

△ AMBOSS



Welcome
to AMBOSS Kita

We value children's rights. At AMBOSS daycare, we ensure that any kind of media involving children that is publicly published is held to the highest ethical standards. In keeping with this, parents are asked to provide consent for their children to be featured. Only children with parental consent have been published in the magazine.



Little AMBOSSians

Providing high quality and innovative child care at work requires exemplary learning facilities and a passionate educational team. That's how our little AMBOSSians story begins!

We all know that being a full-time parent demands as much attention as your working life. No matter if you are an expat in Berlin or a native Berliner, you can't avoid the stress of finding a Kindergarten spot for your child. Having a Kita at the workplace gives parents valuable time to thoughtfully plan out the next steps of their child's life without hurry.

One of our goals as a strong family company is to support our employees by providing better work-life balance. We wish to bring the joys of family into the workplace. Instead of parting with your child before trekking to the office, you are creating wonderful memories by starting and

ending the days together in different departments of AMBOSS. Commute with your child by train or bicycle, and share these fun daily moments instead of the rush of dropping them off at a different Kita. New parents will have the precious opportunity to breastfeed, change, and interact with their child without disrupting their own productivity.

As medical professionals, we believe that providing safe, structured, and engaging settings will stimulate growth and inspire each child to be their best. The passionate and experienced teachers at the AMBOSS Kita know that the key to learning is providing an environment where children are free to absorb lessons and express their innate talents and creativity. They create a safe and warm space, guiding them by blending the best of tactile and kinesthetic styles of instruction. ■



Dear Reader,

Welcome to the AMBOSS Kita magazine! Our daily experiences in the Kita are rich in learning, including invaluable child-rearing skills that we would like to share with you.

This magazine will give us the opportunity to update you on the fun-filled days we have had, as well as to dive deeper into the research surrounding child development.

It has been an uncertain time for everyone including parents juggling childcare and work. We took the popular decision to reopen our Kita in May to support employees through the pandemic. I am so glad we did!

You will notice that this first edition focuses on separation anxiety, an issue that often occurs in the transition from parental care to a Kita setting. We are proud to work closely with parents in what can be a difficult time for all involved and sharing this best practice will hopefully lessen any anxieties that others may have.

We utilize different educational approaches, such as Montessori, Steiner, and Traditional. Each approach provides a wide variety of effective and valuable learning tools. We combine all pedagogies to suit the individual needs and talents of learners.

Remember to get in touch if you would like further information on anything included in the magazine or visit us in the Kita!

Suzanne Uprichard



Natia Vardzelashvili

It's hard to believe that it's been a couple of months since the AMBOSS Kita opened. Building a kindergarten in these very uncertain times has been an ongoing challenge that has required us to reassess our habits and rethink our assumptions about virus safety, but also about our approaches to effective staff communication and organizational practices. Meeting this challenge daily with the uniquely talented minds at AMBOSS has been a rewarding growth opportunity.

Since we launched the Kita we've come up with many ideas on how we can share our stories and daily experiences. This all culminated in creating our AMBOSS Kita magazine and sharing our fun daily insights and experiences with you. In this, our first issue, we talk about one particularly inspiring educator, Maria Montessori, share the best baby snack recipes, and help you to find the most baby-friendly places in Berlin.

And so, without further ado, I would like to welcome you to AMBOSS Kita Magazine.

Natia Vardzelashvili



Kala Pingle (1,5 years)

First little AMBOSSian

Separation Anxiety

Returning to work can be a bittersweet moment for many parents. As much as you are excited to catch up with colleagues and get back into the work rhythm, leaving your child for the first time is daunting. This transition is something that we are very familiar with at the AMBOSS Kita, having worked closely with several parents through this process.

Why can this be such a challenge? Object permanence, a natural point in your child's development, is the reason behind this. Simply put, this is when infants first understand that objects exist, even when hidden and that events occur in the world independently of their own actions. This stage can be as early as 4 or 5 months of age, however it is normally seen at around 9 months. It will mean that a child is more unsettled or upset when they realise you are truly gone or when they are not in control of their own environment.

