

The Montessori Messenger

Est. 2003

www.samontessori.org.za

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How we live Montessori

Dear Parents

Montessori has grown tremendously in South Africa over the past few years, particularly because parents are realising the benefits of this tried and trusted method that originated in the early 1900's.

The fundamental reason why the Montessori Method worked then, and still works today, is because it is a programme based on the developmental needs of children. These needs are universal. A child, regardless of where they are born, will develop along the same path. For example: When learning to walk, the new-born infant does not start to stand and walk within a few hours of birth like a little foal. Rather, the child builds a variety of skills that will enable it to walk after the first year. Firstly, the child strengthens his /her core muscles through, rolling, sitting and crawling. After hours of physical, emotional and intellectual work on the part of the child, she/he stands, she /he walks!



The Montessori classroom does not need to “move with the times” because human development has not changed. The environment we provide to our children both at home and school

need to accommodate these specific developmental needs of each child.

I am yet to meet a parent who does not acknowledge the uniqueness of each child and that they develop at their own pace. Yet, for the most part, we are desperate to have them fit in with an educational system that is designed to create clones, factory workers. (People who concentrate for short periods (30 – 45 min); people who will respond to a bell; people who are able to understand concepts in isolation of other relevant concepts.) Why do we do this? Why are we hesitant to go against the grain?



Sometimes Montessori schools or teachers feel this pressure and adapt the Montessori Method, thereby diluting the experience the child receives. This has been proven to lessen the effectiveness of the Montessori Method

(http://www.montessori-science.org/Science_Evaluating_Montessori_Education_Lillard.pdf)

You can offer optimal developmental support for your child's school years.

1. Choose a Montessori school that commits to authentic practice and is a member of SAMA.
2. Encourage your school to work towards the 3rd (full membership) level of SAMA schools.
3. Follow Montessori principles at home:
 - a. Engage with your child meaningfully. Make eye contact when you speak, hang out together. Build relationship.
 - b. Do not resort to rewards and punishment to manipulate the behaviour of your child. Rather engage with misbehaviour in a loving and gentle way. Children need unconditional support as they learn to navigate through life. They need love with no strings attached.
 - c. Develop independence by allowing them to help out around the house and do things for themselves.
4. Remember these years go past incredibly quickly. Don't focus on the adult your child will become instead focus on the child they are today.



Warm regards

Kym

The SAMA team:

SAMA is a voluntary association with an office in Port Elizabeth. It was originally formed by a few very dedicated Montessori school owners 14 years ago, and has survived through sheer dedication and the sacrifice of many personal hours.

VOLUNTEERS:

Kym van Straaten (President)

- Conference Chair,
- Gauteng JLC Secretary
- Owner of Randburg Montessori, Johannesburg.
- Course Director at The Montessori Campus Training Centre

Jacky Price (Past President)

- NAISA representative,
- Owner of Blue Moon Montessori School, Cape Town.

Jenni Petersen (General Secretary)

- Western Cape JLC representative
- Principal of Stepping Stones Montessori Pre-school, Cape Town.

Peter Williams (Treasurer)

- Trustee of Montessori Connect group, Cape Town.

Nicky Rodseth (Member)

- Marketing and Advertising
- Owner of Montessori Life, Durban.

Mariana van Niekerk (Member)

- Owner of Somerset West Montessori School, Somerset West

Sunita Parmar-Khoza (Member)

- Conference Co-ordinator
- Principal of Modderfontein Montessori School, Johannesburg.

EMPLOYEES:

Irmgard Pringle

Executive Office Administrator

Izaan Niewoudt

Office Assistant

Natalie Adão Gröss

Gauteng Regional Manager

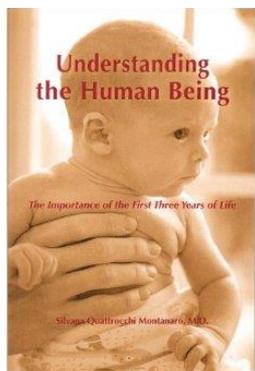
Jennifer Moore

Western Cape Regional Manager

PARENT RESOURCES

Understanding the Human Being. The Importance of the First Three Years of Life.

By Silvana Quattrocchi Montanaro MD.

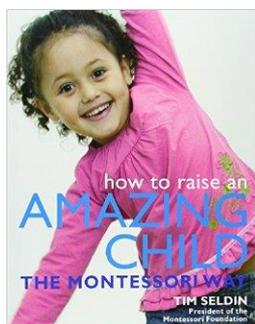


This is recommended reading for anyone in pregnancy or with an infant. Especially relevant in the first year of life. This is THE Montessori baby book. The book starts at Prenatal Life and flows to Birth right through to topics such as Weaning, Language Development and Movement. It contains a small amount of photographs, really just enough to illustrate the idea presented.

A wonderful, uncomplicated read.

How to Raise an Amazing Child the Montessori Way.

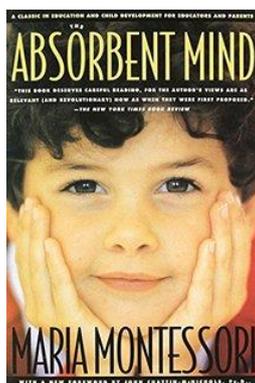
By Tim Seldin.



This comes as a recommendation to anyone who is new to Montessori and wants to get a feel for what it is really about. It is an easy read with wonderful easy to digest philosophy component as well as containing lots of great activity ideas even if you don't take the Montessori path.

The Absorbent Mind.

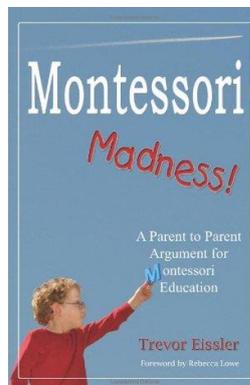
By Maria Montessori.



I would recommend this to every parent who has an interest in Montessori with some existing background knowledge. It thoroughly explains the reasoning behind many of the Montessori concepts. It makes one appreciate the alternative approach to humanity that Maria Montessori had.

Montessori Madness.

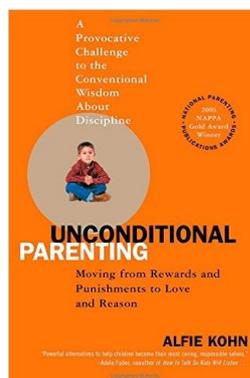
By Trevor Eissler



A parent's perspective of the Montessori Method. As a former pilot, Trevor values the thoroughness and exactitude of the Montessori method. He explains jargon and philosophical points in an easy to read and understand way. All Montessori schools and parents should have this in their library.

Unconditional Parenting: Moving from rewards and punishments to love and reason.

By Alfie Kohn



Most parenting guides begin with the question "How can we get kids to do what they're told?" -- and then proceed to offer various techniques for controlling them. In this truly groundbreaking book, nationally respected educator Alfie Kohn begins instead by asking "What do kids need - and how can we meet those needs?" What follows from that question are

ideas for working with children rather than doing things to them.

Why Children Need Rest & How to Provide It

Dr. Gordon Neufeld-

This Youtube clip by Gordon Neufield regarding restful and restless children was recommended to me by one of the parents at my school. This is perspective is truly helpful both in the home and the classroom.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUHnMfa_aKE&list=FLORXn0KHrMqpKM5hvpkrJqQ&index=1