



Southern African Montessori Association

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Message from the President

Dear SAMA Members

Message from the President

“You must be the change you want to see in the world” – so says Mahatma Gandhi and what wise words to guide SAMA into the next year.

It is so easy to get stuck in trying to find solutions, creating all sorts of new plans and programmes and looking out there for the answers. During the days of the SAMA conference and in the subsequent workshops, I was struck by how far we have come as Montessorians in our region but equally how stuck we are in many things too!

If we want our schools and training centres to be sustainable, celebrating Montessori education for decades to come, we need to be the change we want to see. We lament over poor standards in schools, blame training centres, wish for parents that “get this” – the list goes on. But do we all really understand that each and every one of us has a significant part to play in ensuring authentic Montessori is practiced in each moment we profess to be Montessorians? Through our integrity, honesty and willingness to remain true to the essence of Montessori education, I believe it is possible to be the change.

The Exco will meet this coming weekend (24th/25th May) for our second face to face meeting since the AGM and one of our primary goals is to identify the best way to put a best practice guiding document together for our members. We plan to spend the next year listening to your ideas, comments and most importantly, your wisdom and experience. Please attend SIG meetings, send us your views, talk to each other and help guide a process that is only going to benefit every child we serve.

In the documentary, the 11th Hour, Janine Benyus, founder of the Biomimicry Institute, speaks of humans needing to use nature as a model, measure and mentor. She explains that in nature, preserving and preparing for the offspring is done for 10,000 generations ahead. And this means that the preparing and preserving is focussed on the place, the immediate environment, to ensure it exists for the offspring 10,000 generations ahead!

This is so similar to our Montessori philosophy – we know it is through the environment, specially prepared by the directress, which creates stability, purpose and sustainability for the child. As we celebrate World Environment Day on the 5th June, I hope we remember the profound impact that our classroom and training environments have in the grand scheme of life – 10,000 generations ahead!

Warm Regards

Sam Streak

SAMA President

Conference Thanks



Once again, a heartfelt thank you to everyone who made the 2008 Conference in Knysna such a success – from the behind the scenes workers, staff of the PE Montessori School and the Knysna Montessori School, to the speakers, including our keynote speaker, Tim Seldin from the Montessori Foundation and International Montessori Council, to the SAMA members and other conference delegates.

We have had incredibly positive feedback and lots of encouragement over the past few weeks – thank you for this and your continued support. When the Exco meets on 24th/25th May, we will definitely start our year on a high note! Planning has already begun for next year's conference and we will be sure to note your suggestions and build on the positives once again.

“Children have enquiring minds that differ in what inspires them. One needs a variety of options and approaches to accommodate them all.”

Dr. Professor George Ellis-Mathematics Department UCT



MONTESSORI, MOVEMENT AND LEARNING READINESS.

Research conducted in Pretoria (2003) found that up to 51% of children at school have some sort of learning difficulty. Labels abound – ADD/ADHD, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Low Muscle Tone to name but a few. The question on everyone's lips – *WHY?*

Much research points to the fact that most learning difficulties stem from an under-developed or inefficient neurological system – in other words, that the brain has not formed adequate neural pathways required in order for efficient learning to take place.

Learning readiness in the young child depends mainly on three broad factors: Attention, Balance and Coordination. In order to be able to learn, the child must be able to pay attention to what is being taught. In order to be able to pay attention, the child must be able to focus his conscious awareness upon a specific task while rejecting all other irrelevant sensory stimuli such as background noise, movement etc. Coordination requires that the child has successfully passed through all the normal developmental stages of primitive and postural reflexes in order to build a solid foundation for automatic motor control.

But by far the most important factor affecting the child's ability to function and learn efficiently is his sense of BALANCE.

Through a pre-programmed innate developmental movement sequence, every child in the world gains mastery over his own body through repeated movement resulting in his being able to maintain his balance over an increasingly smaller area of support – the newborn infant requires a supporting surface for the entire body, whilst the toddler, through innate knowledge and constant repetition has built enough balance to allow him to progress through the stages of crawling, sitting and eventually walking which requires a much more advanced state of balance in order to be supported only by 2 feet!

Efficient balance is crucial as the child continues to develop in order that he may develop the concepts of proprioception (the knowledge of his body in space), muscle tone (the degree of readiness to respond in relaxing muscle), laterality (knowing that there is a midline and being able to cross this midline spontaneously), and directionality (choosing a dominant side and being able to identify the concepts of right, left, above, below, in front of and behind). All these are base concepts that are required for the later efficient inter-hemispheric higher level concepts of reading, spelling, writing and maths.

Preschoolers today in general are not developing adequate balance skills on which to build an efficient 'learning-ready' system. Why?

Neural pathways are created in the body through repeated movement. As the body moves, electrical impulses are generated that start the construction of a neural pathway. Constant repetition of the same movement 'cements' this pathway and once this has been achieved, the movement no longer has to be thought about, but is taken into the 'subconscious'. Now the brain is free to think about the next, more advanced step of movement (and balance) control.

