

Cornerstone News



September 23, 2016

Now Taking Reservations for Silent Journey



If you are wanting a deeper, more coherent understanding of how and why Montessori curriculum works for children, Silent Journey is the most comprehensive parent education event we provide. Silent Journey is an adult education event that we first presented in 2007. It is a two-part program that is experiential and very informative. The positive and grateful feedback we receive from participants is what keeps us motivated to present Silent Journey year after year. We have had a few people call in to pre-register for this year's

event so they can be sure they don't miss it. Space is limited to 20 participants and historically fills up quickly.

On **Friday evening, November 4th**, we will gather at 6:00pm for a few minutes of greetings and snacks before embarking upon the "silent" part of the journey. At the end of the evening, we gather at circle to share impressions of the experience.

On **Saturday morning, November 5th**, we will meet at 8:30am for a continental style breakfast (with lots of coffee of course!) and then proceed to each classroom to be presented a wide variety of lessons from classroom teachers, not getting talked at. You will experience lessons throughout the entire spiral of the curriculum - from the Toddler classroom through the Junior class.

Your questions will be answered and your curiosity satisfied. Why is the pink tower such a powerful material? What does it mean, in reality, to speak of a "spiraling curriculum?" Why is my child so proud of using the "racks and tubes"? Shakespeare in 7th grade!? How do "grammar boxes" work? What do they learn from the "peg board"? Your hands-on work will give you insight in to Montessori materials.

It is a time commitment, we know, but it is worth it. So line up your babysitter now and join us for this fun and enriching event.

The Fall 2016 Issue of *Montessori Life* includes a review of “Follow the Child: The Basics, Misconceptions, and Underlying Lessons of a Montessori Education” by Junior Teacher and Admissions Director Rob Keys. The review was written by Dane Peters, grandfather of Harper (LEI)! The book is available in the office and at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). If you decide to purchase a copy through Amazon, enter the Amazon site through the link at the bottom of Cornerstone’s home page. Cornerstone gets a percentage of everything you ordered.

Parents Learning and Loving Montessori Education

By Dane L. Peters



FOLLOW THE CHILD: THE BASICS, MISCONCEPTIONS, AND UNDERLYING LESSONS OF A MONTESSORI EDUCATION

By Rob Keys

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

Paperback, \$7.95

“Follow the child” is a beautiful concept, and now it is the title of an excellent book about Montessori education. Written by Rob Keys, who has 30 years of experience in Montessori teacher education and school admissions, it is a book well suited for parents looking for the best learning environment for their child, as well as for parents who are struggling with keeping their child in a Montessori school beyond kindergarten or Lower Elementary.

When I first began my journey in Montessori education, I was told to read *Montessori Today: A Comprehensive Approach to Education from Birth to Adulthood*, by Paula Polk Lillard. The book’s basic approach and thoughtful guidance were the perfect introduction to my work as head of a Montessori school, especially since I had no prior Montessori experience. As I immersed myself into this new, beautiful world of education, I quickly realized there would be an ongoing need for parent education on Montessori and the Montessori method. While the Lillard book was comprehensive, I knew that parents might not have the time or inclination to read it from start to finish. So I wrote an overview of Montessori education for *Independent School* magazine.

Follow the Child falls right in between *Montessori Today* and my article; that is, it is concise, accessible to readers, and, at the same time, provides ample amounts of in-depth Montessori philosophy, practices, history, and understanding. It also presents a thorough and sensitive approach to how Montessori education supports the child over the first three planes of development. This integration of the developmental planes, materials, and the essential aspects of Montessori education, all presented in easy-to-understand language, is what makes the book such a great tool for parent education. Keys captures the essence of a Montessori education, making a convincing argument for why parents should entrust their child to a Montessori school. In a comment he made to me when I interviewed him about the book, he stated, “Montessori schools have long relied on the success of their graduates and word-of-mouth to validate their programs. Results are self-evident in the happiness, well-being, and learning success of the children.”

The book’s cover is beautiful, but there is no imagery inside the book. I feel this was a missed opportunity to show the compelling Montessori materials and classroom environments with children engaged in work. Visual representations of how to follow the child would have done a lot to capture the eloquence and power of Montessori. Similarly, while the author makes references to outside resources, the book does not have a refer-

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ence section. Notes, an index, and a bibliography would have been helpful, both to lend validity to the book’s content and so readers could follow up on items of particular interest.

In the end, educators who are drawn to the dictum “follow the child” will bolster their understanding of how children learn best by reading this book. And we Montessorians would do well to pass *Follow the Child* on to parents and prospective teachers, so they too can further their understanding of the power of a Montessori education.

