



National Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2016

Letter from the President

By Jacquelyn Price

Dear Members

Welcome back to what promises to be a bumper filled year, with many of you already off to a good start with workshops and the like. Our continued professional development is ever important, especially in this fast changing world of ours.

I am saddened when I hear people say, "Oh I'm done with my studies" or "I do not need to go to refresher classes". Wouldn't it be ideal if we were able to retain absolutely everything we thought we had learnt through our initial training? Yet unfortunately we don't. And, we also do not receive in any one period absolutely everything we need to navigate us through our life's work.

Refresher courses are aimed at recall and strengthening of previously obtained knowledge and skills. And although we may be many years in our present work, there is always so much more to learn and go over. How often we hear our colleagues say "every time I re-read one of Dr Montessori's books I learn something new."

It is not only the receiving of information in workshops and short courses, but just think how much you could share with fellow like-minded peers. The passing back and forth of collective understandings and working experiences is ever inspiring. We see this at our regional meetings; which are a valuable means for us to share more amongst each other.

As you read though the articles in this issue on the importance of a three year cycle, we are aware of the hardships with which schools are faced when losing children at the older age of any vertical age group. And yes, in an ideal world, would not having a full complement of children in the third year be the cherry on top! I hear you positively agree; yes, that would be wonderful! Balancing those numbers is always a tricky task for school managers.

So be the best in Montessori you can be! Connect with others and share your ideas and experiences. All the best to you as you navigate yet another enriching Montessori year.

Warm regards

Jacky

"Successive levels of education must correspond to the successive personalities of the child. Our methods are oriented not to any pre-established principles but rather to the inherent characteristics of the different ages. It follows that these characteristics themselves include several levels."

Maria Montessori: Childhood to Adolescence.

In this issue....

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Focus Features:

Why the 3-year-cycle and its relevance to both children and teachers in all environments.

Ways to encourage our parents and teachers to commit to a 3 year cycle.

The role of the third year student in the Montessori classroom.

The stages of development in teachers.

3-year cycle: The legal stuff...

Member Schools' News

From the SAMA Office

Classifieds

Vacancies

SAMA School Visits – February 2016

By Natalie Gröss

Having the opportunity to visit our SAMA member schools over the last few months has been most enlightening. I greatly appreciate the hospitality from our member schools that always welcome me warmly into their Montessori environments.

There have been a few concerns that our members have been asking us to address and assist them. Two of these issues, have been that of dealing with the registration processes for their schools and then with the number of children they are losing to traditional schools who insist upon children joining their pre-primary in order to gain a place in their primary school. These are pertinent issues. Our president, Jacky Price, our EXCO, our administrator Irmgard Pringle and I, are doing everything we can on a daily basis to make the concerns from our members heard and acknowledged.

Regarding the registration process, the exuberant costs involved and some of the resistance met at various departments, please know that we are liaising with the relevant representatives, ensuring that your concerns are heard. If at any point you meet resistance from any of the registration departments, or from any officials visiting your school, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us immediately so that we can support and guide you wherever we can.

The challenge with our schools having numerous children leave to attend traditional schools in order to gain entry into the primary schools is a growing concern. One of the things that we encourage our schools to do is communicate effectively with the parents who enroll their children, what the three-year developmental cycle entails. To receive the full benefit of a Montessori education, a child who enrolls should remain in the program for three years or more. The parents committing to joining the Montessori community need to understand that each step of a child's development and learning from the time they enter the Montessori classroom serves as a solid foundation for the next. The child who does not finish the program will never experience the same benefits, joy and satisfaction of having reached the end. I have often heard of the analogy when it comes to the developmental processes of the three year cycle, "having poured the concrete it also needs an opportunity to cure" for the foundation to be sound. An authentic and thorough Montessori program works in the same way. Therefore, the importance of the three-year cycle is crucial in Montessori.

It is a clearly-defined and discrete educational unit with a beginning, middle, and an end for each child, with the third

year in each sequence a capstone year that becomes a culminating experience academically, emotionally, socially, and developmentally.

A detailed report will be shared with our members at our annual AGM in April, and I look forward to sharing my experiences and interactions with all our member schools.

SAMA gets a new look on the Web!

A new and improved SAMA website will go live within the first two weeks of March. This new website will enable schools to update their information and schools will also be responsible for updating their school information regularly. All membership renewals and even new membership applications will be done on line.

The website will also make it easier for members of the public to find a SAMA Montessori school in their area. Once a member of the public finds the list of SAMA schools in the area of choice, the school's membership tier will also be displayed. This means that prospective parents will be able to see whether a school is not yet operational, an initiate member, a progressive member or a full member.

SAMA members will engage the website by creating a log in code that will give them access to a wide variety of Montessori information, SAMA information and interesting local news.

The new website will be launched on the D6 Communicator. Watch out for our new SAMA website, together we're going places!

Why the 3-year-cycle and its relevance to both children and teachers in all environments.

An essential part of the Montessori environment and subsequently the learning that occurs within that environment is the other children in it. The Montessori classroom provides ample opportunities for making friends, interacting and developing consideration for others, learning how to co-operate and fostering a sense of interdependence.

Children should enjoy learning, and in an environment that embraces mixed age groups working together, they come to know it as a labour of discovery, exploration, play, excitement and joy. To these children, learning does not just mean getting ready for the next grade. To become lifelong learners, children must see their work as rewarding, meaningful and absolutely enjoyable.

It is important that Montessori teachers and parents appreciate that multi-age grouping is not the same as multi-grade grouping. Multi-grade classrooms assume there is appropriate work for each grade and children work within their grades with limited opportunity to go above or below their grade.

Rather, the diversity in ages provides opportunities for social interactions and cross-age learning which enable children to learn in an emotionally secure environment. We realise this in our schools and classrooms but also appreciate that our classrooms should strike a heterogeneous balance of gender and ability within each age level. Montessori schools strive to ensure each age group to be roughly equal in number, to avoid becoming "top" or "bottom" heavy.

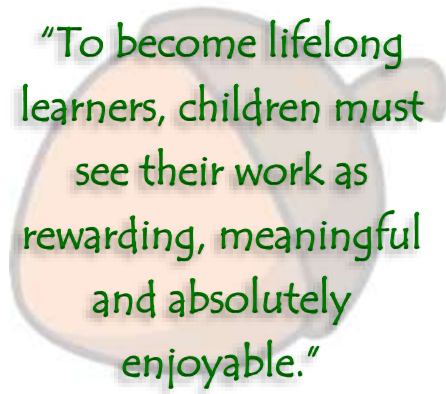
This is not always possible for many schools. This may be due to the lack of understanding on the part of the parent of the importance of the three-year cycle, or, the increasing pressures made by the surrounding private schools. How does one solve this challenge? The answer is simple but with two important components: Firstly, offer a good (pure) Montessori programme where the children are so academically, socially and emotionally competent and confident that they easily assimilate into Grade 1. Secondly, educate the parents at your school to appreciate the wonders of the methodology and reiterate the significance of the third year in the Montessori school – the year where it all comes together.