As a result of this uncertainty, children can develop separation anxiety. This can be recurring – some toddlers will skip this stage earlier on, only to be challenged by it at 15–18 months of age. Children will naturally want to be more independent but having awareness of these separations can still be difficult for them. It is common to find their reactions also become exaggerated as they are more able to express themselves. Shouting, crying and tantruming are all part and parcel of a toddler's behaviour to persuade you to stay.

But there is good news! By the age of three, children understand the impact this type of negative behaviour has on their parents. Despite their own stress, they will often try to explicitly change their actions. Further, children at this age have more communicative skills including reasoning and explanation, making it easier for there to be a conversation around the separation.

So, what can we do to support children?

✓ Be consistent in the routine – this is critical

so that separation can be normalised. It also allows children to establish relationships with their new caregivers.

✓ If possible, explain WHY you are leaving and WHEN you will return. A child doesn't need to be able to read the time - you can leave a visual representation or write it for them so they have a concrete reminder.

✓ Keep goodbyes short and sweet! Although it will be hard, try not to become upset or to express negativity in front of the child. This is something that will automatically trigger their own inability to cope with the situation. Further, do not re-enter a room because of a child's pleas.

✓ Bargaining and negotiation are only effective on a short-term basis. Promises of treats, quality time or other surprises will not help to address the anxiety and distress your child feels. It will not rid them of the problem long-term. Unfortunately, separation is something that your child must learn to cope with in order for them to develop healthily. Therefore, it is best the situation is not viewed as one they can change easily through persuasion.

✓ Concentrate on new caregivers instead! Although this can be a challenging time, remember to have excellent support around you. More likely than not, you will have other parent colleagues, friends and family members who will have their own experiences to share. In addition, remember your child will mirror any attitude to new caregivers so make sure that you are positive and collaborative. Help your child to learn about new adults in their life and especially important details like their name, their nationality or fun facts such as their favourite colour!

These first steps towards independence are immensely rewarding as a parent and we know that with this advice, that your child will be able to overcome any separation issues. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Kita staff for more resources and information on this subject. ■

Maria Montessori & Early Childhood

One of the biggest questions facing parents in our modern society is choosing the type of education for their children. When considering various education methods that schools offer, parents sometimes feel overwhelmed with doubts as to which is the best approach and how it might affect their future development and growth.

This year on the 31st of August, we celebrated 150 years since the birth of Maria Montessori, one of the first women scientists and physicians in Europe who revolutionized early childhood education, bringing new methods in realizing the student's full potential. She believed that if we can change how we educate children then we can change the world (Haskins, 2010).

Maria Montessori (1870–1952) was born in Chiaravalle, Italy, to a well educated family. Her father Alessandro was an accountant in the civil service and her mother loved reading, both instilling in her a passion for learning. Maria was determined to study medicine despite the fact that it was difficult for women to enroll in a medical school. Her belief that she would become a doctor was unshakeable, and after many unsuccessful attempts she told her professor “I shall become a doctor” during a failed interview. In 1890 Montessori enrolled at the University of Rome to study Physics, Mathematics and Natural Science. She studied two years and received her diploma, and her diligence and discipline enabled her to enter the faculty of Medicine in Rome. In 1896 she became one of the first female doctors in Italy (P. Povell, 2017).

Maria began her career in education in 1898 beginning with developmentally disabled children. Believing that the environment was crucial

for children for their development and growth, Maria's interest turned toward developing a distinct educational theory centering on the child and establishing a new dynamic between the student and teacher. The teacher was now a “directress”: one who prepares an environment, observing and patiently facilitating the development of the child's inner life through their work in the classroom.



Montessori's Philosophy. Montessori identified three critical periods in children's development after years of observation and analysis. In her view, the child is a “spiritual embryo”, whose psychological development and biological growth proceed together through “sensitive periods” in which the child is very sensitive and acquires many specific skills. These three phases are from birth to 6, from 7 to 11 years and from 12 to 18 years.

She described the period between birth and three as the “Unconscious Absorbent Mind” in which the child takes in stimuli from their environment and explores objects, ideas, and languages.