In our increasingly more technologically advanced and frantic lives, we have allocated very little time or inclination for our children to be able to move as freely as they were created to do. Babies are no longer left to lie and roll on the floor, to strengthen head, neck, eye and arm muscles. Instead they are carried around in car seats and rockers that inhibit head movement. Or placed into moulded 'doughnuts' or walking rings that inhibit the very movements that are required in order for the child to learn to sit and walk unaided.

In short, the children that come into our pre-schools are already at a disadvantage in terms of their neurological development.

Maria Montessori was an ardent believer in the link between movement and neurological development, and it is through her work and research that we as Montessorians are able to give today's preschool child an added advantage in terms of his building of concrete neural pathways.

In her book, *The Absorbent Mind* (1989), Dr. Montessori writes:

"One of the great mistakes ... is to think of movement by itself, as something apart from higher functions.... Mental development must be connected with movement and be dependent on it."

As Montessorians, we are taught to look for the child's Sensitive Periods – those times when the child ‘*shows an intense interest for repeating certain behaviours at length ..., until – because of this repetition – a fresh function suddenly appears with explosive force*’ (*The Absorbent Mind*, 1989). Repeated movements done with the exercises of Practical Life and Sensorial activities in particular are most beneficial to the development of the child's neural pathways. Allowing the child to work uninterruptedly within the Cycle of Activity ensures that the child can develop concentration and learn to focus his conscious awareness on that one specific task to the exclusion of all other sensory stimulus (Attention!).

Montessori's progression of materials from concrete to abstract in gentle steps further falls in line with the body's natural cycle. As an infant, the child first needs to become familiar with himself before he can abstract any thought onto external objects. Just as the child needs to understand his own internal body map (i.e. where his nose is in relation to his eyes) before he can understand his body position in relation to another object or even later the position of two objects in relation to each other, so does the Montessori equipment allow him to learn to understand the concrete expression (through his senses) before taking him on a gentle, easy to understand journey into the abstract world.

Following the body's natural proximo-distal development sequence (from the centre outwards), Montessori works with the same principles of working and mastering gross motor (muscle) skills first before adding the more complex fine motor skills. For this purpose the exercises of Practical Life and Sensorial are structured in such a manner that the child will first learn to master the easier ‘gross motor’ activities of squeezing water between two bowls with a sponge, before he moves on to the more intricate ‘fine motor’ activities of picking corn kernels from one container to another with a pair of tweezers.

Other examples of the development of large muscles (and in so doing the development of neural pathways!) are the exercises with the Pink Tower, the Broad Stair, the Red Rods and the Large Number Rods. Each of these activities requires ten different trips between rug and shelf interspersed with smaller muscle movement in the actual working of the activity.

Two of the most phenomenal activities devised by Dr. Montessori to aid the child in his motor and neural development are the exercises of the Silence Game and Walking on the Line. Walking on the Line and its variations help to develop the child's sense of balance (so vital for later higher level functioning), his control of movement and an awareness of his body in space. The Silence Game represents the most advanced level of movement and balance – the ability to stay totally still.

As Montessori educators today, we are all aware of the vast advantages that Montessori children have in our classrooms. What many of us fail to realise though, is just HOW widespread and fundamental Dr. Montessori's understanding of the human body and brain's development was.

In terms of ‘learning readiness’ – a child who goes through the Montessori system in the manner that Dr. Montessori intended the philosophy and the materials to be used, should by all intents and purposes certainly be well equipped with the ‘Attention, Balance and Coordination’ required in order to be fully learning ready when moving on to ‘big school’.

So – when in doubt, let us trust in Dr. Montessori's training and research and remember above all to – FOLLOW THE CHILD – he knows what is required in order to build the most efficient neural pathways in his brain!

Susanne van Niekerk



What's Outside?

An important factor in designing space for the outdoor area is to question whether it is static or dynamic. Schools spend an enormous amount of money on jungle gyms that are static. And the hour playtime for children is the same every single day! Let's look at how we can create dynamic outdoor spaces:

Many schools have a gardening programme yet there are times when children just want to jump, run, socialise and play!!! There needs to be an invite each day to discover a new area through movement or opportunities to create new experiences through movements.

Build up a store of crates that hold interesting materials and objects that can be used to make exciting play areas. Rotate these crates so that each day can be different.

For example; have crates for water play. One can just have blue water play materials or red(recyclable containers come in all colours) A water trough for whisking bubbles or melting huge ice blocks (ice cream containers are used to make these) have 2 coloured ice blocks and let the children see what happens when they melt. Have an area for large sensioathic play: sawdust, shaving foam, goop, clay, pebbles, shells etc...

