

## **ABOUT ME, TONI SCHNEIDER SCHOOL DIRECTRESS**

I have worn many hats and had several different careers. I have managed a retail clothing store, a travel agency and worked as a freelance writer and photographer.

I have finally discovered my true passion in life is teaching young children.

I home schooled 3 of my four children because I wanted to enrich their learning experience with more hands on materials. The children just blossomed in this type of environment and when they did decide to be part of the traditional school system they did very well adapting and did it with complete confidence.

Three years ago I was faced with making some career decisions after being home with my children for the past 10 years. I saw an advertisement in a local newspaper for a Montessori assistant. I did not know much about this teaching method but I was very curious. After three interviews I was hired out of 130 candidates.

At first I felt very intimidated and I did not have a clue how to speak or interact with the children so I was afraid to say or do anything. Then I invested in books and tapes and I learned more and more about the Montessori Method.

I was fascinated when I read that in 1907 Dr. Montessori was given the opportunity to study "normal" children, taking charge of fifty poor children of the dirty, desolate streets of a slum area on the outskirts of Rome. The news of the unprecedented success of her work soon spread around the world, people coming from far and wide to see the children for themselves. Dr. Montessori was as astonished as anyone at the realized potential of these children.

As I worked as an assistant in the Montessori schools it was fascinating to watch the children being transformed into self disciplined students who approached their work with intensity and deep concentration.

I used to think you needed words to teach but I learned that children learn much better by just having them observe.

I believe that we should just guide the child through an array of interesting and innovated ways of learning about the world around them.

I have become quite tiresome to my friends and family because all I talk about is what we do at the Montessori school and how wonderful

the children learn. I tell them how three year olds prepare their own snack, wash their own dishes, put on their own shoes and coats and can be quite independent.

I have since attended the Canadian Montessori Academy and graduated from their teacher training program. After graduation I opened my own school in an effort to help nourish the spirit of the child and make the world a better place one child at a time.

Toni Schneider

## **REFERENCE LETTERS**

My name is Lisa Pisano, and I have had the honor of working directly with Mrs. Antionetta Schneider this past year. We both worked as assistants at Nature's Classroom Montessori in Mukwonago, Wisconsin.

Antionetta is a woman who I have the utmost admiration, and respect for. She is one of the most honest, caring, loving, and hard working individuals I have ever met. This past year was her first experience in a Montessori setting. I was extremely impressed by her ability to learn so quickly. She went home at night, and did research on her own. She wanted to better her knowledge on her own because she wanted to be the best she could possibly be for the children. All of her hard work, and dedication showed because she was fantastic in the classroom with the children.

I have so much confidence that she will be a fantastic teacher some day.

Sincerel,

Lisa Pissano

To Whom It May Concern:

Toni worked with me this year as my assistant in an Early Childhood (3-6 yr old) Montessori classroom. She came in having no previous knowledge or experience in the Montessori philosophy. However, she simultaneously approached the situation with intense curiosity and a desire to learn. Having already parented four children of her own, Toni was faced with the challenge of taking all she had learned from her own children and her responses as their mom, and then incorporating that into her new role as a quiet guide for the children in the Montessori classroom. It was exciting for me to hear Toni talk so enthusiastically about the method in which we worked with the children. In fact, much of what we do in the classroom, she has taken home and integrated into her daily life with her family.

There were many instances where Toni went out of her way and put in extra hours of her own free time to help finish or take care of something at school. It is always her intention to be as helpful as possible.

Having home-schooled her own children, Toni came into the environment with many ideas and projects that could be introduced to the children. She was not afraid to implement and follow through with these ideas in the classroom. The children always appreciated and enjoyed the activities she brought in to share.

Toni has a lot of kindness and laughter to share with the children. She has invested 110% of herself into looking out for the well being of our little friends.

Sincerely,

Erin C. Houlihan  
Montessori Directress, Nature's Classroom Montessori.

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter on behalf of Toni Schneider.

Toni was an assistant in my daughter Caitlin's Montessori Classroom. Toni is one of the kindest most open hearted people I have ever met. She was thrown into a difficult situation at the beginning of the year and rose to the occasion. She learned the Montessori Method quickly and adapted well. She worked well with children of all ability levels and some with special needs.

Toni is a care giver that children flock to. When Toni is around the children, you can see the love she has for them. When my daughter was in Toni's care, I always felt she was getting the same type of respect she gets at home.

Toni's respect for children extends to their parents. Toni would tell me stories of my daughters' interactions with her or one of the children in their classroom. Toni is clearly committed to children and their families and insuring children receive loving, and respectful care.

Sincerely,

Meg Hunter

To Whom It May Concern:

Toni came to our school in mid-February, 2007, to complete her student teaching practicum for The Canadian Montessori Academy Teacher Education Program.

As her supervising teacher I could see that Toni clearly showed a genuine love for children. She was aware of their emotional and developmental needs. She was proud to establish rapport and devotion with the children. Toni contributed many supplemental lessons in the cultural area of our classroom as well. Her work was beautifully prepared; she was very adept at setting up work for the children.

Toni was very receptive to constructive criticism and was willing to embrace and practice Montessori philosophy in her dealings with the children. She enjoyed interacting with staff and was cautious not to overstep her position.

I am confident that Toni will be a motivated and prepared Montessori directress.

Respectfully,

Carol Luterbach