

# Rebecca Howell



1. What would you say were the key benefits of a Montessori education compared to other early year settings? Montessori education is founded in observation, providing tools that allow the teacher to follow the child and help to guide him/her along his/her chosen path of development. It cultivates a deep respect for the child and provides techniques that allow for his/her independence, enabling him/her to reach his/her maximum potential as a human being.
2. How did you hear about Montessori? In 1995, I returned from the Peace Corps. Looking for a job, I was hired by someone who had also served in the same Peace Corps group. She was a director of a Montessori School. I started as an office manager, but fell in love with the educational philosophy and eventually went on to get my training, first as an Infant-Toddler teacher and later as a Primary Teacher.
3. Why did you decide to train to be a Montessori teacher? I enjoyed working with young children and found the training helped me to honor the child respectfully. I worked as a toddler teacher for a few years before staying home with my own children. When my youngest child was three, I began working at his school and felt that expanding my training to include the Primary (3-6) level would allow me to be a better teacher.
4. What does the course entail? The MCI course provides a well-rounded education, informing students about a variety of child development theories, Montessori curriculum, and observation techniques. It entails a great deal of hard work and research, but is worth it if you are interested in a comprehensive education that includes both theory and technique.
5. What qualifications do you receive and what are your career options? I already have a Masters in Education, but the course did allow me to add credits to my director qualification. Also, it has made it possible for me to apply for teaching positions in any Montessori school as a teacher for children aged birth to six years.
6. Can you get funding for the course? My work helped me pay for the training.

7. What did you do before you got into Montessori? I was a Peace Corps volunteer in West Africa.
8. And finally...a word of advice for people considering a career change and thinking about working in childcare? I always believe that while it is important to like children, one should consider a career in childcare only if one is doing so in order to help children on their path to independence. It is a demanding career that takes a great deal of patience and energy. It is an important career in which the primary goal is to give children the tools to be critical thinkers, confident beings capable of taking on anything.