Put together different crates for collections of sandpit toys so that again it is not the same each day; children arrive in anticipation of what they may find. Swimming pool tubes/gutters to make tunnels, lots of water to mix in, only large spades today or just our hands! Sometimes we find "treasures" in the sandpit when we are sifting.

Set up demarcated areas differently each day for exploration of balls, bats, hoops, bean bags, balls, skittles, skipping ropes, creative obstacle courses, allowing the children to freely explore. As indoors, each area is demarcated so that used equipment is returned to where it was found; you could use the hoops or ropes for this.

You as the facilitator need to engage and inspire children by asking them what they would do with the equipment or demonstrate different ideas. Blow bubbles for them to chase. Play games. When last did you play hide and seek or dodge ball or what's the time Mr Wolf?

Create quiet spaces to have a story or play with finger puppets. Have large blankets or bright cloths to drape over the jungle gym. Set up a pulley system for the children to take things up and down. Rolling balls down gutters from the top platform is great! Have logs to sit or jump on. Collect rocks and stones to create a rock garden. Collect pinecones, peach pits bark. Make your paths curvy. Create grass areas with mounds or hills and meadowland/indigenous gardens to wander through. Paint a chess/draughts board on a large paving stone.

It takes effort to plan and implement an outdoor programme. Equipment has to be laid out each morning and put away again each day otherwise it just "disappears". Children are involved in this, they all help with the tidying up, but the organisation and upkeep is yours.

Children are hard wearing on a garden, but with some planning one can create amazing and exciting places for the children to play in.

Jacky Price



A Different Kind of Movement...

Submitted by Sam Streak

It is World Environment Day on 5th June – there has never been a more important year to bring this event into our classrooms. Below is some information about the day as well as 12 Tips to help reduce our carbon footprint on the planet. There are additional ideas on the United Nations website (<http://www.unep.org/wed/2008/english>) as well as a beautiful 4 minute video clip (set to Sting's Fragile song) reminding us just how fragile the Earth is right now.

Without any doubt, Montessori schools and organizations around the world should use this opportunity to bring about Maria Montessori's vision of true Cosmic Education.

About World Environment Day 2008

World Environment Day, commemorated each year on 5 June, is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action.

The World Environment Day slogan for 2008 is **Kick the Habit! Towards a Low Carbon Economy.**

Recognising that climate change is becoming the defining issue of our era, UNEP is asking countries, companies and communities to focus on greenhouse gas emissions and how to reduce them. The World Environment Day will highlight resources and initiatives that promote low carbon economies and life-styles, such as improved energy efficiency, alternative energy sources, forest conservation and eco-friendly consumption.

When did it all begin?

World Environment Day was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. Another resolution, adopted by the General Assembly the same day, led to the creation of UNEP.

How can you celebrate World Environment Day?

The World Environment Day Alphabet - 80 Ways to Celebrate

World Environment Day can be celebrated in many ways, including street rallies, bicycles parades, green concerts, essay and poster competitions in schools, tree planting, recycling efforts, clean-up campaigns and much more. In many countries, this annual event is used to enhance political attention and action.

Heads of State, Prime Ministers and Ministers of Environment deliver statements and commit themselves to care for the Earth. Serious pledges are made which lead to the establishment of permanent governmental structures dealing with environmental management and economic planning. This observance also provides an opportunity to sign or ratify international environmental conventions.

On this World Environment Day, let us examine the state of our environment. Let us consider carefully the actions which each of us must take, and then address ourselves to our common task of preserving all life on earth in a mood of sober resolution and quiet confidence.



Twelve Steps to Help You Kick the CO₂ Habit
(Detailed descriptions for each are available from
the United Nations website for World
Environment Day:
<http://www.unep.org/wed/2008/english>)



Whether you are an individual, an organization, a business or a government, there are a number of steps you can take to reduce your carbon emissions, the total of which is described as your carbon footprint. You may think you don't know where to begin, but by reading this, you have already begun.

1. Make a commitment

Reducing your carbon footprint is no different from any other task...

2. Assess where you stand

It is likely that carbon will eventually be judged as an atmospheric pollutant and regulated accordingly, with consequent costs—and opportunities—for all sectors of society. Knowing where and how you generate greenhouse gases is the first step to reducing them...

3. Decide and plan where you want to go

Based on your assessment of climate-related risks and opportunities, a strategy and action plan can be developed...

4. De-carbon your life

There is a broader way to think about carbon and climate. Everything an individual, organization, business or government does or uses embodies some form of carbon, either in products themselves or in the energy and materials it takes to make them...

5. Get energy efficient

Improving the efficiency of your buildings, computers, cars and products is the fastest and most lucrative way to save money, energy and carbon emissions. This does not mean going without. Energy efficiency is about increasing productivity but doing more with less...

6. Switch to low carbon energy

If possible, switch to energy sources that emit less carbon and can reduce costs and emissions. Generally, coal produces twice the emissions of gas, six times the amount of solar, 40 times the amount of wind and 200 times the amount from hydro...