Teachers should appreciate that all parents do not deeply understand the intricate workings of a Montessori classroom. Often, schools paint a blurry picture to parents, one that shows Montessori being the same as regular, perhaps adding that it is academically more robust. This attitude is detrimental to the school because it compounds the illusion, for parents, that the child is getting the same type of education (CAPS) at the

In a Nutshell...



... "opportunities for making friends, interacting and developing consideration for others, learning how to co-operate and fostering a sense of interdependence."



"To become lifelong learners, children must see their work as rewarding, meaningful and absolutely enjoyable."



"Educate the Parents"

Montessori school or at the regular school, with the exception that there is more freedom in the Montessori class.

Schools should embrace all elements of the Montessori programme and require teachers to answer the following question before deviating from the method or adding 'modern' materials or extensions to their classrooms:

"Does this aid normalisation?"

Montessori wrote in the Absorbent Mind that "normalisation is the single most important result of our work." Normalisation is reached through purposeful work. Purposeful work engages the hand and the mind. Purposeful work brings concentration. If the seating arrangements or layout of classroom or activities on the shelves are not conducive to concentration, change it.

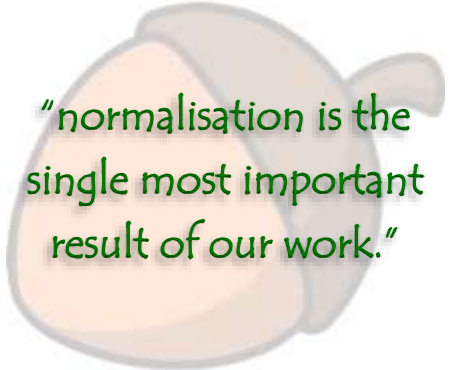
It is the responsibility of each Montessorian to educate the parents they deal with on Montessori matters. Share with parents that each year holds a special significance for the child as the roles s/he fulfil change. Because of the mixed age group, the classroom has a heritage, with only the oldest third leaving at the end of each year. Therefore, when the child returns s/he has familiarity in his/her environment, because there is an existing relationship with two thirds of the children and the guide (who ideally also stays for a three year cycle). This all helps the young child to adjust quickly after a long break and allows him/her to engage eagerly with the new challenges brought on in the new year. This three year age span offers a greater opportunity for establishing the group as a "family" of children and gives each child a three year time frame for development, because children learn at different stages or paces.

To correct defects in character, Montessori wrote, "it is unnecessary to threaten or cajole a child in order to encourage the development of good character, but instead to normalize the conditions in which the child lives."

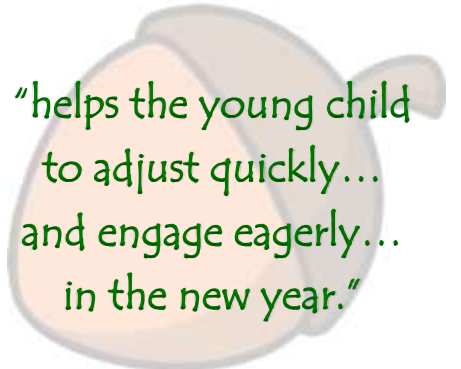
As the child matures over the 3 years spent in a Montessori classroom various stages in behaviour, self-directed autonomous learning and the ability to take responsibility are evident. The typical Montessori classroom contains children from all three stages.

The First Stage:


Children in this stage are learning to focus their attention and to concentrate on a purposeful task. They are often very young (2 ½ - 3 years) or are new to the Montessori classroom or can also be children who habitually disturb the work and concentration of others.



"normalisation is the single most important result of our work."



"helps the young child to adjust quickly... and engage eagerly... in the new year."



"opportunity for establishing the group as a "family" of children"

These children are not ready for the freedom and responsibility granted to others in the Montessori classroom. Strategies the guide may use to help concentration develop may include:

- Working near a Montessori guide
- Inviting the child to work in a specific area of the Montessori classroom with the guide checking on them frequently throughout the day.
- Giving the child limited choices to assist the decision making ability which is developing in the child.

Guides working with children at this first stage of normalisation offer the young child practice in making choices. One could start by offering one choice. Later, as the child demonstrates responsibility, the guide will offer the child two choices. "I noticed that you like working with the metal insets. Today, would you prefer to work with the sandpaper letters or the metal insets? You decide."

The guide must then encourage the child to complete the activity s/he has chosen. Should the child refuse either of the choices offered and chooses another activity, the teacher allows him to do that until he finishes (because he has made a choice – a huge step in self-directed learning). However, the guide will continue to calmly direct the child's choices until s/he is able to focus on an activity and wants to repeat it. Gradually, the Montessori guide gives the child less directed choices. "What would you like to work on today?" If the child says s/he doesn't know, the guide can then offer directed choices of work until the child is able to make his own choices.

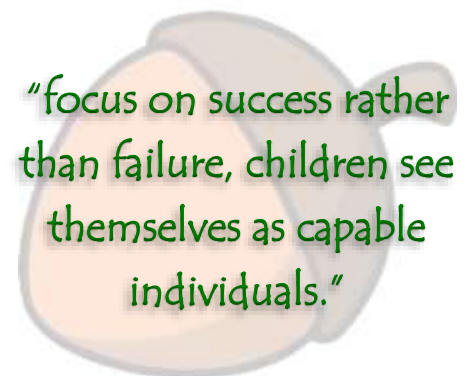
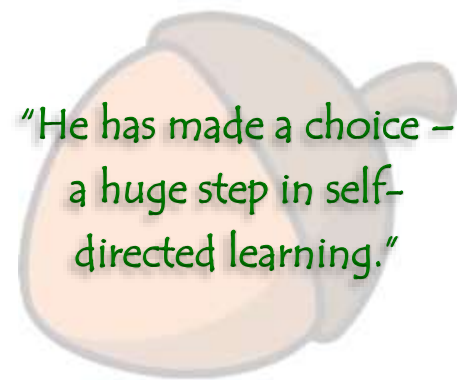
The Second Stage:

As the child is ready for it, the child experiences more freedom. Children at this stage demonstrate the ability to move from one activity to another, selecting several activities during the work period, though they seldom repeat an activity.