Age 3 to 6 years is called the “Conscious Absorbent Mind” which has a fascination with organizing and ordering all of their prior knowledge. She believed that the assistance of perceptive, empathic adults in the proper environment would guide children through each stage of development and one of the first steps is allow them to move freely to discover their new world. She understood that movement was a major component of learning. “In our new con-

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ception the view is taken that movement has great importance in mental development itself, provided that the action which occurs is connected with the mental activity going on. Mind and movements are parts of the same entity” (cited in Lillard, 2005, p. 40).

The next period is age 6 to 12 years and is one of “Calm and Serenity” which she considered the era of growth but not transformation. “If we look at the physical body, we see the signs that

Maria Montessori with Children
Permission given via email:
info@montessori150.org



seem to mark the limit between these two physical periods. Transformation that takes in the body is very visible... The child loses his first set of teeth and starts growing the second" (Montessori, 1949, p. 25–26).

Finally, the third period from 12 to 18 years old "which is also a period such transformation that it reminds us of the first period" (Montessori 1949 p. 26) but of course involves the complex hormonal and physical changes of the teenage years leading up to adulthood.



Montessori Classroom Environments.

The first thing you will notice when entering a Montessori class is how much it differs from a typical classroom. The environment is structured around sequenced learning materials in the belief that children study best in an ordered setting. The items and materials are carefully selected to engage the student and promote various types of specific psychological and physical developments. The children are given the freedom to choose materials themselves and the directress instructs them on their use and removes any obstacle to development.



The child's freedom of movement is of great importance. Sometimes free movement is understood incorrectly by Many people who think of it as a chaotic environment, which is

incorrect from this perspective. "We call an individual disciplined when he is master of himself, and can, therefore control his own conduct... Since the child learns to move rather than sit still, he prepares himself not for the school, but for life" (Montessori, 1964, p. 86–87).

For example, numerous studies show that Montessori children were significantly more likely to use higher level concepts of justice and fairness to convince the other child to relinquish the contested objects and resolve conflicts (Lillard & Else-Quest, 2006).

In addition to her groundbreaking work in education, Maria Montessori strongly advocated for women's and children's rights. In 1896, the feminist organization Associazione Femminile di Roma was established in Rome with Maria serving as its vice secretary. Maria Montessori was a speaker at the Women's Achievements and Women's Endeavors conference in Berlin held by the Association for Women's Weal. In 1896, Montessori campaigned at the first feminist congress in Berlin for equal pay for equal work.

Montessori teaching methods today enjoy huge popularity and have been adopted by early childhood education programs throughout the world, influencing generations of students and educators. Now, more than ever, her studies and findings inspire many educators to change the learning environment into a dynamic praxis for children to learn with love and joy. ■



Translingualism. Communication across languages!

Gerda Lerner the famous novelist once quipped, “living in translation is like skating on wobbly skates over thin ice. There is no sure footing; there are no clear cut markers; no obvious signposts. It helps to trust in one’s balance, to swing free and make leaps of the imagination”.

I am sure that many of you will relate to this statement and empathise with any language learner who is in the process of mastering another tongue. It takes dedication and as mentioned above, a certain amount of courage to try and communicate effectively. The difficulty we can face is that not all speech or common expressions are even translatable. And yet, translation is more often than not, the main method of learning how to speak another language.

Now imagine you are a child growing up in a multilingual household. Here, our early learning is focused on mimicking sounds that we hear before assigning meaning to them. We use our entire environment to absorb language and spend time trying to understand more than just the grammar or the vocabulary. We also consider the body language, tone and pronunciation that accompanies what we say. For children, translation and other methods of coding and decoding languages are difficult to comprehend as there is often no “right” or “wrong” way of saying something.

In traditional pedagogies surrounding multilingualism, educators have often seen more than one language as a handicap and prefer to emphasise the school language to ease matters. This can be limiting and frustrating for young children who do not have the luxury of a large vocabulary or knowledge of who speaks what language. It can inhibit their speech development through

curtailing natural conversational skills they have built previously with their parents.

