

A Vibrant Community of Educators!

Joelie Key-Tissot

There are many misconceptions about Montessori education. Rumor has it that Montessori children are allowed to run free and without any structure or discipline. But Munir Shivji, director of Innovative Montessori Schools, says, "It simply isn't true. They have no 'free' time at all."

Munir explains that the Innovative Montessori School is a vibrant community of educators and families, agreeing with Dr. Maria Montessori's methodology and philosophy. For them, every child is born to be a learner. The full potential of each child is recognized only through an ordered, planned, prepared, challenged and nurtured environment that is physical, educational, intellectual and social.

"Of course, academic excellence is extremely important. But not cramming," asserts Munir. "We want them to develop their natural love of learning. Where their eyes pop open in excitement when they understand why $1+1=2$. Their minds are like sponges. Giving them that solid foundation ensures their enduring appetite for learning. From that point on, they'll be set for life. Even

when it comes to High School or University."

Every teacher is certified. "But not just certified. We look for the best of the best. What makes them different? For us, it's commitment to the students."

Innovative Montessori believes in holistic development. They are very active in extra-curricular activities like drama, art, music, foreign language/culture and gymnastics. This builds confidence and self-esteem as well as academic success.

Innovative Montessori is not a glorified daycare. "We're not just a place for parents to drop off their kids. We want the types of families who get involved by asking why we do certain things or who suggest other ideas of things to do," says Munir. "Parental involvement is the most important thing about our school. We want the children to see the school as an extension of home.



And we want parents to feel that the school is their environment as well. Moms and Dads."

Every teacher in Innovative Montessori School knows every student in the school, their parents and their siblings. Not just the ones in their own classroom. Strong bonds are built through programs like Sunday Funday and school-organized family camping trips.

Munir encourages parents to visit and tour the school, to ask the teachers questions about what they do and why. And bring your children. "We see in each child, the future of society and of our nation. The child in the process of fundamental development has unlimited possibilities and the future rests on our ability to cultivate this potential."

Innovative Montessori School