



April 2011

Newsletter for Parents of SAMA Member Schools

Dear Parents

This is the last letter from my desk as President of the South African Montessori Association Trust. I have found this part of my work one of the most rewarding! Interacting with you as parents who are *interested* in your children and in the Montessori schools they attend. Your feedback on a monthly basis has been very heart warming, not only because you have taken the time to express thanks, but also because it means that we are reaching people who will 'spread the word'!

The next SAMA Executive Committee will be taking the Montessori Best Practice document which was submitted to members for comment at our last AGM and look at absorbing it into some kind of accreditation process that schools will undertake in order to align their Montessori practice under a common vision. This is an exciting step forward for Montessori in our country.

Montessori is flourishing world-wide. The foresight of the amazing woman who pioneered the thought that children's education needs to start at birth, and who compelled us to rethink the way we set out environments for children, the materials we give them to stimulate their interest and the role of the adult were not only ingenious in their day, but continue to hold water and carry weight in the most advanced educational discussions and research today.

I am proud to have been part of the South African Montessori journey with you and your children. The past two years have strengthened and deepened my understanding of the method, and your stories and queries have often prompted me to go back to my books for exploration in search of answers!

We are currently all preparing to attend our 9th Annual SAMA Conference, held in Durban this year. The theme of the conference topics will explore the benefits of play and take us outside into nature to remember the glorious gifts it offers our children. The directresses will surely come back to school full of ideas and enthusiasm, renewed once again for the year ahead with Montessori energy.

E.M. Standing, who wrote the book, *Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work*, said, "Applying fundamental principles of nature to the education of children is perhaps the most enduring legacy and lasting value of the life and work of Maria Montessori."

My best wishes to you and your children, and the schools that are striving towards excellent Montessori education.

Heidi van Staden
SAMA President (2009-2011)

SAMA OFFICE: Cell no: 072 609 6979 Office: (041) 367 4936
Fax: 086 561 8774 e-mail: admin@samontessori.org.za
Website: www.samontessori.org.za

