



Southern African Montessori Association

July 2007

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Message from the President

Dear SAMA Members

I hope you enjoyed a good winter holiday and are back at school refreshed and ready for the new term (for those following private school terms: enjoy your upcoming holidays!)

The theme of this newsletter is Social Responsibility and Peace Education – two cornerstones of Montessori education. As you know, SAMA is currently developing a position statement on these two areas and we would value your input and experiences.

As Montessorians, we often fail to notice how much we naturally do in terms of these two areas because they are so intrinsic to our schools. It is useful though to step back and really examine how we practice peace and social responsibility each moment of each day.

As the adults in the world, we have an overwhelming responsibility to our children to make sure they have a decent planet on which to live and grow. We owe it to ourselves too! The desperate message to take care of the planet, to stop our destruction of it and create sustainable relationships is coming through loud and clear.

In our classrooms, with the children, it is quite simple to take the first steps towards making a difference. Start recycling (not as a project but as a lifelong habit), change to energy saving light bulbs, don't use the lights when you don't need to, plant indigenous plants, start a compost heap, adopt a family in a poorer community and help them improve the quality of their lives...the list is endless. Most importantly, do something!

The late Norman Cousins said, "The starting point for a better world is the belief that it is possible...the wild dream is the first step to reality. It is the direction-finder by which people locate higher goals and discern their highest selves. If our purposes are frail, if our concern for progress is small, then we'll bow before the difficulty. But if we have some feeling for the gift of life and its uniqueness, if we have confidence in freedom, growth, and the miracle of vital change, then difficulty loses its power to intimidate." (Peace in Action, April/May 1986)

Warm Regards
Sam Streak
SAMA President

Peace and Social Responsibility

“The cultural materials are not just an interesting way to teach geography. They help the child to understand the vastness of our earth and universe and the great responsibility each of us shares to nurture it. They help the child to understand the vastness of human life and that same responsibility to nurture one another.

In this way, the peacefulness of Montessori comes first from a dichotomous humility, that we are each tiny bits of a much larger unfolding and that our every action affects its path. We are both imperceptible and indomitable. We cannot experience that by adding sums and diagramming sentences. But we don't have to leave our classrooms to understand it.”

(The Tao of Montessori by Catherine McTamane, 2005)

“If someone listens, or stretches out a hand, or whispers a kind word of encouragement, or attempts to understand a lonely person, extraordinary things begin to happen” (Loretta Girzaitis, American writer)

“Our main task is to see that human technologies foster rather than destroy nature...our education needs to prepare us for that role...this is the spirituality of the future” (Thomas Berry)

“The first aim of education should not be to prepare young people for careers but to enable them to develop respect for life” (Norman Cousins)

“Preventing conflicts is the work of politics; establishing peace is the work of education.” (Maria Montessori in Education and Peace)

“Dante said ‘The greatest wisdom is first to love’. It is hoped that when this sentiment of love can be aroused in children, people in general will become more human, and brutal wars will come to an end.” (Maria Montessori in To Educate the Human Potential)

Recommended Books

(Search loot.co.za; amazon.com or Kalahari.net to find these books)

Education and Peace by Maria Montessori

To Educate the Human Potential by Maria Montessori

Nurturing the Spirit (in non-sectarian classrooms by Aline D Wolf)

Our Peaceful Classroom by Aline D Wolf

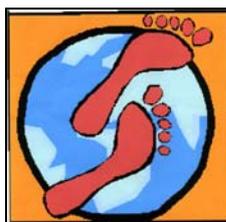
Honouring the Light of the Child by Sonnie McFarland

Children who are not yet Peaceful by Donna Goertz

The Tao of Montessori by Catherine McTamane

Centenary Celebrations

“100 Steps for Montessori” is a sponsored walk to raise awareness of Montessori during the Centenary year. It is an invitation to every Montessori school in the world to take part in a global sponsored walk.