7. Invest in offsets and cleaner alternatives

There is a limit to how much efficiency you can squeeze from your lifestyle or your organisation's operations, or how much renewable energy you can employ...

8. Get efficient

Looking at your life or business through a carbon neutral lens can help you in other ways by increasing the efficiency of resource use, avoiding and reducing waste and ultimately improving your overall performance and reputation...

9. Offer—or buy—low carbon products and services

The market for climate friendly products and services is growing rapidly, from energy efficient products to new renewable energy systems...

10. Buy green, sell green

The market for green products and services is growing rapidly...

11. Team up

Many private sector companies are increasingly working with non-governmental organisations, cities or governments to identify and implement best practice solutions to reduce emissions...

12. Talk

The increasing importance of climate change means that companies and organisations will need to communicate. Transparency is critical. The internet and other new media mean that companies, organisations and governments cannot hide behind green wash...

(This is an abridged and adapted version of an original piece produced by UNEP for the UNEP/Sustainable Development International publication 'Climate Action')

www.climateactionprogramme.org

Asylum for the Verbally Insane

Author unknown

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice,
Yet the plural of house is houses, not hice.
If the plural of man is always called men,
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of my foot and show you my feet,
And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?
Then one may be that, and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren.
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!
Let's face it - English is a crazy language.

There is neither egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple.
English muffins weren't invented in England.

We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writer's write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham.
Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend?

If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?

Sometimes I think all the folks who grew up speaking English should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane.

In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital?

We ship by truck but send cargo by ship. We have noses that run and feet that smell.

And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out,

and in which an alarm goes off by going on.

So if Father is Pop, how come Mother isn't Mop?

And that is just the beginning--even though this is the end.



Submitted by Jenny Miller

Conversations with Montessorians



Most of us have heard this wonderful lady Bukelwa Selema; always with a sparkle in her eyes as she speaks from her heart.

1. How did you become involved with Montessori education?

I was working in the Health Psychology unit at UNISA when an afterschool care centre evolved at my house. It was soon followed by a request to establish a preschool by the parents. They chose Montessori after visiting many preschools and that was the beginning of an adventure for me.

2. Describe your involvement in Montessori over the years. Has it evolved? Stayed the same? Declined? What is your involvement today?

During the early years I wanted to experience every opportunity to increase my understanding of the philosophy. I attended every possible workshop and read extensively. I used every possible opportunity to tell people about Montessori. These days I have somewhat mellowed, and I do not have the physical energy I had then. I still head the school I established in 1990. I am extensively involved in training and I am the SAMA representative on NAISA.

3. Did your Montessori training have a significant impact on your philosophy of education? A significant impact on who you are now?

I had many years in experience in Paediatric Psychiatric nursing and in Nursing Education. If I had known about Montessori philosophy, then I would have approached my work differently. I would also have sought out a different kind of education for my elder children. Montessori training was a life changing experience. I became more aware of how my actions, no matter how small, can affect those around me. I made an effort to live my life differently.

4. Has experience in the classroom altered your philosophy or view of yourself?

Working with children is like constantly being surrounded by mirrors. They help you see yourself as you really are because their response is pure and honest. I made an effort to listen to what the children tell me through words and actions (or non action). I also made an effort to love myself in spite of what I sometimes see in those mirrors.

5. What do you see as the most significant accomplishment of the Montessori movement in South Africa in the past 50 years?

The Apartheid milieu could have destroyed the Montessori movement in South Africa. I see it as a significant accomplishment that in spite of operating in an environment that was hostile to everything that Montessori philosophy espoused, Montessori has thrived and grown to present day levels.

6. The most significant failure?

We have failed to convince the powers that be that Montessori Education holds real possibilities for South African children. Maybe our schools have not been as spectacular as they could have been, or we have worked 'too small'. Whatever the reason, we have not made sufficient impact to get the decision makers in education to come knocking on our doors.

7. What is your favourite book written by Maria Montessori?

Strangely, I do not have hot favourites amongst Maria Montessori's writings, but I enjoy some books about Montessori education, particularly the books written by Paula Polk Lillard.

8. What is your favourite book or resource of any type that you use or refer to often?

I have several, including *The Montessori Controversy* by John Chattin-McNichols and *Standing's Maria Montessori Her life and work for Montessori*. For enjoyment I keep returning to JRR Tolkien's books and my World Books are constantly used for reference personally and in class.

9. What is your favourite children's book?

"The Story of Ruby Bridges" by Robert Coles. It is a story of the triumph of love over evil. Children at our school have always responded positively to it.

10. Describe a favourite Montessori memory.

Our school was trying to get SACCEE accreditation and Debbie Applebaum paid the initial visit to assess our centre. She was a bit sceptical about Montessori Schools and recently had had an unpleasant encounter in one. She was bowled over by a four year old who gave a very precise presentation on how to roll up and put away a work mat to a six year old. It happened spontaneously, without adult intervention and both children were polite and gracious.

