The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. The shapes are primarily triangles and polygons, creating a dynamic, layered effect. The overall composition is clean and modern, with the text centered on a white background.

Building a Bridge: Montessori in Your Home

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What do we mean by Montessori at home?

- ▶ Reinforcement?
- ▶ Enrichment?
- ▶ Homework?
- ▶ A way of living?
- ▶ Decor?
- ▶ Organization?

Today, we will discuss ways to incorporate Montessori in all of these ways

Why Montessori at Home, Too?

- ▶ Consistency
- ▶ Routine
- ▶ Demonstrating the important link between home and school
- ▶ Communicates to the child that school is important
- ▶ Reaffirms the authority and value of your child's teacher
- ▶ Increases your child's confidence and comfortability at school
- ▶ It makes parenting easier
- ▶ Because Dr. Montessori says so 😊:

“At this stage [0-6] the child is partly at home, partly in school. The plane of education should take both the situations into consideration.”

-Dr. Montessori, The Places of Development

Understand and Strive to Meet the Goals of Montessori

- ▶ Primary Goals: Order, Concentration, Coordination, and Independence (OCCI)
- ▶ Order: Routine, Organization, Process, Sequence
- ▶ Concentration: Focus, Problem Solving, Experimentation. Concentration is not the same as entertainment
- ▶ Coordination: Fine Motor, Gross Motor, Timing, Effort
- ▶ Independence: Confidence, Completion, Assistance
- ▶ Secondary Goals: Self-explorations, Discovery, Self-discipline, Peace, Exploration and Appreciation of Nature, Community Service, Beauty

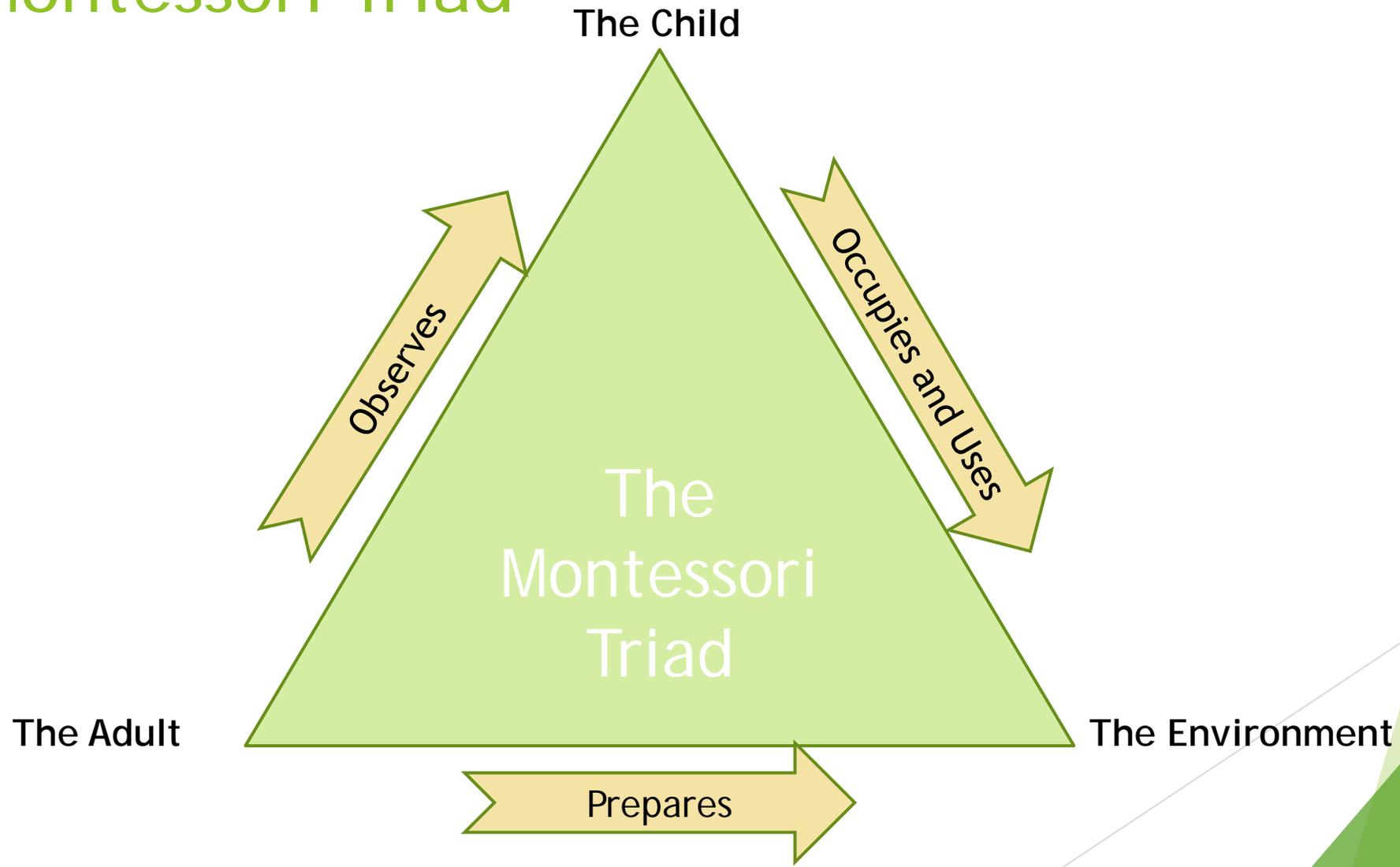
Always Ask: Does this support OCCI??

