Alive
Montessori & Private School

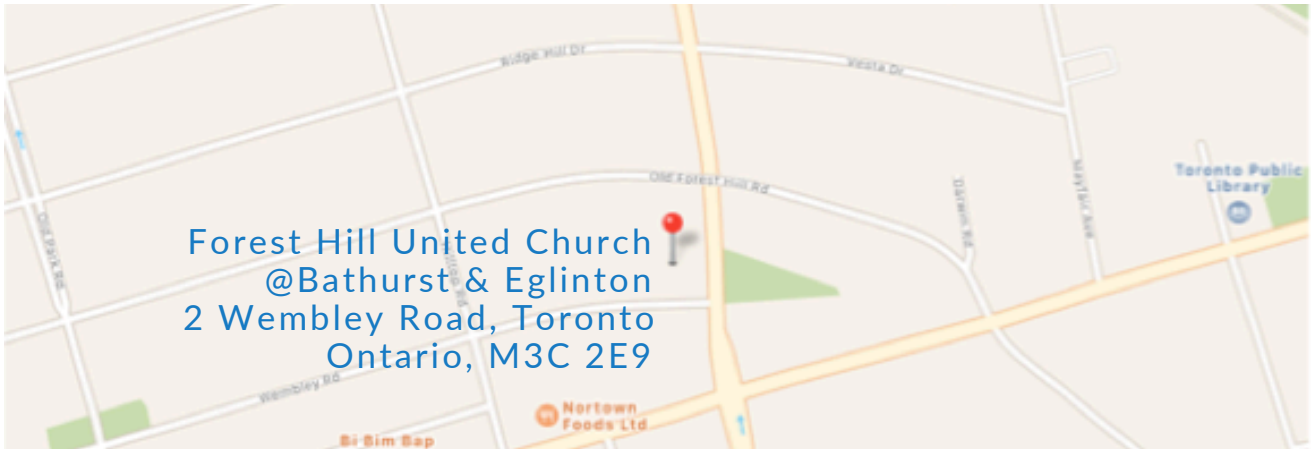
We make learning come *Alive*!



Our Curriculum is designed to bring out the best in every child.

Alive
Montessori & Private School





Located in beautiful Forest Hill, at Bathurst & Eglinton in Toronto, we are a non-religious school dedicated to providing a safe, caring, home-like environment. A place where children have fun while learning so they can excel in their later education and in life

Alive
Montessori & Private School

We welcome you and your child to Alive Montessori.

At Alive Montessori, we are dedicated to providing a warm, engaging, and inspiring learning environment where each child can thrive individually, academically, socially, and emotionally.

Our focus goes beyond traditional academics — we nurture independence, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning. From the moment your child joins our classroom, they will be encouraged to explore, create, and take ownership of their educational journey.

This information package will provide a glimpse into our school and community.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need any assistance — we're here to help!

Julia Simon
Executive Director & Principal



Some of Our References:

"We are so blessed to have met you!
Thank you for welcoming us to your school and family and helping with our move to Canada. Max has grown so much in his time at Alive and we know this has been a wonderful foundation for his future. " [OM]

“At the beginning of the school year Sofia was enrolled in a TCDSB just as I was when I was growing up. Within the first month of September we found out that Sofia was struggling with anxiety. She was nervous all the time, didn’t want to go to school, spent endless nights coaching her telling her she was going to be OK. She wouldn’t eat, wouldn’t sleep and would pace back and fort all evening on school nights begging and crying for me not to send her. After long coaching sessions with teachers and doctors, I decided to enroll her into Alive Montessori School. I honestly didn’t think that this school would help and that I would need to seek help through specialists who deal with children like Sofia. THANKFULLY I can say that Sofia’s been enrolled in this school since January and has done a complete turn around. She’s exited about school and her classmates. She’s learned so much within the first month of being there and has a different outlook on school altogether. Alive Montessori has done a tremendous job helping me work with Sofia to cope with her anxiety and work with her one on one. It really does make a difference when there’s ONE teacher for every 5 students instead of there being ONE teacher for every 35 students. I do believe that if teacher has more one on one time with your child, it will help them progress. They have an Open House days and I would love to have whoever is interested to drop by and come visit. Their learning skills and what they teach our children at such a young age is incredible to see.”[JR]

""“Before my son started going to Alive he didn't like school; he hated to write and didn't like math very much. He had started not caring much anymore. Julia got him back excited about life and now he loves to write and is a year ahead in all subjects.” [A.W.]

