



# Parent Newsletter

October 2012

VOLUME 12 – ISSUE 10

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Charl du Toit

Dear Parents,

As we enjoy spring and welcome the rains to the Highveld, we revel in the growing greenery. I am reminded of the growth we have shared as an organisation.

Montessori education is growing in South Africa with many parents choosing this method of holistic child development for their children. The success of the Montessori Method is simply that the curriculum fits the child rather than the child being forced to fit the curriculum. How many parents appreciate the creativity required of the Montessorian who will find just the right lesson to inspire interest and concentration in a child who hasn't yet been able to find that for himself?

Our schools all strive to follow the guidelines set out by Maria Montessori more than 100 years ago, as they carefully nurture and protect the emerging potential of each child.

With the name Montessori freely available, we, as SAMA would like to educate you the parent on what makes an authentic Montessori school. What should you be looking

for to ensure that your child gets the best of what Montessori has to offer?

It is important to remember that Montessori is a holistic method of education, and best used as a whole.

### KEY PRINCIPLES:

1. Classes in Montessori Schools are mixed-age and non-graded.
2. Montessori schools accommodate an extended period of uninterrupted self-chosen activity – a period during which children can choose their own activity and work undisturbed for a minimum of three hours.
3. Rewards and Punishments are not used in a Montessori environment.
4. A prepared environment is a critical component of Montessori pedagogy. It serves the developmental and pedagogical needs of the children using it. It supports freedom of movement, speech and association as well as free choice of activity; The Prepared Environment facilitates normalization and valorization and includes a full range of Montessori

materials appropriate to the age for which it is prepared.

5. The adults in the Montessori environment exhibit and apply the principles of Montessori pedagogy through a disposition of respect and patience towards the child. They have an ability to balance the principle of non-intervention while at the same time not abandoning the child;

The Prepared Adult trusts in Montessori principles, methodology and pedagogical aims by seeing the role of the adult as primarily observer, scientist and interpreter of the environment rather than as a teacher in the conventional sense. They guide the child to normalization and development appropriate to each Plane of Development.

6. Montessori schools develop curriculum guidelines which conform with the vision of child development and the educative goals outlined by Maria Montessori.

Kind regards,

Charl du Toit