

For immediate release

Quality Preschool Prevents Problems during Teenage Years, study finds

UC Irvine study supports OC preschool's emphasis on self-confidence and academic skills



Orange County, May 18, 2010. Choosing the right childcare setting can influence a child's life for years to come. A study by UC Irvine's Dr. Deborah Vandell, released today in the journal *Child Development*, substantiates the claim that past childcare experiences make a profound impact on teenage years. The study links the propensity for impulsive, risk-taking behavior in teens to the number of hours spent in daycare. Kids who either spent their toddler years largely at home with a loving parent or attended quality childcare centers, consistently fared better than those who

attended mediocre childcare centers. The study shows that quality childhood experiences, whether at home or with attentive, trained and well-compensated caregivers guiding stimulating activities in clean facilities, make all the difference in later years. For teens who had such care, the study found both behavioral benefits and strong advantages in academic performance.

"These results are no surprise to us," says Ray Girn, CEO of LePort Schools, a group of five private schools in Orange County. "We consistently find that children who attend our Montessori toddler and preschool programs develop a core personal positive self-identity that includes inner self-confidence and curiosity, as well as outward social skills. Our parents regularly comment on the positive changes they see in their children within just a few months of attending our schools. In fact, we have several parents who have gone back to work, comfortable in the knowledge that their children are getting the nurturing early experience they need."

LePort Schools offer a Montessori early childhood program for children ages 18 months to 9 years. In a Montessori preschool and lower elementary classroom, children enrich their knowledge and personality by working with materials designed to engage their curiosity and foster their development. Dr. Maria Montessori, a physician and scientist, formulated her educational method and materials in the early 1900's, and then trained hundreds of educators. Today, over 4,000 Montessori schools in the US enable children to self-teach key skills—such as concentration, careful observation, letter/sound recognition and numeracy – by working with specialized Montessori's materials. Children in Montessori schools such as LePort learn to read and write at age 4 or 5, and do basic arithmetic with numbers into the hundreds before they reach kindergarten age.

"In our spacious, light-filled classrooms, you see three-year-old children busily focused on learning how to tie bows with 'dressing frames', four-year-olds who build words with a material called the 'moveable alphabet', and five-year-olds who practice arithmetic with 'golden beads' that represent the decimal system into the 1,000's," explains Monica LePort, Chief Operating Officer. "Our students learn to be independent at an early age. They derive immense pleasure from activities such as gardening, cleaning, and of course academic learning—all of which they do on their own. They become content, confident little people—and are amazingly mature in their social interactions. I like to tell parents that they should look for a preschool—not a daycare—even for toddlers, and this study serves to confirm that advice."

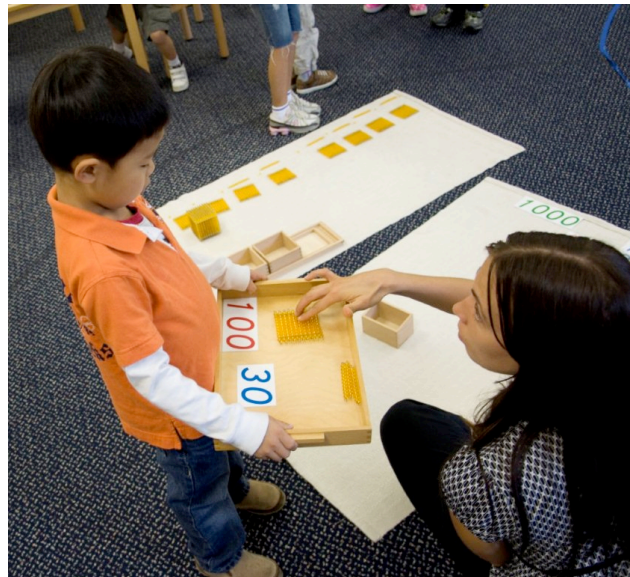
To learn more about LePort Schools and the Montessori Method, visit www.leportschools.com, or contact us at info@leportschools.com.

Photos of LePort Montessori Children at Work

High resolution photography available upon request. Please contact Monica LePort at mleport@leportschools.com



Building words with “movable alphabet”



“Golden beads” introduce decimal system



Learning to prepare food in “Practical Life Area”



Learning about height, width with blindfold and “cylinder blocks”