

Progress Reports: What Parents Need to Know

Progress reports **reflect a child's growth over time**. Progress reports record and assess each student's academic and social development, as well as clarify goals. It is NOT a traditional "report card". It is more.

The progress report is essentially a guide for both parents and teachers to come together, get on the same page, and see how your child is doing (what their interests are, where they are thriving, etc.). It contains a list of descriptors that demonstrate a student's academic behaviors. The skills in the continuum increase in difficulty or demand as they move through developmental levels. As the student masters the majority of skills on a given list, he or she progresses naturally through levels that are contained within the guide.

Montessori teachers closely monitor this progress through record keeping and observation. Because they work with each child for several years, they get to know their students' strengths and weaknesses, interests and personalities extremely well. Montessori teachers often use the children's interests to enrich the curriculum and provide alternate avenues for accomplishments and success.

While the teacher strives to constantly observe and assess the progress of the children and keep written records for each child, this information is to help the teacher and the parents support the children in their developmental work of self-evaluation and personal responsibility. *Assessing progress through traditional tests and reporting progress through the assignment of grades and class rankings are foreign to the Montessori way of working and defeat the many careful aids to child development.*

In contrast to traditional education in which the teacher assesses and evaluates progress and informs the children and their parents of the result, our children are taught how to evaluate their own efforts and are expected to be accountable for making their best effort at any task they undertake. The children are given specific aids and tools for responsibility, including a Personal Work Journal in which they record how they spend each minute of the school day and in which they record the lessons they have received and the activities from which they can choose, and periodic individual conferences with their teachers to review work and progress.

The Full Cycle refers to the period of time – typically three to four years – needed in order to complete the developmental and intellectual work of the Lower Elementary or the Upper Elementary. The cycle includes a year of being the newest and youngest children who receive help from classmates, a year of being the oldest and most experienced children who provide the model and give the most help to others, and a year or two in the middle, sometimes giving and sometimes receiving help. It is vital to

the development of both the individual children and the classroom community that each child is allowed to complete the full cycle in his or her respective communities.

You may also note that between levels (from 6-9 and 9-12) your child may not move as quickly or the demands may increase, slowing his or her movement through the continuum levels. This is expected as children move beyond learning to read and write to incorporating those skills more fully into all of their academic work.

Information compiled through various sources:

montessoritraining.blogspot.com

montessori.org

ageofmontessori.org

community-montessori.org

ebridgemonessori.com