So where does one start with Montessori at home?

- ▶ Decide how "far" you want to go? Do you want to invest in furniture and additional materials? Or do you just want to work within the framework of what is available in your home?



Creating Your Child's Living Space: The Montessori Triad



Creating Your Child's Living Space

- ▶ Set aside an area specifically for your child(ren). Children should have open access and free reign in this area
- ▶ Prepare the environment. Be sure all safety precautions are taken so the child can be free in his space.
- ▶ Crawl around and experience your home from your child's point of view
- ▶ Choose a limited number of activities that are a mixture of toys, art, and other items your child enjoys
- ▶ Display activities at the child's level that is easily visible to the child. Provide all items for child to complete activity independently. Rotate monthly, or as often as your child needs. The child **MUST** be involved in this process
- ▶ Take away and store all unnecessary items, game boxes, instruction sheets, etc.
- ▶ For puzzles, blocks, etc., provide pictures of finished item
- ▶ You will have to "give a lesson" to your child with new items

Once the environment is prepared, this is your child's space.
It becomes the child's responsibility.

- ▶ Encourage your child to take care of his or her space. She is responsible for keeping the area tidying
- ▶ Provide a plant or two for the child to care for
- ▶ Provide a dust pan, a table crumber (especially if he or she eats in his or her play space), and a small broom or sweeper



Montessori for the Rest of the Home

- ▶ Same rules apply! Adults always are the models!
- ▶ While the rest of the home is not solely the domain of the child, we can make it easy for the child to navigate
 - ▶ Make low level cabinets child proof. Instead of locking everything up, place dangerous items in higher cabinets, leaving items your child can explore at his reach
 - ▶ Make your child's necessities reachable. Provide stools, if necessary. This would include toothbrushes, toothpaste, clothing, shoes, etc.
- ▶ All items have a place. When not in use all items should be returned to that place
- ▶ Set limits. Children crave order and boundaries. Make them a routine in your house. Allow as much freedom as possible within those limits!
- ▶ Expect independence, self control, and self discipline

Involve Your Children

- ▶ Expect that your children will want to be with you. Involve them in what you are doing by providing small, broken down tasks to aid what you are working on. For example, please bring me 5 potatoes
- ▶ Give your child regular chores. Children are capable of much more than adults think they are!
- ▶ To Compensate for Chores or Not to Compensate??

Age-Appropriate Chores for Children



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Ages 2-3

- Put toys in toy box
- Stack books on shelf
- Place dirty clothes in laundry hamper
- Throw trash away
- Carry firewood
- Fold washcloths
- Set the table
- Fetch diapers & wipes
- Dust baseboards

Ages 4-5

- Feed pets
- Wipe up spills
- Put away toys
- Make the bed
- Straighten bedroom
- Water houseplants
- Sort clean silverware
- Prepare simple snacks
- Use hand-held vacuum
- Clear kitchen table
- Dry and put away dishes
- Disinfect doorknobs

Ages 6-7

- Gather trash
- Fold towels
- Dust mop floors
- Empty dishwasher
- Match clean socks
- Weed garden
- Rake leaves
- Peel potatoes or carrots
- Make salad
- Replace toilet paper roll

Ages 8-9

- Load dishwasher
- Change light bulbs
- Wash laundry
- Hang/fold clean clothes
- Dust furniture
- Spray off patio
- Put groceries away
- Scramble eggs
- Bake cookies
- Walk dogs
- Sweep porches
- Wipe off table

