

INSIDE THE ACORN by Pamela Bloom

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Every day at Acorn, I find yet another connection that Maria Montessori's philosophy, materials, and techniques make to contemporary research. This week, it dawned on me that Daniel Goldman's research that resulted in his book, *Emotional Intelligence*, seemed to support the essence of Dr. Montessori's vision. In *The Secret of Childhood*, she wrote "that children have a deep sense of personal dignity." From that dignity, children can evolve as kind, respectful, and caring. Dr. Goleman defines strong emotional and social intelligence as having self-awareness, managing emotions, harnessing emotions productively, having the ability to read emotions, or be empathic, and handling relationships. Acorn teachers guide each child as they navigate in their ever-expanding world of learning. Our faculty achieves this by first modeling grace and courtesy. Step by step, the children become aware of the impact of their own actions on others, of how to strengthen friendships by understanding the power of words and deeds, and of how to make amends if, in fact, a friend's feelings were hurt. The goal is to be able to listen to what others say, learn cooperation, and to be helpful. Maria Montessori actually gave us an emotional literacy program. Many of you describe how your children stand out. You know an Acorn student by the way he or she handles himself or herself in social situations. I believe that you are confirming the strength and success of your children as they grow with us at Acorn. You are absolutely correct. I see your children as having emotional and social intelligence.