This type of child usually makes up the biggest population of the Montessori classroom. Because this child is not deeply engaged with the materials s/he moves quickly from one activity to another, demonstrating that s/he has not developed true self-control or inner discipline. As long as the child is able to make constructive choices, s/he is given the freedom to select their own work. Children at this stage benefit from frequent lessons or presentations.

The Third Period:

Children at this stage are typically mature and are often in the 3rd year of the three year cycle.



This child is able to focus on one activity and then move successfully to another without disturbing the work of others. S/he may concentrate on an activity and its extensions for weeks at a time. Because the child no longer requires much supervision, the guide/s must carefully observe him/her so they know when s/he is ready to move on to new and interesting activities.


Knowing that the typical child may take several years to become normalised and moves through periods of normalisation is liberating for the guide. Instead of saying "When will they be normalised?" the guide may sit back and delight in watching each child's journey towards independence and normalisation.

The multi-age classroom develops self-directing, autonomous individuals. Autonomy is a critical issue in multi-age classrooms where it is imperative that children take charge of their own learning. As independent learners, children do not have to wait for the "teacher" to tell them what to do. Children become active and enthusiastic participants in their own learning, enjoying the "ownership" of the processes of learning to read, write and solve problems.

Parents are often concerned that Montessori preschools tend to avoid whole group or large group lessons. This is not entirely true. In a classroom with mixed ages these groups are flexible and based on need, interest or topic rather than age. The guide or child can create a group, but the guide usually facilitates the group to meet the collective needs of the children. The "group" may number from one to many children.

Make the parents aware that this type of grouping is not another way to label the children. In the multi-age classroom, ability grouping is not used to define a child's learning because the Montessori philosophy rejects a "deficit model" (focus on what a child doesn't know, rather than on what the child does know). The focus on success keeps the child engaged in the learning process. The multi-age classroom provides repeated success for all the children in the classroom no matter where they are on their continuum of learning and normalisation.

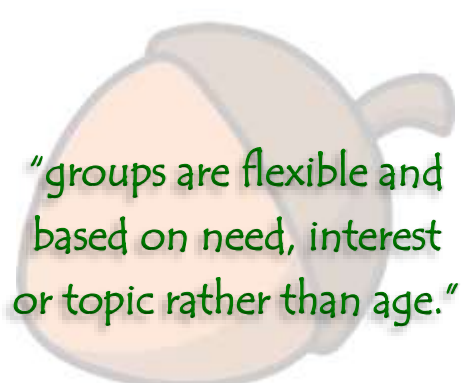
With the focus on success rather than failure, children see themselves as capable individuals. The guide staying with the group for the three year cycle is also incredibly important because s/he understands that learning is a personal construction of knowledge. S/he knows each individual child deeply and personally and can design curriculum goals and plans based on individual needs, strengths and interests. The guide develops a child-centred curriculum rather than insisting that every child master a pre-determined curriculum regardless of their needs.



"S/he may concentrate on an activity and its extensions for weeks at a time."



"delight in watching each child's journey towards independence and normalisation."




"groups are flexible and based on need, interest or topic rather than age."

Another benefit is that work is individual, therefore, children progress at their own pace and there is co-operation rather than competition between the ages.


Older children take the initiative to “teach” their younger classmates. This is an exciting experience for both the younger and older children. Eventually every child has the opportunity to be both the “pupil” and “mentor”. Mentoring benefits the mentors as well - i.e. an older, insecure reader who mentors a young non-reader boosts his/her own self esteem. The opportunity for a child to feel like someone of importance cannot be underestimated. Socially, older children will often escort younger children to the bathroom, extra murals, lunch area, play area etc. This offers all older children the opportunity to play esteem-building leadership roles both academically and socially.

The Montessori programme is designed to allow development at the individual’s pace. It provides for the wide range of developmental needs of the child. The Montessori guides are trained in child development in the given age range while the Montessori training enables the guide to present the curriculum in a manner that best fits the child rather than making the child fit the curriculum.

Parents must be made to understand that the Montessori curriculum is a sequential programme designed for independent learning. From the moment a child enters a Montessori environment, we are concerned with the on-going development of the “whole child”: intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual and social. We need to stress to parents that the cycle of learning is completed upon approaching age six and not five. If the child leaves before age six, s/he has not received the full benefit of our programme nor has s/he had time to complete his/her learning in our curriculum.



“co-operation rather than competition between the ages.”



“opportunity to play esteem-building leadership roles”

Kids Speak...

I had inadvertently left the silkworms at home. The children asked where they were and I had to confess. "I left them at home."

"By *theirselves*?" gasped Justine.

"Who's looking after them?" demanded Rocco in horror.

Ways to encourage our parents and teachers to commit to a 3 year cycle

We are all aware that it is essential to complete the three year cycle in the Montessori environment. When children/directress/assistants stay a complete 3 year in the **same Montessori environment** with the **same group** of children and the **same directress/assistant** they are able to build a strong, stable and consistent community. The children have the freedom to concentrate on learning (without the worry of transition and adjusting to new teachers or environments) and the teachers are able to build strong connections to provide the ultimate support to each child.

“One of the documents I had to sign was a statement of my commitment to keep my son in the primary (3-6yrs) program for the full three-year cycle.”

Read the article here: <http://mariamontessori.com/mm/?p=1640>

This could be introduced and work effectively for parents and employees.

The Role of the Third Year Student in the Montessori Classroom

Friday, September 28, 2012

FROM NAMC teacher training blog:

<http://montessoritraining.blogspot.co.za/2012/09/role-third-year-montessori-student-planes-development.html>

When Maria Montessori developed her educational method, she created programs that encompass a three-year learning cycle. This three-year cycle corresponds with Montessori's planes of development, each of which spans six years of the child's life:

- First plane: 0–6 years (Absorbent Mind)
- Second plane: 6–12 years (Childhood)
- Third plane: 12–18 years (Adolescence)
- Fourth plane: 18–24 years (Young Adult)

Within each plane of development, there is a natural separation and transformation that occurs every three years.

First plane:

- 0–3 years: The child absorbs everything in her environment, subconsciously
- 3–6 years: Child is now conscious of what is being learned
- Second plane:
 - 6–9 years: Child has the ability to comprehend. He questions everything. He has a very curious and active imagination. It is the time for creating a personal code of ethics.
 - 9–12 years: Child is able to work more abstractly and enjoys BIG works. Inner order takes precedent over external order. Ethics now expands to peers and the world at large.
- Third plane:
 - 12–15 years: Puberty
 - 15–18 years: Adolescence



In the Montessori classroom, third-year students apply their knowledge and model behaviour for younger students



Third year students are confident in who they are; they are the role models and leaders of the class, taking younger children under their wing to teach and nurture.

The Montessori Classroom

Let's take a look at how the three-year cycle works in the Montessori 3–6 environment. (The same model can be applied to the Montessori elementary and secondary environments as well).



