

5

top ideas to  
get you started

THE FMS LEARNING FROM HOME STARTER PACK FOR  
Under 3 (Birth - 3 years)



Forestville  
**MONTESSORI** School  
*Thriving beyond...*

COVID-19 sure has us all pivoting and flipping our thinking. When it comes to learning, we are focused on providing you with assistance that is practical, not overwhelming and as aligned as possible with our Montessori philosophy. As we've been creating these booklets, we've also been commenting on how this disruption is actually the kind of parent education we've been planning to provide as part of our strategic plan. Little did we know we'd be turning it around in under one week! A gift pack especially for you!

Welcome to the FMS LEARNING FROM HOME STARTER PACKS. We have prepared a different pack for all of our programs:

Under 3 (Birth-3 Years)  
Pre-Primary (3-6 Years)  
Lower Primary (6-9 Years)  
Upper Primary (9-12 Years)

We hope that these packs along with the *Learning from home - Parent Handbook* which you can download from our website, are helpful.

Staff continue to design learning activities for the next phase of the FMS Learning from Home series. So watch this space. In the meantime, until our GOOGLE platform is ready, where students will be able to upload work, feel free to send us images and stories we can share of your children's Learning from Home experiences. Transparent Classroom also continues to be a source of information for you.

We're here for you. Call, email, keep in touch on social media. Help us to help you by staying connected.

*"Character education cannot be taught. It comes from experience and not from explanation."*

*Maria Montessori*

Denice Scala  
Principal

# 1 Create a working space in a calm area of the house

Montessori classrooms are prepared environments that take the child's needs and abilities into account.

If the environment is prepared with your child having access to the things that they need then your home will begin to mirror the FMS toddler environment. The prepared environment is intentionally set up to support children's independence, movement and concentration.

Most of the things needed you will probably have in your home already. Be creative with what you have, you may just have to move some things around to create a beautiful toddler space.



# 1 Create a working space in a calm area of the house



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Think of these four things when preparing your home for your child:

- Items that the child uses need to be their size and fit for purpose so that they can achieve the desired task.
- Every item in its place. Respecting a child's need for order requires us to create a defined place for items and activities in our homes. Over time children will learn to return items from where they were found.
- Items that you want them to use are displayed at their eye level and they are able to access them independently. Anything that is not a choice should be put out of reach.
- Order and simplicity creates beauty and invites simple choices. If there is less choice than your child will engage with the items for longer periods.



# 1 Create a working space in a calm area of the house

Walk around your home and begin to discuss with your child that we are going to set up some things together for our home environment that they have at their school.

- Set up an area for your child to work: child size table and chair, large mat area.
- Set up a food area for your child's independent use.
  - Suggestions for breakfast – small container of cereal already measured out. Bowl and spoon out and ready on shelf, small jug of milk ready in fridge.
  - Suggestions for snack: You may also have 2 pieces of fruit and some crackers with a chopping board, apple cutter, butter knife, plate, fork that your child can use for snack throughout the day.
  - Water source: Have a jug with water available and a small cup so that your child can drink when they want to throughout the day.

- Create a quiet space such as a reading corner with access to books, pillows, a small comfortable chair.
- Create an art area that has paper, pencils, art supplies, scissors and glue available.
- Create a cleanup area that has a sponge, drying cloth/face washer or paper towels already torn off the roll, small dustpan and brush so that your child can help care for their home and keep it clean. Show them where to put the dirty cloths.
- Select 4 - 5 activities to put on a shelf as their work choices. Encourage choosing one item at a time and help them to pack away before choosing another item. Rotate these every 2-3 days or as interest fades.

# 2 The importance of routine

Children respond well to knowing how their day will unfold by the sequence of activities remaining as consistent as possible. The adult can set the broad daily routine and then let the child work independently within that framework.

You will begin to see your child work within the freedoms and limits of this broad framework as they will know what to expect and will feel comfortable to engage independently if their routine remains consistent.

When introducing the routine include your child in the discussion so that they feel a part of the decisions that are being made and include simple choices such as “do you want to choose free play from the shelf or we can go outside?”

## A suggested daily routine:

Early morning	Breakfast – child participates in choosing what they want, and helps pour milk from small jug into bowl. Child supports the pack up of breakfast. *Wiping spills with a sponge.
	Self care – brush teeth, get dressed, make bed.
	Free play - choice from shelf work – music with free dancing (ribbons and scarf)
Mid morning	Snack – child chooses from snack area and prepares at table, pack away dishes, clean table.
	Movement activity – outside in the yard, yoga, walk around the neighbourhood,
	Free play – choice from shelf work – art, construction, painting, collage using leaves found outside
Lunchtime	Food Prep and Lunch with the child. Children can set the table, pour a drink and pack up.
	An unfamiliar genre of world music chosen during lunch time.
	Pack away dishes and clean the table.
Mid afternoon	Naptime or quiet time activities. *Allow children to sleep as long as they need.
	Free Play – shelf work, gardening, outside activity. Window Washing. Playdough
	Snack – child chooses from snack area and prepares at table, pack away dishes, clean table.
Dinner	Dinner – child sets table for family members, pours water for each member of the family.
	Helps to clear table.
Evening	Bath and Bedtime sequence.
	Read bedtime story and goodnight kiss.

\* Please modify this sample routine to fit in with your family life.

# 3

## Working independently

**Free Play:** Free play means a number of things. It could mean your child is playing with their choices from the shelf, you might be working with them on an activity or they may be working with an activity that you want to introduce to them from the shelf.

The morning period might be a good time to connect with your child and do activities together, remembering that it should be child led play. Other times free play is more independent and you can work in parallel to them, stepping in and out of the play.



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# 3 Working independently



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**Quiet time:** The mornings will be full of movement and activity with play and food prep scattered throughout the day. Introduce quiet time in the afternoon and provide a choice of where they wish to do it, either in their room or in a quiet space in the house. Provide them with familiar activities that they engage with for long periods such as books or listening to music or pretend play which relaxes them. Create a calm and soothing play scene for them to use: ocean, farm, or tea party with teddy bears.

**Movement:** If permitted, try to get outside once a day to connect with your neighbourhood and local nature spaces. Try to do this in all weather. If you need to stay indoors then design an obstacle courses together. Children need to move throughout their day.

**Food preparation:** Children are used to making their own snacks at school. Some children may be able to use an apple cutter with some help to push down, they may be able to cut a banana, peel an egg, spread butter, jam, avocado on bread or crackers as well as make simple recipes such as bread rolls.

# 4 Read aloud

We encourage parents to read aloud with their children multiple times throughout the day. This will help build their reading confidence and help them to further develop their reading and oral comprehension skills.

Author's of picture books for shared reading:

- Mem Fox
- Allison Lester
- Pamela Allen
- Trace Moroney – Feelings books.



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# 5 Connection with nature

If you have access to flowers, children love making their environment beautiful.

You will need:

- small sturdy vases
- small flowers
- small jug and funnel
- Access to water
- Basket for collecting flowers
- Safe scissors



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# Now is a time for you to follow your child



Be available and present with them when needed

Allow them to make meaningful choices throughout the day



The Kavanaugh Report has many inspirational ideas to develop a Montessori home.