“Ms. Julia is no ordinary teacher. She stands out because she genuinely loves children ... I wish every school could be like Ms. Julia’s school; our world would be better for it.” [H.W.]

WHY SHOULD I CONSIDER ALIVE MONTESSORI & PRIVATE SCHOOL FOR MY CHILD?

All of our parents have compelling reasons for sending their children to our school. Some of the more common are as follows:

- "The standards of the public school system are too low"
- "There are too many kids in the classroom and my child is not receiving enough individual attention"
- "I don't feel that the school is safe for my child"
- "He is behind in his reading, and his writing is atrocious"
- "We've had behavior problems ever since he started going to school"
- "She doesn't do well in large classrooms"
- "She already knows what they are teaching and is bored"
- "My child is getting bullied by other kids"
- "There is not enough discipline in the school"
- "The school doesn't seem to care"
- "Some of the other children are having a bad effect on my son"
- "My daughter is not learning anything"
- "My child hates to go to school"

The common thread for all these parents is that they care deeply about their child's future success.





A poor education will limit your child's potential for success, but he or she will reap the rewards of a proper education for a lifetime.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU AND YOUR CHILD

The very best gift a parent can give their child is a good education. The skills and abilities learned in school largely determine the success your child will have throughout their life. The first few years of schooling are vital, as they establish the foundation for all subsequent learning. Correcting a poor start in schooling is made much more difficult because the child's ability, confidence and attitude toward learning, whether positive or negative, are largely set in these early years.

We set very high standards for our teachers and for our students. We know that you are placing your trust in us to give your child the very best education possible. Here, your child will be treated as an individual and given personal attention. We will do our very best to keep them engaged and interested in learning by making it fun and related to the real world. We teach life skills, work ethic, mental and physical discipline, manners, and how to work as a team and care for others. We consider ourselves to be partners in the future success of your child. We listen and work with you, on forwarding the best interests of your child. We want your child to receive a real education – one that will give them the knowledge, skills and confidence to achieve success, in career and in life.



JULIA SIMON, OWNER/PRINCIPAL



Julia Simon was born in Hungary. She was influenced at an early age, by parents who were both professional educators, and her interest in education was cultivated as a young child. Her father was a college professor at an esteemed College. Julia's mother was an elementary and middle school teacher, who later became the principal of a large inner-city elementary school. By focusing on art and art education, she was able to positively engage disadvantaged children and youth under her care, and help alleviate some of the socioeconomic disadvantages that plagued inner city neighbourhoods.

Julia's early interests included athletics (she was an accomplished gymnast and swimmer), dance, art, music, literature and, of course, teaching. She graduated with an Elementary School Teachers Diploma, and later earned additional Qualifications as a Librarian, and Swimming Instructor.

During her tenure as a teacher in Hungary, she came to resent heavy state control over education in the 1980s in eastern Europe, and the lack of intellectual freedom prompted her to seek a new life in Canada.

Having to learn a completely new language, Julia gained a unique perspective on the difficulties in learning how to read and write English. With her own experience as a backdrop, Julia vowed that she would find and use the best methods for teaching children how to read and write.

Julia earned her Early Childhood Education Diploma in Toronto in 1990. As an experienced early childhood educator, Julia recognized the potential benefits of the Montessori method of teaching. She earned her Montessori Diploma in 1995. In 2001, she started her first Montessori preschool in Toronto. Two years later, due to high demand, she added an Elementary school program.

In 2011, she founded Alive Montessori & Private School, which now operates at its current home, at 2 Wembley Road. By making learning fun, and by giving the basic subjects of reading, writing and arithmetic the prominence they deserve, Julia's students can excel in their education and establish a strong foundation for their future careers.