11. Did you have a mentor, supervisor, teacher or student who has significantly affected you?

My trainer, Clare Collecott, was strict and uncompromising and a purist. She taught me the importance of paying attention to detail and helped me make the link between philosophy and practice.

12. Do you have any particular memories of your first day of teaching?

We operated in a church which meant that we had to pack the entire prepared environment in boxes on Friday and set it up again early on Monday morning. The children used to help us set up. We had few materials and they were valued and handled with care. Those children were the most normalised we ever had in my opinion. I also remember the excitement of seeing the sensitive periods at work and beginning to understand their significance.

13. What more could we as Montessori educators be doing?

Montessori education is a powerful agent for change. We could use it as a tool for transformation in South Africa. We need to look at whether our efforts to bring social change have given the results we would like to see, and, if not continuously ask ourselves what "the Montessori way" of achieving this could be. We can use Montessori philosophy and education to forge real partnerships between communities and to promote peaceful existence.

14. What do you think the future holds for Montessori education?

I think that more than at any time in history, especially in South Africa, Montessori education is on the brink of a great breakthrough. More parents are looking for alternative forms of education. Increasingly, Montessori is becoming a viable choice. If we embrace this opportunity appropriately, then Montessori education is poised for a future where it can play an important role in changing the world.

Thanks Bukelwa

The New Members of Exco for 2008/2009



**SAM STREAK: SAMA
PRESIDENT**

Sam qualified as a Montessori directress 16 years ago and is the owner and principal of the Port Elizabeth Montessori School. She is a director at The Academy for Montessori Teacher Training and runs their Port Elizabeth Centre. Sam serves as Secretary on the Eastern Cape Joint Liaison Committee. Sam has presented at both local and international conferences and has an interest in Special Needs Education.

Sam has held the positions of General Secretary, Formal School representative and Eastern Cape Regional Representative for SAMA. She has just completed one year as SAMA President and has been re-nominated to serve a second and final year. Her contact details are president@samontessori.org.za Cell: 082 4117154 or Office: 041 5812874



**HEIDI VAN STADEN:
GENERAL SECRETARY**

Heidi van Staden has more than 20 years experience as a Montessorian. She is currently the principal of the Montessori Academy and College in Pretoria and is a director with the Montessori Academy for Teacher Training. Heidi has served on the SAMA Exco for several years, as both training representative and General Secretary. She will continue to serve as General Secretary for 2008/2008

Heidi has a BA degree and PGCE as well as holding Montessori qualifications for 2 ½ to 6; 6-9 and 9-12 years. She works extensively in disadvantaged communities and has presented both locally and internationally.

Heidi's contact details are: academy@netactive.co.za Cell: 083 2680968 or School: 012 996 0855



**SUSANNE VAN NIEKERK:
TREASURER**

Susanne van Niekerk founded The Brain Connection, centre for Neuro-Educational Assessment and Learning Efficiency in 2005. Susanne holds Montessori 3 – 6 year Diplomas, is an Audiblox and THRASS tutor, and Brain Gym trainee. She is an Integrated Learning Therapy practitioner and has a special interest in neuro-educational

development. Susanne lectures for Montessori Centre International (MCI) at their Durban centre.

Susanne has served on the SAMA Exco since its inception, first as KZN regional rep, then Pre-School rep and finally as Treasurer for the past year. Susanne will continue serving in this role for 2008/2009. Susanne's contact details are: susannev@mweb.co.za Cell: 082 900 3192



**JACKY PRICE: ORDINARY
MEMBER PORTFOLIO**

Jacky has served as a co-opted member on the SAMA Exco for more than a year. She has been responsible for the National Newsletter and Parents Newsletter. Jacky is a very experienced Montessorian – in both teaching and training. Jacky is the owner and principal of Blue Moon Montessori School in Plumstead, Cape Town.

Jacky's contact details are chandler2@telkomsa.net Cell: 084 404 0447

At any particular moment a child is attracted to the object that corresponds to his greatest need at the time.

Maria Montessori



**SUMAYA TAR-MOHAMED:
ORDINARY MEMBER
PORTFOLIO**

Objectives:

Facilitate meetings between fellow Montessorians with the purpose of sharing knowledge. To be able to organize workshops that assist in the training of Montessori Teachers. To facilitate networking between SAMA Members.

Experience:

1 year experience as a tutor for a 5 year old - Language; 2 years experience as Kumon Instructor; Art & Craft Instructor; 7 years experience in an 3-6 Montessori Environment
Sumaya's contact details are ably@yebo.co.za Cell: 072 152 4399

The ability of the of a thing to attract the interest of a child does not depend so much upon the quality of the thing itself as the opportunity that it affords the child for action.

