

# The Shocking Truth about **Montessori Teachers**



# How Our Teachers Are Different

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When I opened our school in 1975, I wanted to create something that was different. I knew that the school would only survive if we recruited and retained EXCELLENT teachers.

I also developed a passion for practicing authentic Montessori. When our school became an accredited Montessori school - one of the very few within hundreds of miles

- I started to receive inquiries from other people who wanted to work in a real Montessori program.

The result? I am lucky to work with the most talented early childhood staff in the region. I develop long term relationships with these highly trained teachers because we share a common passion for excellence.

The teachers we hire share the same characteristics:

- They are experts - bona fide experts - in child development: AMI training is a one- year rigorous training that is demanding and intense. Teachers in training attend lectures and practice teaching sessions 7 hours a day, 5 days a week for 9 months. They are then examined by an international group of teacher-trainers before being granted a diploma.

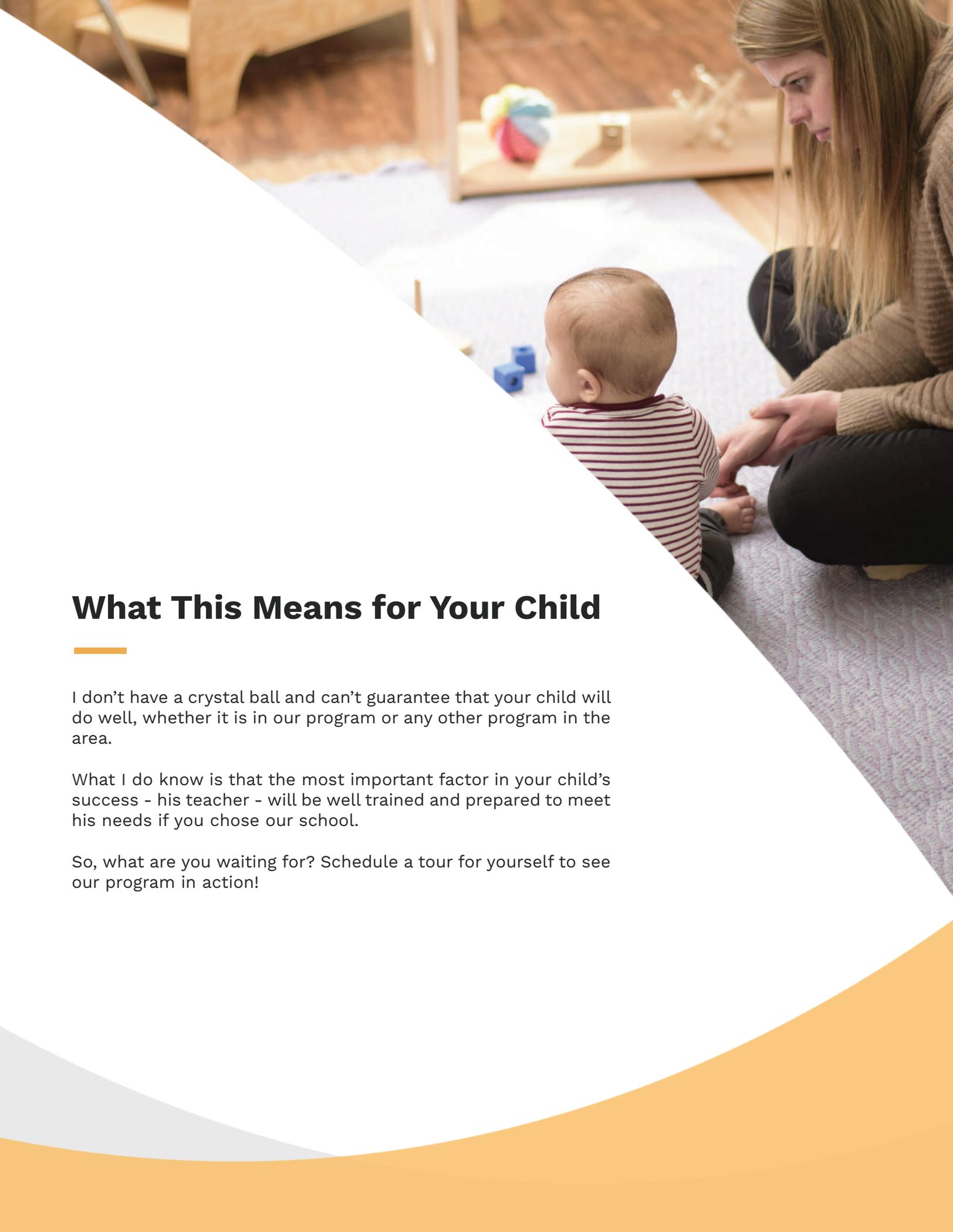
- They respect your child's individuality: In Montessori teaching, the teacher is seen as a guide. She is trained to observe your child and introduce her to developmentally appropriate materials. She knows the scope and breadth of the Montessori curriculum and presents the right lessons to your child at the right time. She will not move your child on to the next concept until she is ready to move on.

- They are patient: They do not praise, reward, punish or point out mistakes. Rather, mistakes are viewed as "learning opportunities". If your child continues to make errors, she will re-present that lesson with a special emphasis on the parts he doesn't understand.

- They create inspiring classroom environments: Our teachers ensure the full complement of Montessori materials in the classroom supports the diverse learning going on in the class.

The materials must be spotlessly clean and in good repair. That means pencils are sharpened, no pieces to an activity are missing, sponges are softened and paper is present to accompany a particular activity. It means that fresh flowers are available for arranging and that all of the decimal math materials are where they need to be.

The Montessori environment must be attractive and prepared for use so that your child has everything he needs when he is ready to learn.



## What This Means for Your Child

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I don't have a crystal ball and can't guarantee that your child will do well, whether it is in our program or any other program in the area.

What I do know is that the most important factor in your child's success - his teacher - will be well trained and prepared to meet his needs if you chose our school.

So, what are you waiting for? Schedule a tour for yourself to see our program in action!

I can't tell you how many times I have heard this story: A parent chooses a preschool program - Montessori or otherwise - and the child begins instruction. Things start out fine but slowly the parent realizes that her child is not learning, not growing, not thriving in this environment.

Don't think that it can't happen to you. Poof! Just like that, your child's first educational experience goes down the tubes.

Rest assured, however - it doesn't have to be this way!

## The One Factor That Makes All the Difference

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It's the teacher.

Next to you, your child's first teacher will have the greatest impact on his overall development. Nine times out of ten, the reason a child has a negative experience in preschool is directly related to the teacher's talent, education and experience.

A good teacher will inspire him to explore, challenge him when needed, and instill a love for learning. She will compliment the work that you do at home as a parent.

## Why Finding a Good Teacher is Hard

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Unfortunately, most early childhood programs lack an experienced and highly educated teaching staff. The only educational requirement to be a preschool teacher in the state of California is 12 Early Childhood Education units - just 4 classes at a community college.

In addition, many preschool teachers don't stay on the job for very long. The minimal educational requirements and low salaries often lead to high turnover. Well-intentioned people with potential to be great teachers often use the job as a temporary position while they work towards something more permanent.

And don't let the name "Montessori" fool you, either. It isn't a trademarked term, so anyone can open up a program and claim to be a Montessori school. Most Montessori schools don't have teachers who are any more qualified than the average preschool.