Translingualism, literally translated as language across tongues, is a relatively new perspective within the multilingual education and one I have followed closely. The idea is that children should be encouraged to speak using whatever language they have in order to build their confidence in communication. Zum Beispiel, if an infant or toddler is not aware of the words, for example, they are able to express this idea in their second or third language, despite the rest of the sentence being in English. Meaning is still successfully conveyed.

As an international company within a city renowned for its mix of people from all walks of life, it is imperative that all cultures and languages are celebrated and treated with equal importance. To a child, every language has the same significance and I have seen first hand the enthusiasm that even infants and toddlers have for using words to communicate. Our Kita strives to maintain this interest through explicit lessons in English and German as well as opportunities for parents and children to share their own languages in play. Building a positive attitude to multilingualism will always be more critical for a child’s learning than having a perfect command of multiple languages. ■





Toilet Training for Toddlers

Tips from the Top!



Jamie Glowacki | Potty Training and Parenting Expert

The AMBOSS Kita likes to work with other teaching and childcare professionals in order to provide the best advice for parents. Potty training is a tricky area of child development, and one that is normally very individual to each family. We felt it best to seek out some experts for their opinion on the best way forward, and we invited for the interview – American child care writer and parenting expert Jamie Glowacki, famous for books – *Oh Crap! I Have a Toddler* & *Oh Crap! Potty Training* to speak to us. This interview was an enlightening hour of helpful advice and some funny stories. Thank you Jamie for also answering all of our parents' questions.

First of all, let's begin with how were you inspired to write a book about potty training?

I started potty training when I worked as a social worker in San Francisco. I worked specifically with parents who suffered from a range of mental illnesses. At that time I was seeing 4 and 5 year old kids in diapers – I knew it wasn't right. These parents were not financially well-off and diapers were so expensive. I had the brainwave of interviewing older generations on potty training and their secret methods. Armed with this new information, I taught those young mums. Later on, I moved my career to Rhode Island on the East Coast and had my first child. I was determined to potty train him early, I believe it was 22 months. My friends were skeptical but actually it was a big success. They were surprised, but I knew what I was doing! Later, I decided to gather even more knowledge and be inspired by my own professional experiences to start writing books.

In your opinion, when is the best age for children to start toilet training?

This is a very complex question! It is interesting to consider what 'ready' means. No child can take off their diaper and tell you! Normally kids are ready from the age of 18 months. At this age, they usually come with you in the bathroom and they want to see and experience things. They want to play with toilet paper and flush water. Sometimes, parents see their child is a little interested – they think, "let's wait... maybe they will be more interested tomorrow". But if you don't jump on that interest, the child forgets about it. Explicit toileting can start somewhere between the 20 to 30 month range. At this point, they have a lack of separation anxiety and don't cling to their parents anymore. They are learning how to eat, how to walk etc. and with parental supervision, they can learn toileting skills too. At 3 years, a child's complete understanding of their own individualisation is present. This is the age to start practicing. When a child gets older it gets harder to train them, because they have used a diaper their entire life. It confuses them to know why they have to stop. I consider diapers as a habit, so if you have a habit for 4 years it is harder to break. Not rocket science right? In the USA, people are repeatedly too busy... I hope it is not the same in Berlin!

What are the stages of potty and toilet training?

Another complex question that I dedicated an entire book to! Some parents are afraid of causing a sense of psychological distress to the child. I would jokingly say, "no serial killer ever blamed their mum for potty training me when I was 2 years old!". People can make a big deal about it. This training takes about 7 days, sometimes longer, of course. This recent pandemic has had an upside for many parents because finally they have time at home to complete this with their child.

In my book, I have blocks of learning. Children will progress through the blocks – if they progress too quickly and the blocks become too difficult, they can revert back to the beginning. Doing this together, you can build toileting skills without a big drama or pain.

Block one – you have to stay home and it's just a day of learning. This should be done without clothes. It's repetitive but worth it!

Block two – create the same day as Block 1 but this time, dress the child. You don't have to put on underpants because it's like a diaper.