The Montessori Method works best when a child can experience all three years of the cycle. The first year is laying the foundation for learning at that stage of development. And the successive years build upon that foundation. In the second year, children explore the lessons and materials in more detail and in the third; children start to apply their learning in new ways.

This third year is critical for the formation of higher level thinking skills. The third year in the Montessori environment is really the “capstone” or senior year. Third year students are confident in who they are; they are the role models and leaders of the class, taking younger children under their wing to teach and nurture. These older students pass along what they have learned to the younger children and celebrate their learning and acquisition of knowledge and skills. They know how hard it was to learn these skills and are delighted to show their peers.

The third year is a rite of passage much as the senior year in a traditional high school. There are some high-school students who graduate early, not having to complete that senior year. However, many students reflect later at never having had a sense of closure; they were just “finished.” Often, they feel that they were removed from their environment too early, without having the opportunity to celebrate the conclusion of their 12-year work cycle. Similarly, removing a child from the Montessori environment before he has the chance to complete his third-year of the Montessori continuum robs him of a sense of completion. The final year of his Montessori program gives a child the chance to develop leadership skills and to apply his knowledge in a new direction — and that is a valuable opportunity every Montessori child should be afforded.



As much as possible, NAMC's web blog reflects the Montessori curriculum as provided in its teacher training programs. We realize and respect that Montessori schools are unique and may vary their schedules and offerings in accordance with the needs of their individual communities. We hope that our readers will find our articles useful and inspiring as a contribution to the global Montessori community.

© North American Montessori Center - originally posted in its entirety at Montessori Teacher Training on Friday, September 28, 2012.



THE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHERS

This model of developmental stages for teachers is influenced by the work of Lilian Platz on teacher development, Malcolm Knowles on adult learning and numerous interviews with Montessori teachers, heads of school, and teacher trainers.

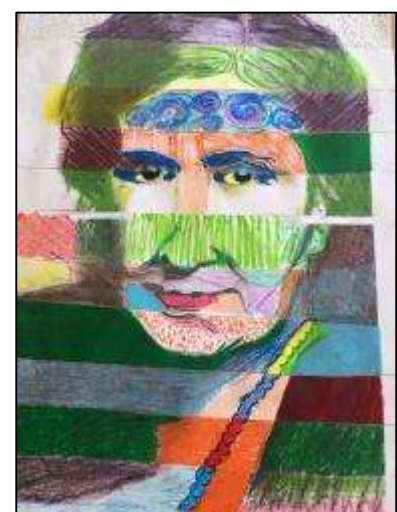
Every Montessori teacher is a unique individual with his/her specific personality traits, skills and potentialities. Yet, in observing teachers over time, we can discern some commonalities related to teachers' stages of development. The stages outlined in this model are intended as a framework for understanding how teachers grow and develop. The years of experience given for each stage are very general. In some cases, a teacher's development may become arrested at a particular stage, regardless of the number of years in the classroom. Sometimes circumstances may cause a teacher to revert to an earlier stage. For example, a seasoned Stage IV teacher who moves to a new school will exhibit some of the characteristics of a new Stage I teacher.

A teacher's development actually begins with formal training. However, the teacher's on-going development occurs within the context of the school. Awareness of the stages of development for teachers helps the head of school to more sensitively support the professional development of each individual teacher.

Neonate (first year)

This stage is very much like that of the human neonate-that first fragile period when the newborn is adjusting to life in a new environment outside the womb-in this case, outside the womb of the training stage.

The ultimate task of the neonate stage is survival. For the infant, it means being able to breathe, digest, and accommodate one's basic systemic functions to an independent existence in a new environment which is infinitely larger and more complex than the old one. For the teacher, it means making the ideal real. The new teacher must habituate within the new environment of the school by developing independent, autonomous patterns or habits of practice in response to the reality of the classroom and school.



Characteristics of a Stage 1 Teacher:

- Idealistic. The new teacher is imbued with a vision of the child's potential and convinced of the truth of the Montessori principles.
- Drawn toward application. As in the second period of the three-period lesson, the teacher wants to do it herself and believes that it will work.
- Vulnerable. Frequently feels overwhelmed by the responsibility undertaken. Fears rejection and failure and is very sensitive to perceived criticism.

Needs

- Freedom without abandonment. Must have opportunities to do it by the book (or by the album!), to repeat, and to engage in trial and error.
- On-going orientation to the new school culture. Guided orientation must be related to issues and circumstances as they arise. The principle of "isolation of difficulty" is very important in the neonate stage.

Support

- Protection from overwhelming stresses. Recognize that the major focus must be to establish an intimate relationship with the children in her class. Remove as many obstacles as possible (intervention with a demanding parent, no assignment of faculty committees, etc.).
- One key personal relationship (head of school or seasoned faculty member) that provides regular dialogue about the actual implementation of theory into practice.
- Hands-on support with practical tasks such as material making, record keeping, ordering supplies, etc.
- Seminars or dialogue with trainers to isolate aspects of implementation. The new teacher also values connecting with other new Montessori teachers to more freely share successes and concerns. (E-mail, chat rooms, and teleconferencing offer expanded opportunities.)

Stage II. Consolidation (2-5 years)

During Stage II the teacher begins to integrate the various skills related to her work with the children. She has internalised the theory and specific lessons and is no longer tied to the training album. She can individualize presentations while maintaining awareness of the whole class and is able to communicate effectively with parents.



The second-stage teacher has differentiated the various tasks and skills by isolating difficulties and is now weaving them into a whole practice. The task of the consolidation stage is fluidity—an integration of practice.

*Happy Valentine's Day from
Montessori Life!*

Regional Meeting Reminder

KZN: 12th March 2016 at: 32 Oxford Drive, Durban North; Hosts: Rose Lowry; Lucy Cronje and team
Topic: We will have a speaker - Janet Potterton, Occupational Therapist, with well over 15 years of experience. She will discuss "when to refer" within the 3 –6 age group she will also discuss how OT problems can affect the child in the foundation phase if not detected and remediated as necessary in the pre –school.

Remember to RSVP to the SAMA office

Characteristics of a Stage 2 Teacher

- Classroom focus. The teacher's energy is primarily directed toward her own class.
- Motivated and self-directed. Sets tasks and determines methods for herself.
- Exhibits self-confidence and joy. This is a natural result of consolidation.

Needs

- Attention. There can be a tendency to ignore this seemingly self-sufficient teacher. This second stage teacher needs specific feedback and dialogue that encourages reflection.
- Stability. Consolidation requires the opportunity to complete a three-year cycle with a group of children and begin a new cycle.
- Directed Input. This teacher is eager to focus more deeply on one aspect related to the classroom. This focus is often shaped by a specific problem, but the teacher can also be encouraged to examine work that is going very well.