News from the Parent Volunteer Group (PVG)!



Curriculum nights are coming soon and the PVG (parent volunteer group) is still coordinating meal donations for teachers and parents. Please find

SignUpGenius link below to sign up use [this link](#). There are still lots of opportunities to sign up be sure to look for your class tab at the top of SignUpGenius. Thank you for your support.

The teachers really appreciate it!

Please remember that the first Parent Coffee and Breakfast with Lee Anne is on Tuesday, October 4th after drop off in the school gym. Lee Anne will share information about the

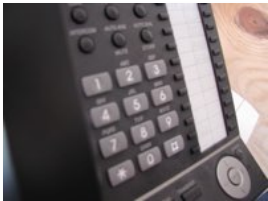
upcoming events (Silent journey, Thanksgiving Feast, Classroom Parent observations etc). The PVG will talk about upcoming events, Room Parents, volunteer opportunities, Cornerstone Family Connections and more. We hope you can join us, even if you only have a few minutes in the morning.

Lower Elementary Arrivals



Let it be known, throughout the land, that Lower Elementary students are now okay to get out of their cars on their own at Arrivals! So it shall be written, so it shall be done. As always, teachers need to be out at arrivals, and your car must be passed the flagpole. Thank you!

Conference Sign-ups



Parent Conference Sign-ups will begin on Monday, October 3rd, starting at 7:15am. Please call the office (603-772-4349) to set up a time. Conferences are on Friday, October 14th.

Faculty & Staff Email

CH@cornerstoneschool.org
TH1@cornerstoneschool.org
TH2@cornerstoneschool.org
P1@cornerstoneschool.org
P2@cornerstoneschool.org
P3@cornerstoneschool.org
art@cornerstoneschool.org

LE1@cornerstoneschool.org
LE2@cornerstoneschool.org
UE1@cornerstoneschool.org
UE2@cornerstoneschool.org
JR@cornerstoneschool.org
newsletter@cornerstoneschool.org
pambloom@cornerstoneschool.org

roanne@cornerstoneschool.org
larobertson@cornerstoneschool.org
sjduffy@cornerstoneschool.org
spanish@cornerstoneschool.org
music@cornerstoneschool.org
admissions@cornerstoneschool.org
sallie@cornerstoneschool.org

www.cornerstoneschool.org

Calendar, classroom news, newsletter archives

Called to a Lesson (a regular feature explaining key components and concepts of a Montessori education)



Technology and Montessori. One of the many September tasks that Junior teachers complete each Fall is the

review and editing of their Technology Policy. That it must be done on an annual basis at least, is a reflection of diligence towards best practices, but also a testament to how quickly devices and their use evolve in a staggeringly short breath of time. While the issue is prevalent when dealing with young adolescents, it is nonetheless a discussion at every age level, or has been at some point.

Montessori professionals, taking every aspect of the prepared environment into consideration, have long debated the use of technology in the classroom (in the early 70's, arguments over the use of typewriters were not uncommon). Dr. Montessori died in 1952, leaving her eponymous pedagogy without specific direction on the multitude and magnitude of technological tools that the following 65 years made available. How would Dr. Montessori have felt about the internet? Video cameras streaming from locations all over the world? Google searches that deliver 2.5 million "hits" in .25 seconds? Fortunately, there are foundational concepts in Montessori that allow us to extrapolate a few principles to guide our work.

First and of course most importantly, it is to follow the child keeping mind his or her

developmental stage. The three-year old child interacting with the three-dimensional pink tower material or manipulating the binomial cube, is gaining insight and making connections that are personal and more meaningful. Learning through their hands, the experience is "owned" by the child. From birth to six-years

"Everything that concerns education assumes today an importance of a general kind, and must represent a protection and a practical aid to the development of man that is to say it must aim at improving the individual in order to improve society."

Maria Montessori

old education is nearly all sensorial. At this young age he or she learns to discriminate between shape and size, form and dimension through the senses. Observing a Primary child repeating the knobbed cylinder work, perfecting the movement, refining the decisions, it is clear that the auto-education of which Dr. Montessori spoke, is the deep reality of these early years.

Seen in this light, it is easy to make a determination as to the appropriateness of a screen for the child in the First Plane of Development. It is not. **Next Issue: Technology and the Second Plane of Development.**



Rob Keys directs micro-economies in the Junior Class and Cornerstone Admissions. He is the author of "Follow the Child", available in the office and at Amazon.com.

www.cornerstoneschool.org

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The Photo Album

Back to School Picnic

