



MMI CONNECT

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How Montessori prepares your child for the 21st Century?

What are the 21st-century skills?

Introduction

What does it mean to be a successful learner in today's context? In the past, an achievement of the "three Rs" (reading, writing and arithmetic) and mastery in academics may have been the measure of attainment. However, the world of the 21st century requires a different orientation. To participate effectively in this increasingly complex society, children are required to think critically, communicate effectively, collaborate with others, problem solve, adopt a growth mindset and engage with the latest technologies. 21st-century skills are a set of abilities that children need to develop to succeed in the information age. The 21st Century Skills lists three types:

- Learning Skills
- Literacy Skills
- Life Skills

In this issue, we shall focus on the learning skills that can be found in 21st-century skills.

What Are 21st Century Skills?

21st-century skills consist of 4 key elements

Learning Skills

- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Communication

Importance of 21st-century skills for young children



In this digital and interconnected world, there is always a need to keep abreast with new skills and knowledge to succeed. For young children to succeed in school, work and life, they need to embrace 21st-century skills. Parents must incorporate 21st-century skills in their young children's daily lives. Each skill is unique in how it guides children and prepares them for life-long learning. These skills are crucial to the future success of today's learners. The idea of 21st-century learning is to help children navigate their way into their future. It is all about strategies that children need to survive in this ever-changing technological world.

The only way to do it is to implement such skills from a young age. Parents, adults and caregivers, whom the child spends most of the early years with, play an important role as the child's first teacher. Thus, it is vital for parents and caregivers to understand 21st-century skills and how they can help to create a conducive 21st-century learning environment at home for their child.

How to develop 21st-century skills in young children at home?

- Parents should follow the child's interest. Generally, Children perform better and are more likely to engage in child-led activities than directed activities.
- Motivate your child, provide positive and constructive feedback for the child to develop.
- Engage your child in play with other children. As your child plays with other children, social skills are developed.
- Offer your child with open-ended play materials that encourage problem-solving skills and creativity.
- Provide your child with hands-on play.
- One golden rule that parents should bear in mind is to allow the child to learn at his own pace
- Be flexible with your child and always be willing to change the plan if you need to.
- Ensure to practice consistency with your child. Being consistent with your child helps him/her to feel secure and develop a child's self-regulation



How Montessori prepares your child for the 21st Century?

21st-century skills found in Montessori

21st-century skills Takeaways

- 21st-century skills promote positive changes and growth in children.
- 21st-century skills help to bridge gaps between play, learning and education.
- A child equipped with good moral values, necessary skills and knowledge faces challenges confidently.
- A flexible child can adapt to new situations and changes effectively.
- When a child becomes a self-directed learner, he takes responsibility for his learning.

A glance at 21st-century skills

Learning skills

- Creativity & Innovation
- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication
- Collaboration

Literacy skills

- Information literacy
- Media literacy
- Information, communications & Technology literacy

Life Skills

- Flexibility and adaptability
- Initiative and self-direction
- Social and cross-cultural skills
- Productivity and accountability
- Leadership and responsibility
- Be responsible for others

How the Montessori Method of Education prepares children for 21st-century skills?

Montessori allows children to understand, control their error and to explore in decision making. Children are provided with hands-on learning materials, encouraged to organize their thinking and can absorb the concept or skill taught at their own pace. They are allowed to experiment, investigate and discover the world around them. The friendly attitude towards mistake set a conducive environment for the development of critical thinking skills. Montessori believes that creativity is not a skill that cannot be learned; however, it evolves from a long process of cognitive development. Children will construct themselves through self-expression. They are given freedom of movement, choice, and speech. In such an environment, children develop strong social skills through interactive learning experiences and activities. The multi-age grouping encourages imitative learning, peer learning, leadership skills and all-round collaboration. Collaboration is at the core of the Montessori classroom. It allows children and teacher to work together to solve problem solve. Communication skill is strengthened through active listening. Opportunities are provided for teachers to carry out activities for children that require communication. Teachers show genuine respect and appreciation for children. Technology plays a dynamic role in Montessori by providing authentic learning experiences for children. Current technology is used in a meaningful way to give a broader understanding of the real world. The key approach to Montessori is flexibility based on the needs, knowledge and interests of the child. Teachers build a relationship with children to create an environment full of leaders in the classroom. Children learn new things and skills according to their interests and capabilities.

Possible outcomes of 21st Century Skills

“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn”.

Alvin Toffler



21st-century skills help to standardize learning setting that promotes positive changes and growth in children. It helps to bridge the gap between play, learning and education. Such skills promote holistic learning and enhance adaptability in children.

What happens when a child is equipped with 21st-century skills? A child equipped with 21st-century skills has a good sense of self-awareness, responsibility, good moral values, necessary skills and knowledge to face challenges confidently. The child becomes a confident person who has a strong sense of right and wrong. The child will be resilient, flexible, adapt to new situations and change accordingly. The child will think independently, critically, make judgments effectively and communicate well. 21st-century skills support children in a good decision-making process. The child becomes a self-directed learner who asks questions to acquire knowledge, reflects on his actions and perseveres in his tasks. As a self-directed learner, he takes responsibility for his learning. These skills enable a child to become an active contributor who participates in pairs, teams and attempts to strive for excellence. The child works for the betterment of his and others lives.

These 21st-century skills can help them succeed beyond academics and give them a better foundation for the future world.