

Does it Work? What the Research Says

A growing body of research supports the effectiveness of Montessori education over a range of outcomes, including school readiness, academic achievement, executive function skills, and more.

Executive Functions: Children in Montessori classrooms have shown strengths in executive function skills, including self-regulation, working memory, planning, and inhibitory control, especially with high fidelity implementation. Executive function strengths were associated with academic achievement. Executive function skills predict positive life-long outcomes such as academic achievement, income potential, and marital satisfaction.^{1, 2, 14, 15, 16, 3}

Social Development: Children in Montessori classrooms have shown better social problem solving ability, a stronger sense of community and social justice, and more positive perceptions of classmates, and they used more positive social problem-solving strategies.^{4, 14, 15}

General Academic Achievement: Children in Montessori classrooms have shown higher levels of self-regulation, which was associated with academic success. Montessori students have also shown higher levels of intrinsic motivation and time on academic tasks.^{3, 4, 5}

Language: Children in Montessori classrooms have shown strengths in phonological decoding, letter-word identification, reading assessments, sentence structure, and writing creativity^{14, 16, 16, 6, 7, 8, 9}

Mathematics: Children in Montessori classrooms have shown higher scores in applied problem solving, understanding of math concepts, and standardized test scores.^{14, 15, 16, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12}

Science: In one study, children in a public Montessori program from ages 3 to 11 achieved significantly higher science standardized test scores in high school.¹⁰

School Readiness: While the Montessori approach recognizes that learning begins at birth, well before conventional schooling starts, children in Montessori preschool and kindergarten classrooms have shown strengths in traditional “school readiness” measures such as phonological decoding, letter-word identification, and math skills.^{13, 14, 15, 16}

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- ¹⁵ Lillard, A.S., "Preschool Children's Development in Classic Montessori, Supplemented Montessori, and Conventional Programs," *Journal of School Psychology* 50:379-401 (June 2012).
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