Maria Montessori



**SHARON CALDWELL:
ORDINARY MEMBER
PORTFOLIO**

Founder and erstwhile principal of the Nahoon Montessori School. Sharon writes and speaks on a variety of aspects of democratic and Montessori education, having spoken at conferences in Africa, the USA, Asia and Australia, and her writings have appeared in a range of international publications. Sharon currently works for the Montessori Foundation and the Centre for Guided Montessori Studies; she is the South African representative for the International Montessori Council. She is a co-instructor on the Montessori Leadership Institutes Online Courses.

Sharon has served on the SAMA Exco for the past year, with the portfolio of marketing. She will continue serving on the Exco for 2008/2009 as an ordinary member.

Sharon can be contacted on sharoncaldwell@montessori.org
Office: 043 735 2221 Cell: 083 456 1048



**LORRAINE WRIGHT: ORDINARY
MEMBER PORTFOLIO:
MEMBERSHIP ADMINISTRATOR**

Lorraine has been the SAMA Membership Administrator for the past year. She is the principal of Little Learners Montessori School in Hillcrest, KZN. Lorraine qualified as a Montessori directress in 2002 and has training in the Handle Approach, THRASS and Audiblox.

Lorraine is married with two sons.

Lorraine's contact details are lorraine@llm.co.za Cell: 082 732 3266 Fax: 086 695 8296



**GAYLE THOMPSON:
ORDINARY MEMBER
PORTFOLIO**

Gayle is a qualified Montessori directress at the 3-6 and 6-9 levels. She is an assessor and has a special interest in personal growth development.

In accepting the nomination to Exco, Gayle said the following: "I sincerely hope that I may be of service to SAMA as all I have to offer with humility is my experience and training over the past 21 years and a love of Montessori."

Gayle's contact details are tommysg@telkomsa.net Office: 021 8581898 Cell: 082 7844114

Members Page

Multiple Intelligences in the Montessori environment.

I am a 3-6 directress at the Montessori Academy and currently studying my Bachelors of Education through UNISA. We have been learning about the multiple intelligences and how they affect a child's learning style.

A boy (age 4) in my group is a very strong auditory learner. It worried me that he wasn't able to concentrate for long during presentations. He is distracted easily and continually interrupts and asks questions. I began wondering what would happen if I spoke throughout the lesson, so I decided to perform an experiment with him today. I introduced the tong sorting work and then presented the exercise in silence. When it was his turn it was clear that he had not absorbed much of what I had done. He was unsure of where the bowls go and how to re-prepare the tray. I then presented the finger colour sorting work. I spoke through the entire presentation, explaining what I was doing. He was completely focused throughout the presentation. When it was his turn he copied my movements and the placement of objects exactly and was able to re-prepare the tray. Would it then not make more sense to speak through a lesson for auditory learners?

Celeste van Niekerk

Why do I get the same email from SAMA more than once?

(Answered by Sam Streak)

We often get asked by members why they get the same email more than once and I hope I can explain this coherently for you!

For efficiency and to ensure no one slips through the cracks in terms of communication, each category of SAMA membership has its own email list, i.e. full members, school members, student members, associate members and training centre members. If you are someone who belongs to more than one category, you will receive the email notices for each category of membership as you will be included on all relevant databases.

There are times when we only send emails to specific categories of membership e.g. the monthly newsletter for parents only goes to school members. Hence the need for more than one database. This means that if

we delete you from that database, you will not receive emails pertaining to that category of membership.

We also have many situations where members of staff have given the school's email address as their own.

Whilst we will do our best to not duplicate and send unnecessary mails, we would rather you receive too many notices than none at all. If you would prefer to only receive one notice, please let us know which database/s you would like to be removed from.

Excellent Website for School Management and Leadership

The publishers of The Handbook of School Management have launched an excellent website at www.ednews.co.za The site contains back issues of the newsletter related to school management, policy, governance and leadership previously recommended. It also has sample policies and good general information and links. We have requested a link from their website to SAMA's website. While many of the policies are aimed at traditional schools, for those of you with primary, middle and high schools, I think you will find the information useful and a good start for your own policies.

Sam Streak

HELP!

Andri Nel from the Knysna Montessori School is looking for access to the following NAMTA journals: Winter 2001, Spring 2000, Winter 2003.

If you are able to help, please contact Andri by email: stingray@lantic.net

Focus for June issue: Practical Life at all levels.

Deadline for submissions: 20 June

All articles are contributed by SAMA members. We would love to hear from our readers. Please send interesting snippets, valuable insights and amusing anecdotes to share with others and help make this newsletter an exciting and interesting one. If you feel you would like to contribute, please send to Jacky via:

admin@samontessori.org.za

Host Schools for 2008/2009

Stepping Stones Western Cape:

Welcomes children from diverse, multi-cultural backgrounds and is one of the longest established Montessori Schools in Cape Town. From small beginnings 25 years ago, we have been at our current premises in Oranjezicht since 1996. The school comprises 4 classes from ages 2 and a half to 6 and we have 78 learners.

