

## The Prepared Environment

Montessori education is based upon scientific observation and assessment of the child in a prepared environment. This prepared environment we speak of holds the key to engagement for children. Inviting materials call to the child's sense of order and curiosity. This is the child's place to prepare for life! "In such an environment, the child proves to be something quite different from a creature who enjoys wasting time and wants to do nothing but play. He becomes an individual who works very hard, who is very observant, who is not destructive. He is incredibly meticulous (much more so than we adults are); he performs tasks scrupulously; he is capable of great concentration; he is able to control the movements of his body; and he is a great lover of silence....All this is the result of an interchange between the child and his surroundings, between the child and his work." M.M. Education and Peace, p. 77.

Think about how different this is from the traditional thought that is centered around the adult in the room. In a Montessori classroom, the teacher is humbled every day by not interfering or seeking gratification from the child. As a matter of fact it is the complete opposite...our goal is for the child to gain confidence and joy through their own discoveries-not to please the adult in the room. The adult is the link and methodically prepares each area of the classroom in order to attain the above mentioned attributes. Can you think of ways at home you can guide your child to become more independent and joyful through their own work? How can you prepare the environment at home to stimulate and engage your child?