Support

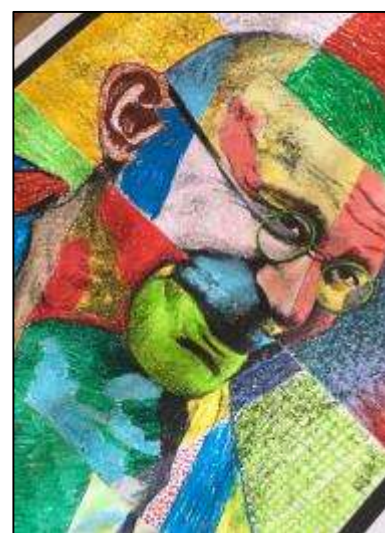
- Continued education related to Montessori. Refresher courses, workshops, seminars.
- Observations of other Montessori classrooms. Particularly at same level.
- Collegial dialogue. At Stage II, the teacher is less vulnerable and ready for more "give and take," particularly when discussions are focused around specific elements of classroom practice.
- Collaborative discussion of expectations and goals (with head and/or seasoned teacher). During consolidation, the teacher is asking, "What should I expect of myself? The children? The parents?"

Stage III: Renewal (5-7 years)

Once a teacher has achieved consolidation, the head (of school) can mistakenly believe that the teacher has reached "maturity." Instead, we need to recognize another stage in the teacher's ongoing development.

Stage three is a very critical period in the development of the teacher and marks a major transition point. During this stage, there is the risk of losing good teachers in two ways: 1) They burn out and leave the classroom; or 2) They burn out and remain in the classroom in a state of stasis.

Positive navigation of this stage results in renewal - a rededication to the work with a deeper understanding of self and of Montessori.



Regional Meeting Reminder

JHB: 12th March 2016; at: 17 Elgin Road, Bryanston; Hosts: Nikki Searl and team.
Topic: We will have an interactive drumming workshop with the Drum Café.
Remember to RSVP to the SAMA office

Characteristics of a Stage 3 Teacher

- A new period of vulnerability. The teacher frequently doubts herself or rationalizes what she cannot resolve.
- Danger of rigidity. Consolidation can become mere routine and the teacher's mode of practice may resemble “automatic pilot”.
- “Difficult.” The stage-three teacher may exhibit behaviour perceived as argumentative or intransigent.
- Lack of enthusiasm for work. The teacher may communicate discouragement, a feeling of being “tired of doing the same things”, or even talk of changing careers.
- In this critical stage, the teacher is asking difficult and essential questions about herself and her work. Where is this going? What are the possibilities? What is my potential? What are the potential developments for me in this field?

Needs

- Define self as professional in a broader sense. The teacher needs to understand the larger context of her work.
- Discussion of career path options. What are opportunities for advancement? Is advancement possible while remaining in the classroom?
- Invest in further study, training, or education. Renewal requires a conscious and personal investment in further developing oneself as a teacher.

Support

- Opportunity to experience leadership in the school community. Examples: facilitate faculty meetings, design and lead a parent discussion program, chair a committee, organise a faculty study group.
- Exposure to wider variety of experiences with community professionals. The stage-three teacher finds involvement with other professional educators by participating in activities and organizations such as a community study group of Montessorians, a network of teachers and health care professionals focused on the ADHD child, an ecological field study class for teachers, etc.
- Participation in regional and national Montessori conferences. The teacher may be asked to write up proceedings and make a summary report to faculty or write an article for the newsletter.
- Observations across the continuum. By observing children in all the levels within the school and in other Montessori schools, the teacher sees more clearly how her own work fits into the larger patterns of the development of the child.
- Teacher prepares a five-year plan for her own professional development. The head uses her plan as part of on-going evaluation to set priorities and goals and provides concrete financial support.

Stage IV: Seasoned Teacher

To be “seasoned” means to develop character and resiliency by experiencing challenges and weathering change. For a teacher, this stage is akin to renewing vows. Having gone through the critical stage of renewal, this teacher is now rededicated to her work at a deeper level and with a heightened sense of purpose.



Characteristics of a Stage 4 Teacher

- Submerging personal striving. The seasoned teacher is not struggling to prove herself and is consequently more open to ideas, questions, and critiques.
- Less need for extrinsic feedback. Motivation and reward are deeply internalised.
- Asks the deeper questions in every scenario. Initiates discussion and centres decision-making around key principles and values.

Needs

- Opportunities for outreach. The seasoned teacher views her work as extending beyond her own class or school.
- Creative opportunities. At Stage IV, the teacher's experience and deeper understanding find creative manifestation in new developments and designs.

Support

- Enhanced opportunities for leadership in wider arenas. Examples: deliver an address or present a workshop at a regional/national conference, lead curriculum development efforts, teach a college course, participate in long-range planning, provide leadership on local and national committees.
- Sabbatical/release time. The school recognizes the value of the seasoned teacher to the school, but also to the larger educational community. It actively supports the teacher by providing time and resources for intensive study, outreach, and project development research.

*Reprinted with kind permission by NAMTA from The Whole-School
Montessori Handbook By David Kahn, Sharon L. Dubble, D. Renee
Pendleton*

The Best Teacher

(adapted from Lao Tzu's Too The Ching)

The best teacher is the one of whom the students are hardly aware.

Next best is the one they love and praise.

Next, the one they fear.

Last, comes the one whom they despise and defy.

When the teacher shows no faith,

The students will be unfaithful.

The wise teacher is humble and sparing in words.

When the task accomplished and everything is complete,

The students say, "We did it! We did it all on our own!"

3-YEAR CYCLE: THE LEGAL STUFF...·

A pertinent aspect of a 3 year work cycle is that many parents register with us only once and we have to make certain that the documentation we have for them is valid for the coming year. I find it useful to hand out the two documents at the end of a year, these two documents need to accompany my new fee schedule and need to be completed by all parents. I find that they act as a good reminder to parents of the conditions of enrolment.



I am happy to share them with my colleagues. Please customize them to fit your school - these are just wording templates.

Nicky Rodseth, Montessori Life Principal

Confirmation of Enrolment for 2015

Please assist the School with its planning and operational requirements for the New Year by completing and returning this form to the School’s Principal before Friday the 5th December 20XX. Thank you.

I/We, the undersigned parents/legal guardians (“Parent(s)”) of (please fill in your Child/Children’s name/s)

.....
Confirm that:

My/our abovementioned Child /Children:

- will be attending (Please place a cross (x) next to your choice)
- will not be attending

Name of school (hereinafter referred to as “the School”) in 20.....