We are proud to have established the Stepping Stones Montessori Bursary Fund primarily for previously disadvantaged children.

Our school is parent-run with an Executive Committee consisting of 7 members. The Head of School is Deepa Kasen. The school is situated at 1 Sidmouth Avenue, Oranjezicht, Cape Town and contact phone number is 021 465 4003



Ocean View Montessori School, I Kwa Zulu Natal

On the East coast of, Durban, and was established by Lucy Watson and Rose Lowry in 1993. There are 65 pupils aged from 18 months to 6 years, with a great diversity of cultures and backgrounds. Such diversity is also present amongst the staff of 9. All of the creative subjects form a major part of the curriculum at Ocean View. We are also part of the International Eco Schools programme and are proud to have received their Green Flag award."



The Port Elizabeth Montessori, Eastern Cape. Opened in January 1995 and is now a pre-school and primary school. We have 105 children and a full time staff compliment of 15. Our school serves as a training centre for the Montessori Academy for Teacher Training. We have a diverse base of children with a strong belief in inclusive education. Community service is another important aspect

of our school. We are proud to be the regional host school for 2008/2009. Sam Streak is head of school.

Address: 38 Seventh Avenue Walmer Port Elizabeth Tel: 041 5813057



Little Penguins Montessori School Namibia: (Head of School: Sophia van Zyl) in Windhoek have agreed to be a SAMA host school for Namibia due to the increased membership in this region. Although Namibia's SIGs may be more bi-annual than quarterly, we are so happy to be able to expand SAMA's networking in a more practical way for Namibian members. More details to follow next month...



Maria Montessori House Gauteng South

Maria Montessori House opened towards the end of 1991 as a Pre-School and Primary school. Through the Montessori program the students are encouraged to develop in the areas of personal responsibility, accountability, independence, and self confidence. Pre-school 3 to 6 years and Lower Primary 6 to 9 years Upper Primary 9 to 13 years Anne O'Regan is head of school.



Montessori Academy Gauteng North

The Montessori Academy and teacher Training College is situated on a small holding east of Pretoria. Our beautiful and tranquil surroundings are an ideal setting for our pre, primary, middle and high school. Heidi van Staden is the co-founder and principal of the school and heads the Pretoria campus of the Montessori Academy for teacher training. Since 1996 they have been committed to quality Montessori education and look forward to hosting the Gauteng North Sig meetings the following year.





Academy for teacher training

Educating the Human Potential

EXCITING NEW WORKSHOPS FROM THE MONTESSORI ACADEMY FOR TEACHER TRAINING (PRETORIA CAMPUS)

**Five Days of Language Workshops in Gauteng in July holidays!
From Monday 30th June to Friday 4th July 9am to 4pm**

- Revision of 3-6 Language Materials including green series and Grammar materials and how these are extended (Heidi van Staden)
 - 6-9 Grammar Materials and Extensions (Heidi van Staden)
 - 6-9 Punctuation, Comprehension and Language Skills (Heidi van Staden)
 - 6-9 Literature, Poetry and Extending Language into All Learning Areas (Sam Streak)
- 6-9 and Foundation Phase – integrating Montessori and the National Curriculum (looking at assessment, outcomes and integration) (Sam Streak)

Saturday 5th July 2008

- Nutrition for the Growing Brain – looking at the revised Food Pyramid, Reading Labels and avoiding toxic additives, and Planning Healthy Meals (Dr Margo de Kooker) –
 - 9am to 12noon
- HIV/Aids For Educators – Understanding HIV for educators and parents; Dispelling myths about HIV/Aids; HIV and the Law (Dr Margo de Kooker)
 - 1pm to 4pm

These workshops are core modules in our 6-9 Supported Independent Study Programme. However, they are open to all who would like to attend as refresher courses, continued professional development or just out of interest.

Costs:

Students enrolled on our 6-9 Programme: R1500 per module (all 6 days)

All other interested people:

Language Lectures: R300 per day

Nutrition for the Growing Brain: R300

HIV/AIDS for Educators: R300

Attending both lectures on Saturday: R500

Venue:

**The Montessori Academy and College
Plot 84 Zwavelpoort,
Pretoria East**

Bookings and Further Information:

Heidi van Staden: academy@netactive.co.za 083 2680968

Sam Streak: montprop@global.co.za 082 4117154

Marketing

AUBURN HOUSE SCHOOL OPEN DAY:
Pre-school, Junior and Senior Primary.
Wednesday 28 May 9 - 11 am.
Auburn Rd Kenilworth, near Wynberg
Information: ph 021 797 7872,
info@auburnhouse.co.za www.auburnhouse.co.za