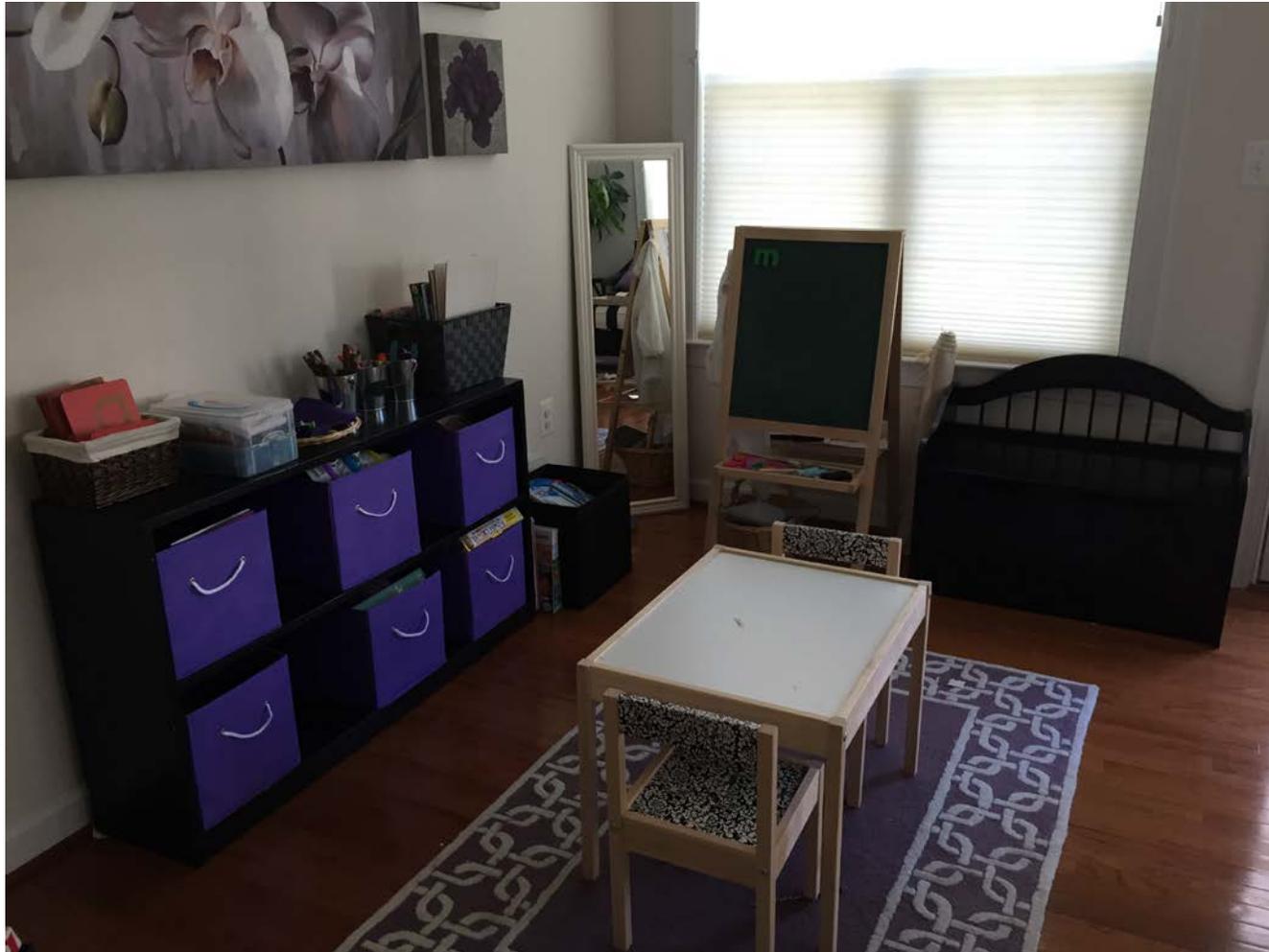
Ages 10-11

- Clean bathrooms
- Vacuum rugs
- Clean countertops
- Deep clean kitchen
- Prepare simple meal
- Mow lawn
- Bring in mail
- Do simple mending (hems, buttons, etc.)
- Sweep out garage

Ages 12 and up

- Mop floors
- Change overhead lights
- Wash/ vacuum car
- Trim hedges
- Paint walls
- Shop for groceries w/list
- Cook complete dinner
- Bake bread or cake
- Do simple home repairs
- Wash windows
- Iron clothes
- Watch younger siblings

Try it out by starting with applying Montessori to what you have



Observe and adjust



Keep Observing and Adjusting...