MISSION STATEMENT

At Alive Montessori & Private School our mission is based on the following premises:

- The word “educate” comes from Latin roots meaning “to lead out”. As such, we believe that it is our duty as educators to bring out the innate skills and talents of the children in our charge.
- Every child is a unique individual deserving of the best education possible.
- Every child has an innate desire to learn that must be cultivated, not blunted.
- Every child has his or her natural interests and strengths.
- Learning occurs at varying rates and every child learns at his or her own optimum pace.
- The Basics of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic are vitally important as these still form the foundation for all future learning.
- The goal of education is to give every child the tools he or she will need to become self-reliant and successful in life.
- Education does not have to be a dreary and dull activity. Done properly, learning is fun.

Our goal at Alive Montessori & Private School is to provide the best possible start to our children through proper education, thereby instilling a life-long love of learning in every child. We aim to create a safe, caring and fun environment where every child will learn and will become more and more confident as he or she gains in abilities.

“Don’t let schooling get in the way of your education.” Mark Twain





WHAT IS THE MONTESSORI METHOD?

Maria Montessori was born in Italy in 1870 and continued her work in education up until her death in 1952. Ahead of her time, she was the first woman in Italian history to earn a medical doctor's degree. After practicing medicine for only a few years, she embarked on the career path for which she would become famous – as an enlightened educator for young children. She was convinced that the conventional methodology of schooling left much to be desired and developed her own system to enable children to learn. This involved creating a carefully structured and stimulating environment where children are exposed to many materials and activities from which they learn. Most parents are amazed when they first see the richness of materials in a Montessori classroom; it is certainly different from the typical classroom in our public schools.

Maria Montessori designed her materials along "sensorial" lines to allow the children to discover, learn and develop using all their senses. Sandpaper letters and numbers, geometric shapes to manipulate and compare, wooden blocks and beads for adding and multiplying, and so much more all contribute to the child's understanding of the world around him.

Dr. Montessori consistently taught reading and writing to children between the ages of four and six, well below the expected norm in our public school system. In fact, she was of the firm belief that this was the best time to do so. She believed that children must re-create whatever it is that they are learning in order to understand it, and for this reason, she taught these vital skills in the reverse order from our usual educational standard – writing, and then reading.

From a humble start in a single room teaching poor children using her educational ideas, the Montessori method of education has spread throughout much of the world for the simple reason that it works. As a parent, there is no better gift you can give your child than a solid education that gives him or her the skills and confidence to be a success in his life.

Julia Simon, the principal of the Alive School is a certified Montessori pre-school teacher (Maria Montessori preferred the term "directress", as this more accurately described the function – to direct the children to discover and learn on their own).





OUR APPROACH TO TEACHING READING

Teaching our children how to read well should be the most important function of our school system. All other learning is dependent on this vital skill. For this reason, an organized, step-by-step approach is needed. Failure in the early stages of teaching a child how to read can leave them so confused and discouraged that they give up trying, making it much harder to correct later.

One of the difficulties in teaching reading is that it is generally taught before and separately from learning to write. Maria Montessori wrote, “Contrary to the usually accepted idea, writing precedes reading.” The famous Swiss educator Jean Piaget explains the reason; “In order for a child to understand something, he must construct it himself, he must re-invent it.”*

We take these words to heart. Maria Montessori herself taught children to read and write between the ages of four and six, and considered this the best age to do so. Using a logical, step-by-step approach, we see no reason for any child to fail to learn to read well. It is a skill all children must master to succeed in today’s world.



* Both quotes are from Why Johnny Still Can’t Read, by Rudolph Flesch. Harper Colophon Books, 1981 (pg. 116)

OUR APPROACH TO TEACHING MATH

Computers and electronic calculators are wonderful tools. However, they also lead to a general deterioration in math ability in our schools. We often see grade 3, 4 and 5 children unable to do the simplest addition and multiplication without using a calculator (or their fingers).

Since problems can be entered into a computer or calculator without much thought, the basic concepts behind them are often not well understood. This becomes apparent when students "memorize" some procedure or formula and have no idea why it works. They may be able to mechanically work out problems, and do well on exams, but without an understanding of why these procedures work, they eventually falter, as the math becomes more difficult. Or they graduate not being able to use what they have supposedly learned in school.