In the event that my/our abovementioned Child/Children will be attending the School in 20..., I/we further confirm that:

I/we understand the terms and conditions of the School Documents which I/we completed and signed in regard to the said Child/Children when initially enrolling the Child/Children in the School; and agree to abide by those terms and conditions until such time as I/we give the School written notice of my /our intention to deregister the Child/Children from the School as required in accordance with the terms and conditions of the said School Documents, or until the School cancels in terms of the School Documents.

I/we have read and noted the School’s Fees Schedule for 20.. and agree to pay the fees therein and to continue paying fees according to my/our currently selected fee payment option. (Please notify the Principal in writing if you wish to select an alternative payment option so the School can amend your account).

.....
Signature and Name of Father

.....
Signature and Name of Mother

UPDATING OUR DETAILS

If your contact/other details have changed since you completed our Name of school Registration Form, kindly assist the School to keep its records updated by completing this form with your new details and return it to your child's Teacher or the Principal. Thank you.

We are the Parents of: _____(insert your child/children's name/s)

PARENT'S DETAILS

Surname of Father _____

Christian name _____

Home address _____

Home telephone no. _____

Work address _____

Work telephone no _____

E mail _____

Mobile no. _____

Postal address _____

Surname of Mother _____

Christian name _____

Home address _____

Home telephone no. _____

Work address _____

Work telephone no. _____

E mail _____

Mobile no. _____

Postal address _____

OTHER CHANGES THE SCHOOL NEEDS TO BE AWARE OF: _____

Just as Montessori introduced exercises in 'Grace and Courtesy' in reaction to the young child's need for order we need to continue modelling the behaviour of grace and courtesy to our employees. They then have the guidelines to fully absorb the how, the when, and the vocabulary they should use in our Montessori environments which will result in a more pleasant environment for everyone.

To find out more about introducing 'Fixed Term' Employment contracts and other Labour issues please visit:

<http://www.mywage.co.za/main/decent-work>

Although the fixed period for a contract with parents is only 24 months i.t.o the Consumer Protection Act section 14, we would advise for assistance with your parent contracts to please contact Jessica Venn, who has assisted SAMA in the past with 'an outline for contracts of enrolment for schools whilst complying with section 14 and regulation 5 of the consumer protection act'.

JESSICA VENN, B.Com Law. LLB.

T: +27 (82) 371 2548 F: 0865523698 E: jessica@venn-attorneys.co.za

**Employees create
customer stories that
make your brand talkworthy.**

Source: <http://heidcohen.com/?p=29719>

Positive Mind.
Positive Vibes.
Positive Life.

Member Schools' News



24th
BIRTHDAY
CELEBRATION

NORTHCLIFF MELVILLE TIMES NMT

24 November 2015

School is great

Paola Warrender writes:

When my son, Owen, was two years old I started asking around about a nursery school for him in the Northcliff-Fairland area.

I was blessed to be referred to Felicity and her Montessori nursery school named Acorn to Oak.

My first impression was of a loving and cared for environment with quality learning and playing tools for the children.

Felicity came across as a little strict, but I appreciated her old school value of respect for self and for others.

Owen was enrolled at age three and we have been on the most incredible journey of learning with him through Felicity's teaching.

While I knew very little about Montessori education, what has stood out for me is how the natural curiosity of our child has been encouraged to discover through his own enquiry about himself and the world he lives in.

The school environment literally tempts the child to engage and explore a range of age-appropriate materials and activities.

Beautifully presented trays of activities line the shelves with which the children "work": Learning to pour liquids, to count, select and sort objects, to open and close containers and to lift, carry and build, thereby

developing all the senses to judge and interact effectively with the material world.

Owen has brought books home from school about the plant and animal kingdom.

All the learning tools are quality and beautifully made.

Children are given the opportunity to learn to use real things.

They learn to carefully lift and pour water from a real glass jug, rather than from a plastic "child-safe" jug.

Owen can count, he knows all the colours of the rainbow, he knows the planets of our solar system and the days of the week, he knows to wait his turn, to put back with care what he has used and to say thank you and please.

While Owen is no saint, most importantly, Owen is curious about everything in his world, be it an insect, a flower, a person or toy.

Recently, Owen came home with a sundial he had made with his class for the garden.

He also does yoga and Kindermusik which he loves.

It is said that the first seven years of a child's life are the formative years that lay the foundation for all further learning.

Felicity, with her Montessori approach, has nurtured our son's joy to learn and we are deeply grateful to her.

A solid foundation has been laid over the last two years.

Regional Meeting Feedback – Pretoria

Our first Special Interest Group meeting of the year was well attended by a wide spectrum of Montessorians of all ages, sexes, races and levels of experience.

Our theme was "Creativity. Heidi van Staden first led a short discussion on what creativity within the Montessori environment means & shared ideas on how to include "great works of art" in our environments

We then enjoyed a hands-on, collaborative art activity – the results of which were quite stunning, as you have seen throughout this newsletter!

The last part of the meeting was spent sharing ideas for shelf activities that encourage the child to use their creativity.

Special thanks to Heidi and her team at the Montessori College South Africa for hosting an enjoyable and inspiring event!



Ncinci Ones Montessori – Hole in the Wall

Dear fellow Montessorians

Greetings to you from Hole in the Wall, Eastern Cape – I trust you are having a good year! I have just had the pleasure of a 7-month sabbatical and it was wonderful and rejuvenating!

I was approached by the local community at Hole in the Wall in January 2016 and they have given me a rondawel – to please set up a Montessori pre-school like I did in Coffee Bay. Here I go again.....

Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori was started by me in 2010, with 15 children in a 5m rondawel and it then grew to accommodate 60 young rural children, who now enjoy a solid Montessori foundation.

I would like to do the same thing for this community, as we continue spreading Montessori through the rural Transkei and need your support.

Below please find some information on the work I have done since 2009, which I am hoping will convince you to sponsor one of the children at Ncinci Ones Montessori. Sponsors are needed to ensure sustainability of the project.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

Dawn Brochenin

For further information, please read further:

Background

I set up and hands-on managed Sustainable Coffee Bay NPO from 2009 – 2015 www.sustainablecoffeebay.org.za

Our projects are based in the greater Coffee Bay area, Ward 24 in the Mqanduli district of the KSD Regional Municipality, which is part of the OR Tambo District Municipality, in the Eastern Cape.

It is part of the Tshezi Traditional Authority, under the leadership of Chief Ngwenyati Phali. Several of the surrounding villages have been identified as some of the poorest areas in the country. As a former homeland of South Africa and having endured a deliberate policy of under investment during apartheid, the area still suffers from having an extremely low socio-economic status. The impact of this is experienced through poor infrastructure, a lack of educational and employment opportunities and many of the other economic and environmental entrapments naturally associated with financial poverty.



