

Concept of the Montessori childrens's house moki

"Help me to do it myself."

Maria Montessori

The **Montessori childrens's house moki** is a state-approved private kindergarten guided by the principles of Maria Montessori.

Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori (1870 to 1952) was a doctor, a natural scientist, and a progressive educationalist. She committed herself especially to disadvantaged children und opened the first children's house guided by her pedagogical ideas in 1907 in a working-class area of Rome. In her work with children with and without disabilities she strove to create an environment in which all children would feel at ease and could develop into independent personalities. Maria Montessori was concerned with the child's process of self-education and founded the Montessori pedagogy which has the child at its center.

The Montessori pedagogy

The Montessori pedagogy stands out for its direct orientation towards the child and for consequently considering the child's needs. The guiding principle "Help me to do it myself" contains the most important basic idea of the educational method. Maria Montessori was convinced that adults intervene too often and too quickly into the developmental path of the child. The child should not just do anything, but it will – in a self-motivated way – find out, experience and learn specific things at specific times. Following Maria Montessori, these phases are called sensitive periods. Every child grows with its experiences, becomes independent and thrives for self-realisation. In the community with other children the child experiences to help others and to accept help from others. In this way the child is stimulated to engage in new undertakings. Within the group, the child is free to do what it chooses.

The Montessori material

For the child to be able to follow its interests and satisfy its needs, Maria Montessori developed special material. The Montessori material allows the child to exercise daily activities. The material also serves to perceive mathematics through the senses touching shapes and feeling quantities. Using other empirical material, the children apprehend geographical topics or learn to read. The objective always is to help the child to organise and structure the impressions it has received by the outside and has not yet assimilated. The material is a key to the world and therefore represents a very important element of the Montessori pedagogy.

The prepared environment

The prepared environment consists of the rooms how they were planned by Maria Montessori. The rooms are designed in a way that the children feel at ease, help to decorate, and look after plants and animals. All material is available at all times, it has a defined place in the room, and has to be brought back after use.

The Montessori teachers are also part of the prepared environment. They mainly observe and help. They accompany the development of the child, offer help, and leave the child to itself, when it has found its way.

Free work – free play

If the prerequisites mentioned above are met, the child is free to choose what it would like to do in the kindergarten: play, observe or work with the Montessori material. In groups, it is best to have children of at least three age groups working together. In a mixed-aged group, the child does not have to comply with a certain norm. Therefore rivalry and pressure are minimised.

The moki children's house

In the **moki**, children aged three to seven years – with and without disabilities – spend a few hours a day together.

The **moki** is state approved. It differs from state institutions in the pedagogy and in the longer period of time the children spend at the children's house. For the child to achieve the goals of the Montessori pedagogy in its own pace, it needs sufficient time. Therefore, the child has to attend the children's house until it starts school. The children come to the children's house on at least five mornings per week. In the first year, it is possible to come to the children's house on either three or four mornings a week. The cost is reduced accordingly; however, the cost of three mornings equals the cost of four mornings at the children's house. The last two years at the children's house form part of the compulsory school attendance.

Session times

Monday to Friday:	7.30 – 14.30
Arrival:	between 7.30 and 8.30
Departure without lunch:	between 12.00 and 12.30
Departure with lunch:	between 14.00 and 14.30
Afternoon sessions:	until 17.30
Departure:	between 17.00 and 17.30
Holidays:	We observe the holidays of the canton of Basel-Stadt

The day in the moki

The morning starts with free work, the free play, lasting until 11 o'clock. During this time, the children can also have a little snack. The children spend the remainder of the morning together. They sing, play, talk, listen or learn. We also offer group activities and physical exercise. Whenever the children feel the need, they can withdraw from the activities or rest.

Meals

The **moki** offers lunch. The children eat all together. This benefits children with or without siblings. The children help to prepare the meal, to set the table, and to clear up after having eaten together. After lunch, the children can rest, play quiet games or enjoy themselves in the garden.

The possibility of having lunch in the kindergarten relieves the parents who can pursue their duties at work or have this time at their disposal. The parents can then focus on their child when it comes home from the children's house.

Afternoon care

On two afternoons a week we offer different activities. On one afternoon, the children go on an excursion or go to the woods. The children in the last two years of kindergarten go to the woods on one afternoon every week, regardless of the weather. The younger children also go on an outside activity, but follow their own program. The other afternoon will be left for free activities.

Parents and teachers

In the Montessori pedagogy, the cooperation between the parents and the teachers is important. Parent-teacher conferences, parent's evenings, celebrations, and other activities support the cooperation.

The leading team

The Montessori teachers Simone Panosetti and Veronika Wipfli-Müller jointly head the **moki**.

Simone Panosetti, Montessori teacher

Simone Panosetti (*1970) is a trained nursery teacher and PEKiP group leader. Since 2000 she worked as a stand-by, since 2003 she works as a Montessori teacher in the **moki**. She too has successfully completed a diploma course in Montessori pedagogy.

Simone Panosetti is married and has two adult Children. She lives in Riehen.

Veronika Wipfli-Müller, Montessori teacher

Veronika Wipfli-Müller (*1955) is a qualified social pedagogue. As co-founder of the play group "St. Johann", she headed one of the groups for two years. After getting her diploma as Montessori teacher, she founded the **moki** in 1990 and merged it with the kindergarten of the Christoph Merian Foundation in 1993. She also wrote the new concept which underlies the work at the **moki** since 2003. Veronika Wipfli-Müller has three adult children and lives in Muttenz.

Owners of the children's house moki

Since 1st August 2014, the owners of the Montessori children's house **moki** are the members of the leading team, Nadja Häring, Simone Panosetti, and Veronika Wipfli-Müller. They work in general partnership.

Support association of the Montessori children's house moki

The support association of the Montessori children's house **moki** uses its activities to financially support the children's house.

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