By using real life examples and materials that clearly demonstrate the concepts behind all math procedures, our students learn that math is a valuable subject that can be applied to the real world around them. With this understanding as a solid foundation, they can then gain skill and certainty by practicing and drilling.



We ensure that our students thoroughly practice all aspects of basic calculation – arithmetic – so they are not helpless if a calculator is not available. When math concepts are fully understood and practiced, students develop a good number sense and take pride in their new-found skills.

Our modern world is full of distractions that can cause our children to have difficulty focusing. Properly taught, math also disciplines and trains the mind that has benefits in all aspects of a child's life that require the ability to persist and to concentrate. Math, dealing as it does with quantities, shapes, measurements, numbers, calculation, and their relationships in the physical world, is vitally important. Students must learn the basic concepts and develop a certain level of skill to be able to apply these to their finances, their future jobs, and their lives.

CARE OF PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Learning is most effective when it can be made fun and full of life. Contributing to this is the cooperation that develops as students work together and help each other. This extends into the wider sphere of caring for all life forms, and the school does keep various pets to help raise the awareness and responsibility of the children. We currently have a hamster, budgies and fish. We also have a greenhouse and a school garden to extend learning beyond the classroom.













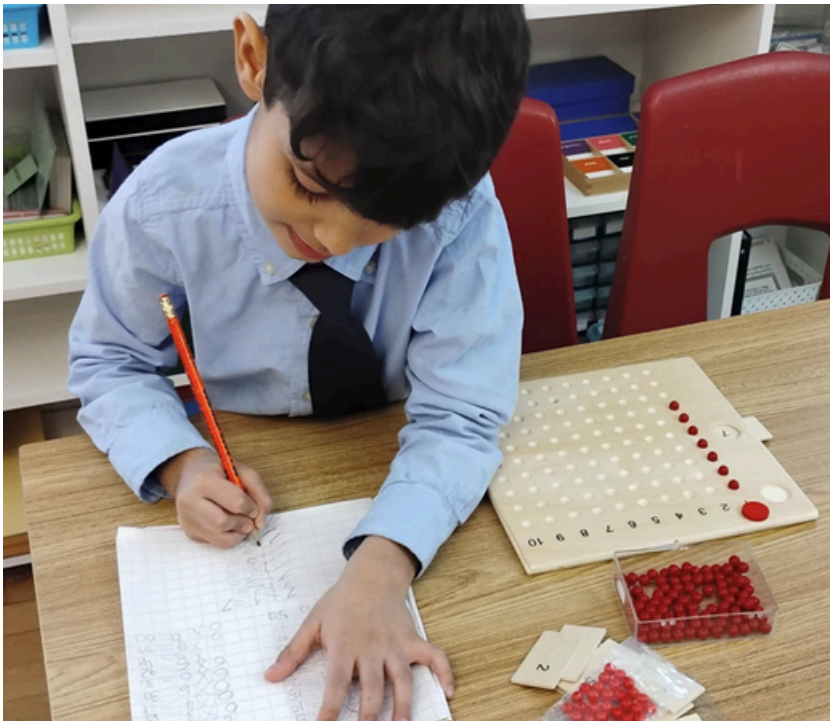


ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

The Alive Montessori & Private School elementary school program follows the Ontario public school curriculum – *with a difference*. We place heavy emphasis on the basics of reading, writing and math to ensure that each child has a sound foundation on which to build their education. All other learning becomes simpler and more rewarding if these are mastered. Our first priority with any new student is to bring these skills up to speed before moving onto other learning. Unique to our approach is the use of "checksheets" outlining the materials to be covered and the skills to be mastered.

The student is expected to fully understand each step before moving on to the next item. This way, the student progresses at their own optimum rate. This moves away from the one-size-fits-all approach and allows us to provide the individual attention lacking in many schools. Learning does not occur in a smooth, linear progression, but happens in spurts. By using this method, all students are accounted for.

Another unique aspect of our approach is that we teach our elementary students *how* to study. This is a skill that is almost never taught. Our students learn how to accumulate new knowledge and develop new skills quickly, thoroughly and effectively.