Block three – leave the house with a clear schedule. My suggestion is wait until they have gone to the toilet and then go. Avoid resistant behaviour by demanding a child goes to the toilet when you want. A focus on the schedule and what they will do after is more of an incentive to follow it. This period can be three or four days, dependent.

Block four – giving the child underwear is a significant step for them in understanding the difference between this and diapers. This can be much later – I have had parents at Block 3 for 6 months.

Block five – self-initiation. When a child independently goes to the bathroom, it has usually been a skill they have developed over 4–6 months. From that point onwards, you can reliably trust the child.

Please do not expect immediate results, initial change may only occur in 7–10 days. This will indicate you are on the right path! If you wait until after the age of 2, you may find that their need to be independent means they do not want to spend this time with you. We must push children to grow their own independence through gaining these types of skills. Never compare your child to others.

Questions from Parents

What to do when the little one is really afraid of sitting down on the toilet seat? (I think she is afraid of the hole underneath her!)

In this case you should use the potty – don't use the toilet from the beginning. I understand that toilets can be scary for them – it flushes and their imagination goes wild! It also depends on what level of anxiety the child has. In the beginning, there needs to be lots of communication. You can gently sit them on the pot and explain things. They love to listen, especially if there is a story!

What to do when they stop communicating after starting to use the toilet?

This is dependent as to how far along the process they are and what 'block' they are on. You may need to revisit the block before. If they have accidents, just go back and remind them. This does not mean a demand or a question. Instead, make it fun! Prompt a statement, challenge or choice. You can always say, "come on, it's time to go to the toilet", give a choice, "do you want to use the big toilet or the little potty?" or even engage them with, "I bet you aren't brave enough to try the big toilet!"

My child asks for a toilet after she's done with her business, how should I communicate with her to ask before?

If a child is still wearing diapers then it's a mistake, because if you put a diaper on the child, who did his business their whole life then of course they will do the same because it's in their mind. This child already tells you that they are ready for toileting. They tell you 'hey I did it'. So we don't want to confuse kids. So would you tell the child not to watch TV and put them in front of the TV. So you don't need to give the child diapers back which they used their entire life and say let me know before. So just take off the diaper. I also compare toileting skills to sleep. Some people think sleep is natural, but it is not. There are some kids who need help but some don't. Toileting is no different. They know how

to pee and poop, but putting in a container is a social behaviour and you are going to teach that as other skills. Parents keep saying they will give up diapers when it's time, but no. Why do the kids give up diapers themselves? Parents should remember that they are charged to teach these skills to their kids. So it's just a skill.

My toddler (2,5) knows how the potty and toilet works, but still struggles to use it consistently. She often refuses and now, hates to have her diaper changed. What is your suggestion, how should we handle this?

This sounds like an individual case that is built around some form of anxiety. It can be difficult to say without studying the family and the child, but first of all, I would suggest that she no longer wears underwear. Children will always choose what is familiar to them so she will naturally always want to have the protection and security of underwear or diapers. I would specify a time for this to be removed and stick to it! If your child is then refusing to use the toilet, this is a behaviour issue. It requires some discipline and firmer communication.

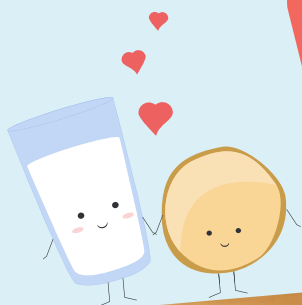
We hope that this article has given some more insight into some approaches for toilet training. We re-affirmed many of our own practices with this excellent advice. We hope that it gives you the same benefit. Our next edition will compare the advantages and disadvantages of using elimination communication in potty training. ■



We are sharing the best recipes!

Store bought cookies often have a large amount of sugar – we've found a simple and delicious solution. Roll up your sleeves and get in the kitchen – Laura and Paloma would love to share their sugar-free, cookie recipe.

