

Starting the Day

The mornings in our classrooms have a lovely natural rhythm.

For the Toddler and Children's House programs to start off on the playground gives those energetic students an opportunity to play with friends and get exercise first thing in the morning, before coming inside and settling down to choosing their work. Depending on the day, there might be a circle first thing, before the students get engaged on their own, or the teachers will let things evolve organically as students get busy.

The Lower Elementary Students who arrive by 8:30 have a few minutes to mill around and get settled before an opening community circle, to introduce a new work and set out the plans for the morning. Then they get to work, with individual or small group lessons.

Upper Elementary gets right to work when they arrive, choosing their activities based on a combination of the plan set out the day before and their scheduled deadlines, and their interest of the moment.

Middle School starts with a community circle, sharing about readings from the night before, setting out the activities of the day, or exploring a new topic.

By 9:30 there is a wonderful, productive buzz in all the classrooms. The students enjoy the freedom to work on something that interests them and are able to focus on each activity for as long as they want. At about 10:30 a restlessness arises, followed by another period of focused concentration. This is a natural rhythm of a Montessori classroom arranged to capitalize on each child's innate love of learning and to foster each student's ability to concentrate and focus.

The predictability and consistency of this pattern is uncanny. The community works together when all are on the same cycle. If a child arrives late or attends inconsistently, their rhythm is not in sync with the rest and they feel it. [This article](#) illustrates the point nicely.

When the community is humming together, it works beautifully! If anyone hasn't visited recently, please feel free to stop in for a visit during the work cycle and see this in action in every program.

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