Now that the first two months of school are behind us, we will continue to diligently implement the "golden rule" for a well-functioning Montessori classroom by fostering its three elements:

1. Respect of Self,
2. Respect of Others,

In order to help young children integrate this golden rule, we rely heavily on adults modeling respectful behaviors through our attitudes, actions, and words; we offer a predictable routine as well as a prepared classroom environment that is orderly, clean, and appealing. Additionally, we strive at creating a sense of belonging and significance within our community through group gatherings where various “grace and courtesy” lessons are introduced and role-played, where problems are expressed without judgment and helpful solutions are offered. Because children learn at their own pace and differently from one another depending on their individual style, we have found that a blend of these elements meets the need of everyone in the group.

One beautiful aspect of the Montessori method is that this golden rule is often already directly or indirectly embedded within a large number of procedures or activities in the classroom. Let’s take for example, the ritual of washing one’s plate or cup after eating a snack. To those who are not familiar with the value of a Montessori education, this may come to them as a trivial detail, some may consider it cute while others may not see an academic value to it. But to those familiar with Montessori’s long term educational outcomes, they know that when a child is involved in such an activity many valuable life skills and for his future are taking root.

Let’s look at how an activity serves all of the three elements of this golden rule. After snack, children take turns using the dishwashing area where they place their dishes into soapy water, scrub their dishes with a brush, rinse them, dry them, and put them away neatly in the clean dish bin for later sanitation. In busy times a short line of patient children is often seen formed. The dishwashing activity encourages respect of self as it fosters autonomy. It is a logical continuation for those who learned how to tend to their basic need of being fed, and it involves wearing an apron to protect one’s clothing. Dishwashing involves respect of others in the act of waiting one’s turn politely and making sure once the dishwashing stand is used, it is made ready (looking like new) for the next person. By scrubbing the dishes, rinsing them, wiping the spills, folding the apron etc. the child is also actively involved in respect for the environment and serving the classroom community as a whole.

Isn’t this a wonderful way to teach our children that no matter how small they are, their actions have an impact on themselves, others, and their environment?
Many thanks to the following parent volunteers who helped make our Halloween class party memorable: Lewis’ mom, Lorenzo’s mom, Bradley’s mom, Atlas’ mom, Yiyi’s mom and Oliver’s mom.

- We would like to thank Matias’ family for offering the classroom snack and flowers this week.
- Thank you to Emmit’s mom for donating 2 pots of herbs for our classroom’s earth boxes.
Thank you to everyone who made it out for our Halloween parade and party. And a special thank you to Camilo’s grandma, Lisa (Olive’s mom), Gisselle (Zoe’s mom), Salina (Colton’s mom), Stephanie (Skyler’s mom), Erin (Lily’s mom), Niralio (Suri’s mom), Jasbir (Arya’s mom) and Joe (Madison’s dad) for volunteering in the classroom and to Bethany for material making! We had a fun day full of excitement.

* Thank you to Zoe for the snack contribution and lovely flowers this week!

* And a huge thank you to all the families that provided delicious Indian food for us to try last week during our class celebration of Diwali on Wednesday. We had a fun day creating diya lamps, coloring rangoli patterns and learning about how Diwali is celebrated.
Thank you to the Kapinos for providing community snack and the donation of flowers for our classroom.