The typical modern classroom has become uninspiring, dull and boring. Most students will tune out if they cannot see how they can apply what they are supposed to be learning to their lives. It is necessary to find hands-on activities that will engage the students and we make sure that these are provided at our school. Our classrooms are lively, fun places with lots of activities to keep students interested. We explore our community and attend a variety of outdoor and indoor activities including the theater, galleries, parks, skating, the Library, and outdoor classroom settings such as High Park Nature Centre and Kortright Conservation Centre.

We take the Ontario curriculum as a guide, and enhance it in many different ways. By taking the child's interests into account, we keep them excited and engaged in the learning process. In true Montessori fashion, we will not inundate your child with homework. We don't expect parents to do our job; we expect the child to be disciplined and work hard to get their work done at school. We do however, encourage parents to engage in lots of reading at home, and to limit the amount of 'screen time" for their children.



EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMMING

At Alive Montessori and Private School we believe in a holistic approach combining scholastics and extra curricular activities. We aim to offer a balanced program that incorporates not only classroom work, but also the opportunity to foster skills and development through physical education, music, Coding classes, Chess club, French language studies, art classes, dramatic arts, public speaking, dance classes, piano classes, and culinary arts. The children will have the opportunity to showcase their talents at our Winter and Spring concerts, where families gather to bear witness to the amazing things our children can do!



COOKING, ART, CHESS CLUB







OUTDOOR EDUCATION, PERFORMANCES





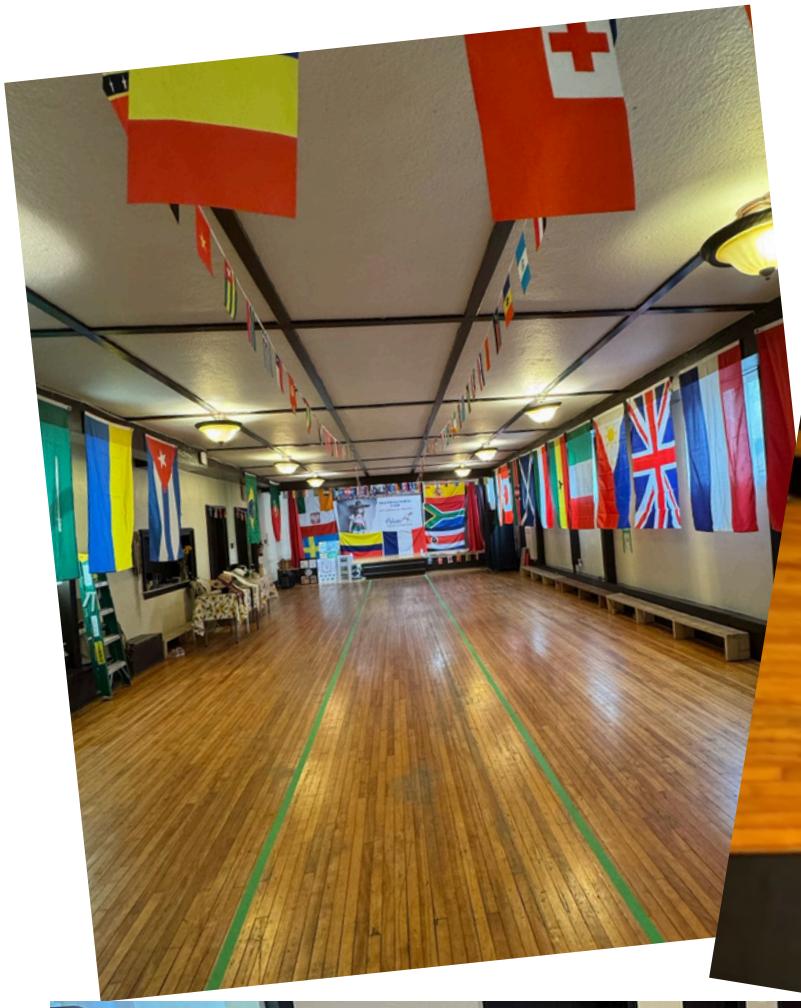
BRIGHT CLASSROOMS, OUTDOOR GARDEN







OUR GYMNASIUM







WE ARE MORE THAN A SCHOOL. WE ARE *FAMILY*!





