



# MYTHS AND FACTS

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ABOUT MONTESSORI

## Myth #1

# Montessori is a religion

Many people think Montessori has religious roots.

## Facts

Montessori is a complex education approach developed by Maria Montessori, an Italian doctor, physician, anthropologist and pedagogue. The Montessori education is a comprehensive and continuous response to the vital demands of human being, adapted to each stage of its development. Montessori observations match the most recent scientific findings on human brain.

## Myth #2

### **Montessori is expensive and you can find it only in private schools**

Montessori is associated with wealth and a private school education, because most Montessori schools are private.

## Facts

In recent years, tuition-free Montessori schools are growing in communities across the world. There are many initiatives endeavoring to spread Montessori in the public sector and bring it to under-privileged communities. Montessori is offered in private schools more frequently than in public schools because private schools are more likely to offer different educational approaches which parents look for.

## Myth #3

### In Montessori classrooms children do what they want

Some think that what all Montessori children do, is wander around and choosing not to do anything. Or that in Montessori schools, children only play with nice toys and they do not learn.

## Facts

Science proves that play is the work of the child. The child discovers the world through its own exploration and interaction with the environment. Being able to choose its own work is one of the key fundamentals of the Montessori method. Freedom of choice maximizes the learning experiences of the child in the environment. It allows learning which becomes inner motivated. And inner motivation is key to success.

## Myth #4

### Montessori classrooms are chaotic

Montessori classrooms may seem chaotic because of the many activities that can happen simultaneously.

## Facts

Montessori recognizes and acknowledges the child's internal need for order and establishes a calm, orderly environment where the child can expect to find things in their proper place and in their proper order. It is here, in this ordered environment where children feel safe and secure, that their brain can focus on the learning experiences.

## Myth #5

### Montessori is just “a trend”

It may seem that nowadays Montessori is “modern” or that it is “a buzz” education and that is why parents chose it for their children.

## Facts

Montessori was first introduced in 1907 and has been spreading since then all over the world. WWI and WWII interrupted drastically the global expansion of Montessori schools back then in Europe. Still, today, there are more than 30,000 Montessori schools worldwide. Not many people realize this, but Montessori is the single largest and widest spread pedagogy in the world.

## Myth #6

### **Montessori children will not be able to transition to “normal” schools**

Montessori offers a very loving and respectful environment and real world is not like that.

Montessori children will not be able to transfer successfully to a “real” school.

## Facts

In Montessori classrooms, children make important decisions every day. They interact in a natural social group. They cooperate with each other. They internalize order. Montessori children very easily adapt to any change. The grace and courtesy lessons that they are taught help them to adjust to meeting new people. They easily ask questions and orientate themselves in a new environment.

## Myth #7

### Montessori is only for gifted children and/or for disabled.

Some say that Montessori schools have the same characteristics as gifted education. Others say that Maria Montessori devised her method of education while working with mentally and physically challenged children.

## Facts

Montessori schools were created with the intent that all children can and love to learn. Montessori schooling helps each child develop their own individuality in a way that puts emphasis on their inborn intelligence and what they're good at. Montessori gives each child a chance to learn at their own pace and experience success. Visit a Montessori school and you will see that the method works with all children alike!

## Myth #8

### Montessori works well only on the pre-school level

Montessori is fine for children in pre-schools but when it becomes more serious and it is time for elementary, it is better to place a child in “a normal school”.

## Facts

Although Maria Montessori began her practice working with children from three to seven years old, the Montessori classroom has expanded to reach Montessori students of all ages including the high school years. Montessori education for all age levels is based in the profound knowledge of human development and the needs and tendencies of human beings in each stage of their lives. That is why Montessori works so well. The amount of Montessori elementary and high schools is growing rapidly and data shows that children graduating from these schools do very well : they are curious, they adapt easily and have a large confidence and self-esteem.

## Myth #9

### Montessori curriculum is not rigorous enough

Some people argue that Montessori children do not know enough content.

## Facts

The Montessori curriculum is presented in a cross-curricular approach so children are often learning more than one content area at a time on a deeper level. Research projects allow for further exploration of a topic and allow the child to follow their interests as well. Education systems all over the world step away from teaching separate subjects and from teaching children mere content. The way science describes education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century sound very familiar to Montessori ears.

## Myth #10

### Modern technologies are prohibited in Montessori classrooms

Many people think that Montessori condemns modern technologies, such as phones, computers and iPads, as being too abstract, commercial and so on.

## Facts

Digital devices are considered “materials” when they fully conform to Montessori philosophy and practice. In elementary classrooms, we treat digital devices as potential tools for self-construction, but we refrain from introducing them until sensorial avenues have been explored by the children, and exhausted.