 for a wintery afternoon of ice skating! Snoopy's Home Ice in Santa Rosa has reduced their regular prices by over half! Tickets are only \$5 per skater, plus free skate rentals. And if we get over 100 participants, Snoopy's Home Ice will donate a portion of the ticket price to River.