Needs Will Change As Your Family and Child Grows, But Process Remains the Same



- ▶ Don't get too attached to a certain arrangement
- ▶ Involve your child in choosing which "work" to place on shelves
- ▶ Work gets put away, before a new work comes out
- ▶ Utilize a defined work space: table or rug (towel, pillowcase, or small blanket)
- ▶ Use toys, art, building blocks, etc. that likely wouldn't be at school. Make sure sets are complete
- ▶ Support the child's craving for reality
- ▶ Include lots of crayons, pencils, markers, a pair of scissors, glue stick, paper, etc. Have it all readily available
- ▶ Focus on process, not product

Montessori and Discipline

- ▶ Set ground rules
- ▶ Focus on encouragement, not praise
- ▶ Do not make it personal. Keep it neutral and factual
- ▶ Avoid punishments and rewards
- ▶ Acknowledging feelings
- ▶ Encourage self-discipline
- ▶ Embrace natural consequences



Homework? Please! No!...How to Reinforce Learning

- ▶ Be with your child. Children, more than anything, want to be WITH their parents. Enjoy it now!
- ▶ Feel free to set limits that make the time enjoyable for you too
- ▶ Use car time to find out what your child is interested in, curious about etc. Turn off devices and get chatting!
- ▶ Don't ask questions! Instead, try sharing information about your life and this will naturally encourage your child to open up and reveal his or her interests
- ▶ Play with your child, especially the games that aren't appropriate for school



"Play is the work of the child" —Dr. Maria Montessori

Working with your child will have a much larger and longer lasting impact

Dos	Supports
Read, read and read some more! Even if your child is reading alone, continue to read to him or her at a slightly higher level. Discuss what you read	Language Development, comprehension, sequencing, etc.
Take advantage of our museums	Planning, organization, observation, reporting
Play outside	Coordination, love of Nature, gross motor skills
Go out for dinner, try different cuisines, discuss the region or country before or after	Geography and culture, grace and courtesy, independence
Bake or cook something new	Mathematical thinking, fine motor skills
Do an experiment	Scientific method, critical thinking
Sort laundry	Color identification and discrimination

Can we do Montessori at home AND embrace technology?

- ▶ Absolutely! But control technology, don't let it control you!
- ▶ Children are curious about technology and do need to learn how to operate technology to be active in today's world
- ▶ Technology can be embraced in a Montessori way
 - ▶ Use technology to engage, not to babysit. Always be present and involved with your child's technology use
 - ▶ Again, avoid "Montessori" technology (apps, games, etc.) - may be confusing child, more so than reinforcing
 - ▶ Limit time, especially passive time.
 - ▶ Encourage active technology: skype with relatives, family dance party with PlayStation, research a topic of interest
 - ▶ No screen time AT LEAST one hour before bed!! And absolutely no screens in the bedroom!

How Do I Know If I am Doing it Right?

- ▶ Like your child's work, process is more important than the product
- ▶ You will run into contradictions. Allowing freedom, but setting limits. Encouraging independence and creativity, but having rules, duties, and requirements.
- ▶ Your family will be engaged and content (a good portion of the time, not always!)
- ▶ You can always go back to observation and tweak. You may not be sure something is right, but you will definitely know when something isn't right or not working!

Resources for Montessori

- ▶ For Small Hands, a subsidiary of Montessori services, wonderful for child sized items - packaged completely and nicely, but much more affordable options
- ▶ Dollar Stores
- ▶ Ikea
- ▶ Consignment shops, sales, etc.
- ▶ Amazon
- ▶ Ideas: Pinterest, Montessori blogs, etc.

Further Reading

- ▶ *Montessori: A Modern Approach* by Paula Polk Lillard
- ▶ *Montessori From the Start: The Child at Home from Birth to Age 3* by Lynn Lillard Jessen and Paula Polk Lillard
- ▶ *Child's Play: Montessori Games and Activities for Your Baby and Toddler* by Maja Pitamic
- ▶ *Teach Me to Do It Myself* by Maja Pitamic
- ▶ *How to Raise an Adult* by Julie Lythcott-Haines
- ▶ NAMTA (North American Montessori Teachers' Association: Books, Videos, etc.
 - ▶ *In a Montessori Home*
 - ▶ *At Home with Montessori*
 - ▶ *Edison's Day (0-3)*
- ▶ Blogs: The Montessori Notebook, Living Montessori Now, MariaMontessori.com (theory and history). Tread lightly on the internet!