Why does Montessori have multi-age classrooms?

Montessori classrooms are designed to encompass a two-to-three-year age span, allowing younger students the stimulation of older children, who in turn gain confidence and leadership skill from serving as role models. Each year when school begins, most Montessori multi-age classrooms have the advantage of having only one-third new students. With two-thirds of our students returning to each classroom, new students benefit from the stability and the security of their older and more experienced peers, who are demonstrating the ground rules, interacting with the materials and serving as role models. Returning students benefit from a teacher who knows them well and can help them to seamlessly continue on their path of learning—with no time last figuring out what they have covered in the previous year. Each child learns at their own pace and will be ready for any given lesson in their own time. The careful observation by the teacher will ensure that these lessons will come when the child is most ready. In a mixed-age class, children can always find peers who are working at their current level. Working in one class for two or three years allows students to develop a strong sense of community with their classmates and teachers.