BEST ECD PRACTITIONER
Dawn Brochenin (Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori Centre, Eastern Cape)

When Dawn Brochenin felt the drag of the hospitality industry getting her down, she decided to do something to improve the lives of others and started the Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori Centre in 2010, becoming the only person to teach Montessori education in the deep rural Eastern Cape.

She launched the centre in a small rondawel with 15 children. "It is beautiful to see little people become independent as they learn."

Today that centre teaches 60 children, with plans to expand further. "We are now opening two satellite centres in Mawatshezi and Ngcwanguba. Brochenin is very proud of her children. "Our children become top of the class when they go to school," she says.

Brochenin plans to use the R60 000 to increase the number of Montessori institutions in the rural Eastern Cape, to empower more local women and to build jungle gyms for the young children.

BEST ECD CENTRE
SECOND place: Little Saints Nursery School, North West
THIRD place: N'waxombotana Preschool, Mpumalanga

My vision

To guide and teach young rural children, giving them the best possible start to life.

The projects that I managed:**Community Basket**

This donation basket was started in 2002 and is located in the Coffee Shack reception where it proved to be highly successful. Guests are able to leave behind items that they no longer require and these were sorted and packed into boxes. When there are 70 – 100 boxes they are dropped off in surrounding villages at the same time Community members are taught the value of tourism and tourists to the area.

Marhenene Boys

Overseeing and mentoring a child-headed household of 4 teenage boys. Acting as guardians, we were involved in these boys' lives on a daily basis by providing them with life skills, school support and new opportunities. They have since grown into confident young teenagers with many new skills, including surfing and they got themselves into the South African Development Surf Team in 2011.

School Furniture and Support Fund

We believe a desk and chair is a right, not a privilege for a scholar. This fund has assisted many schools in the surrounding areas with desks and chairs, security bars, outdoor resources and educational tours over the years, and since inception in 2004, this fund has brought in R118 530.00.

Scholarship Fund

With the closest high school being 20km away, this project, which started in 2004, offers local students the opportunity to get a decent education at St Johns College in Mthatha. Students are selected on their grades and their home situation is taken into consideration. St Johns is an academic school that offers quality education, producing some of the top matriculants in the Eastern Cape each year. The programme has developed to include applicants from six of the surrounding Junior Secondary schools and 30 students have passed through this programme since inception to a value of more than R500 000.

Tertiary Assistance Fund

This fund has been assisting students from the greater Coffee Bay area to enter into or complete their tertiary education. We have had 14 ladies graduate from the South African College of Tourism, all of whom are now employed. We have had 4 young men graduate from the South African Tracker Academy, who are all now employed full time. We have had a Mechanical Engineering student complete his three years at Walter Sisulu Technical University and our top St Johns student who got 4 distinctions in 2010 is now studying Mining Engineering at Wits University – in his last year. This fund will provide much needed role models for the area.

Ex-Mine Workers Assistance Fund

This project started in 2010 when I started helping a few guys in Coffee Bay with applying for their provident funds from Anglo Platinum Mines, where many of the local men worked. Word started getting out and more and more community members came to see me for assistance. We have attended to thousands of community members since inception and close to R4.8 million has been paid out or is in the payment process to community members.

Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori Early Learning Centre

I opened Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori on 15 February 2010 in a 5m rented rondawel and we provided 15 children aged 2½ - 5 years old, with Montessori pre-school education in a stimulating and safe learning environment. The community quickly saw the benefit of investing in the development of young children, as the number of children on our waiting list did not stop growing. Due to the long waiting list of 60 children, I approached the government's National Development Agency for assistance and they supported and approved my project in September 2011. They funded the building of a new early learning Centre that would accommodate 60 young children. We moved into our new building in April 2013 and have been providing a stimulating early learning environment guided in both isiXhosa and English and 2 healthy meals per day. We are trying to integrate education, health, nutrition and social services, which will lay the foundation for a lifetime of learning. We are also trying to assist the establishing of 6 satellite Montessori pre-schools in surrounding villages and 7 local ladies have recently qualified with a Montessori ECD higher certificate NQF Level 5 training course, which was sponsored by Montessori Centre South African and Stichting Obonto NPO in Holland.

In September 2014, I entered Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori and myself into the NDA Early Childhood Development Awards for the Eastern Cape. I entered the school for Best ECD Centre in the Eastern Cape and myself as Best ECD Practitioner. I had not heard anything by January 2015, so did not think about it much. In February I received a call to say that we were in the Top 5 for the Eastern Cape and that I needed to attend the Awards Ceremony at Hemingways Casino in East London. It was a very smart affair and all the top people from the different sectors were there.

Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori won the award for Best ECD Centre in the Eastern Cape and I won the Best ECD Practitioner Award 2014 for the Eastern Cape 😊

We then had to attend the National Early Childhood Development Awards Ceremony on 24 March 2015 at Montecasino in Johannesburg. Ikhaya Labantwana Montessori and I were representing the Eastern Cape at the Awards. Wow, what a lovely week we had. Meeting all people doing the same kind of work from all the provinces – it was very enriching.

The Awards ceremony was a big, shiny event at the Ballroom at Montecasino and all the Ministers and MEC's were in attendance. I was blessed to receive the Award for Best ECD Practitioner in South Africa 2014.



Ikhaya Labantwana 2010



Ikhaya Labantwana 2011



Ikhaya Labantwana 2013



Ikhaya Labantwana 2014

My portion of the prize money allowed me to take a much-needed sabbatical, which I did and thoroughly enjoyed, from July – December 2015.

During this period, I moved from Coffee Bay to Hole in the Wall (9km away), and have really been enjoying living here. During my sabbatical I was often approached by local mamas, asking me when I was opening a pre-school here at Hole in the Wall. I explained that I was on a rest period, and we would look in 2016. In January this year, a local family approached me and offered me a rondawel, asking me to please do what I did in Coffee Bay. I was overwhelmed, as clearly my life path has been decided for me.

We have this rondawel, which will be fixed up with thanks to Stichting Obonto NPO in Holland. We then need to fill the rondawel with Montessori learning materials and nice things and pay wages. Once the 15 children start attending in April 2016, we will need 15 sponsors for the children, at R500 per month, to sustain the project.

I will guide in English and I will have a local lady assisting me in Xhosa and we will have a cook/gardener.

The children will receive a solid Montessori foundation, as well as 2 nutritious meals per day, a daily calcium supplement and deworming twice a year.

The Montessori Method helps children develop creativity, problem solving, critical thinking and time management skills, so that they can contribute to society and the environment. It helps children become fulfilled persons in their particular time and place on earth.

Please contact me for any further information and thank you very much for your support and interest – I really appreciate it!