Paloma's Favourite Cookies



For 6-8 cookies you need

- ✓ 1 cup oats
- ✓ 1 tbsp whole-wheat flour
- ✓ 1/2 cup of coconut milk or water (a little more if needed)
- ✓ 1/2 cup grated coconut
- ✓ 1 mashed banana
- ✓ a sprinkle of sesame seeds

Instructions

Mix the oats with a bit of water or coconut milk, mashed banana and grated coconut. Use more liquid to loosen the mixture or add further coconut/oats to thicken it. The consistency should be a very soft dough that still holds together. Let it chill for 10 minutes. Cover the tray in a light coating of coconut oil. Heat the oil in a preheated oven at 200°C before spooning the cookie mixture on. Decorate with sesame seeds on top. Bake until golden brown.

Ellie's Green Muffins



These muffins are easy to make in batches and are easy for children to independently feed themselves. Ellie eats them every day as a great way of introducing vegetables like spinach. Also, they don't crumble!

For 10 baby muffins you need

- ✓ 2 bananas
- ✓ 100g frozen spinach
- ✓ ½ cup milk
- ✓ 2 tbsp maple syrup
- ✓ 1 egg
- ✓ 3 tbsp oil or melted butter
- ✓ 1 cup rolled oats
- ✓ 1 cup flour
- ✓ 3 tsp baking powder

Instructions

1. In a bowl whisk the dry ingredients, (oats, flour, baking powder).
2. In a blender, mix the remaining ingredients (banana, spinach, oil, maple syrup, egg and milk) into a green smoothie.
3. Pour the smoothie mix into the dry ingredients
4. Fill a greased muffin tray with the mix – a silicone tray works best.
5. From the mix, you can make 9-10 regular muffins or 24 mini muffins.
6. In a fan-assisted oven bake at 160°C or 180°C if using a standard oven. Regular muffins bake for 20-25 minutes and mini muffins bake for 15-20 minutes.
7. Cool, serve and enjoy! Store in an airtight container for 2-3 days or freeze.



7 German Phrases for Expat Families

Are you new to Berlin with your family and just arrived at AMBOSS? Congratulations, we're here for you!

Here are 7 German words and phrases we use daily with the kids that you will need to know, and that can help with your Deutsche practice:



Los, wir gehen zum Spielplatz!
Come on, let's go to the playground!

Laß uns zur Schaukel gehen.
Let's go on the swings.

Viel Spaß!
Have fun!

Zähne putzen!
Brush your teeth!

Was spielst Du am liebsten?
What do you like to play the most?

Schlafenszeit!
Bedtime!



5 Best Family Friendly Places in Berlin

Deutsches Spionagemuseum

For those children who enjoy suspense and mystery, take them to find out more about Berlin's most famous spies.

Deutsches Technikmuseum und Science Center Spectrum

Filled with interactive displays and activities, this introduces Science to children of all ages.

FEZ-Berlin

This centre has a continuous change of exhibitions and regularly hosts children's festivals. A mixture of learning and play, it is a place you can return to time and time again.

Biosphere Potsdam

The sheer size and variety of plant life in this park can take your breath away and have children believe they've entered the jungle! A full day is needed to explore!

Die Freizeitparks Tegel & Lübars (leisure parks)

These multi-faceted parks include family farms and a range of sports to keep every member of the family happy. A perfect picnic spot, which should allow parents a chance to relax! ■

Our Day

The Kita day is tailored to the group of children. We open from 09:00–16:00 with an option to extend to 17:00, allowing you to be as productive as possible whilst in the office. Bio snacks are provided so we only require lunch and a water bottle. Every day, children are brought to one of our local play parks and given time to enjoy nature outdoors. We work with parents to ensure a consistency in sleep schedules, which we know can be changeable! Activities include: art, water play, singing, dancing, baby yoga, puzzles, reading and lots of baby talk! Children leave our Kita better adjusted to parent separation and with a great introduction to socialising with other children of different ages!

If you have any questions, please get in touch. We are always happy to hear from prospective parents and encourage you to also visit the Kita whenever you are ready!

Materials used in the Kita

We believe that children of this age place great importance and interest in a tactile and sensory environment. As a result, we endeavour to use a range of materials, including a focus on reusing and recycling as much as we can. Materials we use include: soil, sand, water toys, paints, eco-glitters, glue, stickers, beads, gems and many other wooden toys. We have a no-screen policy for children in the Kita. ■