We are importers and distributors of
DR ED'S MONTESSORI EQUIPMENT.
Phone us for exceptional prices and quality
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e-mail: sales@rdm.co.za
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Childrens House
Official Distributors of Nienhuis Montessori
Materials
Tel: (021) 788 3160
Fax: (086) 619 5182
Email: childrenshouse@absamail.co.za

Edu Equipment
High quality locally manufactured Montessori
Equipment from
Toddler to Primary contact Dougie at Edu
Equipment Port Elizabeth.
Cell 0722116940 Fax 041-3791595 or
eduequipment@absamail.co.za

If you would like to advertise in
the SAMA Newsletter, please
send the relevant information
through to
admin@samontessori.org

Vacancies

The Beehive Montessori Pre-School,
Durbanville; Montessori Directress required for
our 3 - 6 yr English class to start the beginning of
the 3rd quarter. Please fax or email your CV to
Carol. Fax: 021 919 4223 Email:
beehive1@telkomsa.net

Montessori Directress required for group at popular
Pre-Primary School in Port Elizabeth to start
beginning of July 2008.
Call Jenny 083 283 0404 or
E-mail jenny@brylin.co.za

Little Oak Montessori School in Irene
Centurion requires a directress to direct their
toddler environment. Early childhood certificate
essential. Starting date: 14 July. Contact Marike
or Trish – **012 667 2426 / 0823241100** Marike /
0835565084 Trish

The Field and Study Montessori Pre-School
requires a mature, dedicated and experienced
Montessori Directress. Please contact Julia On
083 6006833 or e mail your CV to:
nebula@global.co.za

Village Montessori School in Pretoria has a
vacancy from September 2008 for a Senior
Primary Educator. Please email your CV to
Liselle at montessorivillage@gmail.com

Bonne International

**Montessori Trained Governess & ESL for
Children Teaching Positions in Moscow**

London-Moscow Agency

USD 3000 USD3000+/R20,000+ net per month

Must be B.Ed. or Early Years Specialist

**Working in VIP Russian Families or English
Nursery**

Minimum 5 years Experience with Pre-Primary
Children

All Travel and Visa Expenses Paid

Must be English Mother Tongue

Accommodation Provided & Paid

8-10 hours per day, 5 days a week

Post Placement Support by Moscow Office

Email CV and recent photos to:

anna@bonne-int.com

www.bonne-int.com



For more information on Job Vacancies, Associate
Member(suppliers), Member schools and more, visit
SAMA website www.samontessori.org.za



REQUIREMENT

A Primary Independent School in Qatar is currently looking for Montessori qualified professional Teachers and Trainers Min. 3 years experience in teaching. Must be Montessori qualified. A market related salary, tax free, accommodation provided. Good opportunity to gain international experience.

Key Resources, established in 1994, is a Qatari owned, European managed recruitment company trading within Qatar, the Gulf and Internationally. As the country's premier recruitment company, we have built a reputation for quality of service.

Over the years we have earned an enviable reputation for the supply of staff to the following core market sectors; banking, construction, engineering, accountancy, IT, marketing, finance & administration and hospitality.

We offer a dedicated, confidential, and professional approach to servicing the recruitment needs of our clients and can offer different levels of search from the traditional database searches through to executive search and selection.

We strive to provide excellent, professional service backed up by a dedicated team of Consultants, Researchers and Management. We understand the value and importance of providing a consultancy based service to our clients.

Please quote Ref. No. Montessori/08 in the Subject line
Please forward CV'S to
apply@keyrsqa.com

Available SAMA Products:

- **The SAMA Recommended Curriculum** – an integration of A Montessori Recommended Curriculum with the Revised National Curriculum Statement. For queries and to order, contact the SAMA office. The curriculum is printed and bound, and is available to paid up SAMA Institutional Members for R250.00 and to all other categories of membership for R1000.
- **SAMA Policies and Procedures CDs** – a comprehensive compilation of government laws, acts, and policies on CD 1 and examples from various Montessori schools and resources to use in school management on CD 2, at R50.00 each. These prices are for school members only. All other categories of membership may purchase the CDs for R500 per set.
- **SAMA Parents Handbook** – a full colour, beautiful publication, useful to parents as an introduction to Montessori Education. This booklet covers basic Montessori philosophy and is the ideal starting point for parent education. These handbooks are available to SAMA School Members only at R25 per copy. For orders of 30 or more, additional postage will be added.

For more details contact: admin@samontessori.org.za



SAMA Centenary Scrapbook

A beautiful, full colour compilation of Southern African Centenary and 100 Steps Stories and Photos. A wonderful memory book of this historic time.

To order, contact the SAMA office on admin@samontessori.org.za or phone / fax 041 581 2874

Cost: R250 per book plus R25 packaging and postage

Limited number of copies available. Sold on a first come, first served basis.

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Please ensure that all your SAMA staff members have the opportunity to read this newsletter.