



Parent Newsletter

February 2013

Communication

By Charl du Toit, SAMA President

Communication must be the basis of all misunderstandings. Some people communicate far too much, and then say nothing, while others communicate far too little and expect you to understand how they feel. We have all seen the cartoons with the wife talking and talking while the man thinks of something else. We have all been teenagers who switch off when our parents want to talk to us, not willing to understand that they have a problem with our dress code. How can we prevent this from happening in our relationship with our children?

In the Play, *'Greet the Caveman'*, based on the book, *'Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus'*, they explain that a woman needs to communicate about 8000 words per day, while a man only needs to communicate about 3000 words per day. I think that children go through similar stages as they grow up. Young children love to talk and tell you about their day, and then at the age of around 10-12 years, they get to the point where you ask them how their day was, and the only answer you get is "fine" ! Teenagers sometimes do not even want to talk and go straight to their room after they have raided the fridge. Then there is the wife who keeps on discussing what happened today at work, while you want to listen to the latest news, or the husband who just makes decisions without informing you - "Honey, I bought a motorbike!"

I was the youngest of four children with parents who could have been my grandparents! By the time I became a teenager, my mom knew what was lying ahead, and instead of constantly poking me with questions about how my day was, she allowed me to have space. She would create times in the day where she was 'quiet' to give me the opportunity to discuss matters I wanted to discuss. She would listen without interrupting me, and then would ask me how I felt about it, and what I thought the solution should be. By negotiating different solutions to a problem, I often ended up choosing the one she thought was best, without realising it.

In today's society where everything is about time and instant gratification, should we not teach our children to become quiet? Our children lack the listening skills required, and we often complain how we need to

repeat ourselves over and over (which teaches them not to listen the first time!). We tend to negotiate, not teach our children to communicate effectively. Montessori children are not exposed to shouting in the class, and from a young age they are given the skills to talk things out around the Peace Table, whilst we teach them skills such as, 'First seek to understand before you want to be understood.' (Stephen Covey's 7 Habits)

Parents may emphasise this, by setting the example and by communicating effectively at home. So often we do not treat the child with respect, but expect respect in return.

The month of love has passed, but it is not too late to share love with the ones around us, for whom we care so much. Rethink how, where and when you communicate. Create family times to discuss matters which are close to your heart. Learn to communicate effectively not only with the people at work, but with your family as well.

“They invented hugs to let people know you love them without saying anything”

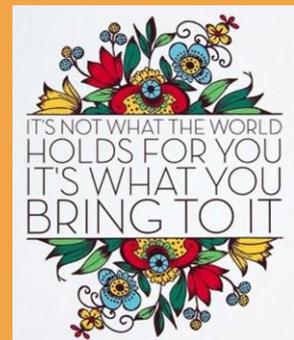
Bill Kean

Tell us...

We realise that a parent's job is never done. Please give us some feedback as to what you would find useful in this monthly newsletter.

We value your suggestions and look forward to hearing from you

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11th National Conference: Sustainable Montessori – The Natural Child

Book now to join South African education professionals as they gather to explore the universal themes and unique facets of Montessori. Trainers, teachers, and administrators from every province will be united to celebrate, learn, and connect on their shared commitment to the work of Dr Maria Montessori.

**Renowned international Guest Speaker and Author
Lynne Lawrence (Executive Director of AMI)**

- **Conference Dates: 28 and 29th April 2013**
- **Management training 30th April 2013**

All welcome, special rates for SAMA members.

Don't miss out, spaces are limited!