Yours in Montessori

Dawn Brochenin



Ikhaya Labantwana Garden
2010



Ikhaya Labantwana Garden
2011



Ikhaya Labantwana 2014



Ikhaya Labantwana 2015

FROM THE SAMA OFFICE



Refresh. Renew. Reinspire.

The South African Montessori Association invites you to attend the 14th annual conference hosted in the heart of the Mother City, Cape Town, 2016.

DATE: SAMA Conference
30 April (09h30 – 17h30)
1 May (09h00 – 17h00)

Leadership & Management workshop with Jonathan Wolff
2 May (09h30 – 15h30)

VENUE: Gardens Commercial High School
Paddock Ave. CBD, Cape Town

COST: Early bird discount of **R1 000** 1 October to 28 February 2016 – book and save today!

SAMA MEMBERS:

R2 700 (early bird: R1 700) for 2-day Conference (30 April AND 1 May)

R1 850 (early bird: R 850) for 1 day Leadership & Management workshop

NON MEMBERS:

R4 900 (early bird: R3 900) for 2-day Conference (30 April AND 1 May)

R2 000 (early bird: R1 000) for 1 day Leadership & Management workshop



To read the CHILD OF THE UNIVERSE magazine online click here:

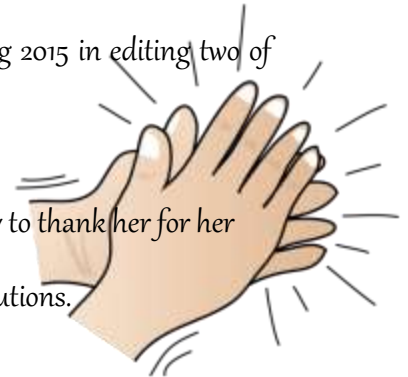
https://issuu.com/2luni-media/docs/montessori_mag-



Special thank you to SAMA Individual member Laura Collard who graciously assisted the EXCO during 2015 in editing two of the four national newsletters.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her

willingness and contributions.





6 – 12 Assistants Course

14 – 27 April 2016

The Sustainability Institute, Stellenbosch, Western Cape

Alison Awes (director of elementary training at the Montessori Training Centre of Minnesota) will be presenting the 60-hour Elementary Assistants Course in the Western Cape During April. The intention of this course is to help interested adults become informed, capable, and supportive assistants to a trained Montessori elementary teacher. Further, the program may serve as an information course for administrators of schools and parents. The Course presents an examination of the development of the child in accordance with Dr. Maria Montessori's principles and philosophy. Particular emphasis is given to children between the ages of six and twelve years old.

COST:

1. Course only:

R 6 200.00 - SAMA Members working at SAMA member schools

R 6 800.00 - SAMA Members

R 7 800.00 - Non SAMA Members

2. All-inclusive package: Course with Full Board Accommodation*:

R11 200.00 - SAMA Members working at SAMA member schools

R11 800.00 - SAMA Members

R12 800.00 - Non SAMA Members

3. Conference package: Course including 2-day conference:

R 7 400.00 - SAMA Members working at SAMA member schools

R 8 000.00 - SAMA Members

R10 800.00 - Non SAMA Members

* Accommodation is at the recently refurbished Sustainability Institute Guest House (includes tea-breaks, vegetarian lunches, meal drinks and bed and breakfast). Rooms are for 2 people, sharing.

Spaces are
limited,
Book early to
avoid
missing out.



OFFICE MAINTENANCE

When making a payment to the SAMA office kindly use your surname or school name as the reference in order to allocate the payment effectively. If you have made a payment in the last three months using any of the following references kindly contact Irmgard Pringle as she is unable to allocate the payments.

SAMA TERM1 levy MI	R1000
Tfs for SAMAcon	R1750
Various See Email	R2985
SAMA	R770

Classifieds



Contact: Mohamed Amra
Tel: 0312073871
Cell: 0828069121



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Email: anthea@kid-ease.co.za www.kid-ease.co.za

VACANCIES

GAUTENG JHB

"**Baobab Montessori in Bryanston** is looking for an experienced, caring directress in their 3-6 environment. The candidate should be suitably qualified, proactive, able to be part of a team and passionate about children. CV's can be emailed to Caren and Jessica at info@baobabmontessori.com. Position is to start immediately and salary is negotiable based on experience."

Olivedale Montessori has a vacancy for a dynamic, gentle, toddler Directress, starting in April. Hours 6:45am - 2pm. Requirements: Montessori qualification with a passion for the Montessori philosophy, experience with young children, ability to work well as a team as well as communicate with parents. Please contact Lana on ana@olivedalemontessori.co.za

Living Montessori School has expanded and is looking for an assistant Directress in the Primary School who will eventually take over the role of Lead Directress.

We are seeking someone with excellent leadership skills, work ethic, professionalism and classroom management skills.

Applicants with a 3-6 Montessori qualification will be considered if they are willing to further their Montessori Primary education.

Candidate must be loving, enthusiastic, hardworking, energetic and fun.

Please send your CV to sabashni@livingmontessori.co.za or call 082 494 2335.

Modderfontein Montessori School is looking for a passionate and dedicated 3-6 year old directress to join our teaching family. We are a family owned school set in the beautiful tree filled area of Modderfontein (close to Edenvale). The prospective applicant should meet the following criteria:

- 3-6 year old Montessori Diploma
- 3-5 years of teaching experience in a Montessori school
- SACE registration
- Reliable transport

Our salaries are competitive; we follow the 3 term school calendar. Position is available from 1 May 2016.

E-mail your CV and qualification to sunita@mmontessori.co.za

Western Cape

Honeycomb Montessori preschool is looking for a Support Directress from the Second Term of this year.

We are looking for someone who is creative, enthusiastic, committed and able to work as part of a team.

A fully qualified 3-6 years Directress is ideal but if you are still studying and think you have what it takes to make an impression then please apply. principal@honeycombpreschool.co.za

Chameleons Montessori School in Durbanville is seeking a trained/training Assistant to support their 3-6 Pre-school class, from next term. We would like someone with a deep love of the Montessori philosophy and the ability to really understand and aid the child. If you are interested, please email your CV to emma@chameleonsmontessori.co.za or contact the school on (021) 976 9611. We look forward to hearing from you!

International



Exciting opportunity in Chiang Mai, Thailand for qualified and experienced Montessori teacher.

Varee Chiangmai International School is seeking a qualified and experience Montessori teacher to help set up an Early Years and a Key Stage 1.

Teachers need to hold a Bachelor's degree and have experience in setting up Montessori environments in 3-6 and 6-9 year olds.

Interested teachers can contact Dr Andri at international@varee.ac.th for more information.