



TOTH
MONTESSORI
NAVY YARD, WASHINGTON, DC



August 17, 2020

Dear parents and staff,

We are almost at our reopening day and first want to say that this year more than any other we are grateful for the opportunity to serve you and your children. As we prepare to open we are taking every reasonable precaution to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission at school while at the same time working to ensure we maintain as much sense of community and fidelity to the Montessori method of instruction as possible.

Our core values and principles have not and will not change. You can count on an uninterrupted work cycle, mixed age groups, freedom of choice, a beautiful environment, time for rest and fresh air, Montessori materials, 3-part lessons, the opportunity for repetition and experimentation, and a culture of deep respect for the child in our thoughts, words and actions.

We have participated in weekly stakeholder calls hosted by DC's Office of the State Superintendent for Education (OSSE) who are following and sharing the guidance issued by the Center for Disease Control and the DC Health Department. With our resident epidemiologist's help, we conducted a community-wide risk assessment survey that gives us all a good snapshot of our current collective risk profile and gauges members' feelings about how any potential COVID-19 cases might impact the community. With the aid of all of this input, we plan to provide our community with the following (which will each be posted on our website at <http://toddlersonthehill.org/2020-21-covid-19-operations/>):

- The results from our anonymous community-wide COVID-19 risk assessment survey
- ToTH's 2020 illness decision tree for parents and staff
- Clear community ground rules
- Additional measures we will strongly encourage families to take

In addition, we are preparing our environment to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. We have stocked up on PPE. We have installed a new washer and ventless dryer so that we have the ability to wash any soiled clothes, towels or PPE right away, every day. We've researched and purchased 9 air purifiers for all classrooms, bathrooms and our lobby to ensure that all of the air can be cleaned – and virus and other particles as small as .1 micron can be trapped – five times per hour (in just 12 minutes). We have also hired a new company to come every day of the week to clean the entire facility. None of this guarantees we will catch and kill every virus, but taken together, we feel we're mounting a very strong defense.

In the event we are forced to close a classroom or our entire facility again, we will be ready for it. While Stephanie focuses on health and safety, Natalie is working with teachers to build an online schedule and protocol for distance engagement. You will know what to expect long before you need to rely on it. Our hope is that closures will be few and far between because our building manager, DC's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), assures us that, going forward, our school's operating status will be tied to OSSE's authority, not to DPR's.

If you have suggestions, we are happy to receive them. This year is obviously going to be more stressful for both our families and our ToTH team members. We encourage everyone to reach deep for compassion, patience and tolerance with one another, as there is no doubt that some of us will wish for more stringent measures while others will wish for less. We know we cannot make everyone 100% happy, nor can we eliminate every last risk. But our promise to you is that we will do our very best to continue to meet this challenge each and every week.

In the event OSSE increases the group size limits for schools like ours, we may eventually choose to add additional families, but we would only do so if we are confident we can do so as safely as we are now. The pandemic has caused many daycare centers and preschools to close altogether, and we are determined to not be one of them. With our community's support, we know we can come out of this stronger than ever before.

Thank you for your trust; there will be more to come as we approach opening day.

Warmly,

Natalie Baginski, *Head of School*

Stephanie Sarvana, *Administrative Director, COVID-19 Point of Contact*

Anya Landau French, *Co-founder and Board Chair, Finance Director*