100
steps for
Montessori



12 – 14 October to be the South African 100 Steps weekend

Education & Peace

Maria Montessori, Congress 1937

The question of peace cannot be considered only in its negative side as is generally done in politics: that is as a problem of 'avoiding war' and consequently of solving the conflicts between nations without violence.

Peace also has a positive side which consists in a constructive social reform. It is often repeated that 'to have a new society a new man must be formed', but that is an abstract sentence. It is true that man himself can be improved and that society could be founded on principles of justice and love, but this represents a remote aspiration.

There is however a positive and immediate question to be considered with regard to peace: the society of man has stayed behind as to the form of organization needed at its present state. What must be considered therefore is the 'need of the present moment' not the organization of a better 'future'.

Today society lacks an adequate training of man for the present state of civil life, and a 'moral organization' of the masses.

There is an absolute disorganization of humanity. Men are educated to consider themselves as isolated individuals who have to satisfy their own immediate interests in competition with other individuals. Instead there should be a powerful organization to understand and organize social events, to propose and pursue collective aims, thus ordaining the progress of civilization.

Today there is only an 'organization of things', but not of man. The environment is the only thing organized. Technical progress has set in motion a formidable mechanism that now moves of its own accord and drags the individuals after itself, as a magnet draws a cloud of iron dust, and they are crushed in its gearing. This can be said of everybody, manual and intellectual workers as well. They are all isolated in their interests; they are only looking for the profession that secures their material life; they are all drawn and absorbed by the material machines or the bureaucratic mechanisms. But it is evident that mechanism cannot draw man toward progress, because progress must depend on the man himself. There should be a moment when mankind should take command of its products and assume the directive. This moment has arrived. Either the masses organize themselves and master the mechanical world or the mechanical world will destroy mankind.

If it is recognized that it is this formidable progress and this universal participation of mankind to the realized progress that needs the organization of mankind to uphold itself, it will then also be understood that a new factor must be taken into consideration. Not only, but that this factor has already set to work and therefore urges the whole of mankind to interfere and to fill up the gap that endangers the existence of civilization. Mankind must be organized, because the 'weak spot' through which enters the enemy - that is war - is not the material frontier of nations, but the lack of preparation of man and the isolation of the individual. It is necessary to develop the spiritual life of man and then to organize mankind for Peace. Peace has its positive side in reconstruction of human society on scientifically determined bases. The peaceful social harmony should have a unique foundation, this cannot be but man himself.



Peace Education

Peace Education. Just type these two words into a search engine and you come up with 125 000 000 sites! Does this say something about us human beings or what! In the preschool we work with enriching the children's experiences and vocabulary, what a wonderful opportunity to use this precious time in growing the young child's abilities to use the right words in communicating effectively when a conflict arises in the classroom and they can arise often.

In attending a teacher's conference a few years back I was fortunate to witness an enactment by three 5 year olds where they gave an example of how to mediate between one another when a conflict arose in the classroom. The example was two children in a dispute with a third mediating around a designated peace table. Quite a sight to hear and see as to how well they positively spoke though the issue! Once the mediation was successfully completed the children could go and play in the peace tent in the garden.

Children need daily experiences of fun and laughter, that's what they remember and enjoy coming to school for, good old fashioned warm fuzzy moments!

We should ask ourselves if we were children what do we want more of? As adults what do we want more of? Laughter and love of course! The learning comes easily after this. How do we do this? Think back to your

childhood and how we used to love the games you played. There are numerous non-competitive games to be played for preschoolers and older alike. Research a bit and you'll find a richness of resources available.

Let children know that peace starts with them, remember you are the role model, you set the tone... Plant a peace tree, have group hugs, give feet massages, empower the children to be role players, sing songs, learn poems, read good stories, create posters, dance, use I-messages, see the child's point of view, show acceptance to all, share ideas with others, make a peace book of ideas, let nature in. Build your own peace curriculum.

Just make more peace!
Jacky Price

Peace is within me.

The sunshine warms me
and lights my way.
The flowers cheer me
and brighten my day.
The sky covers me
with a rainbow so bright.
And peace is within me
to make me feel right.

The birds sing to me
And make me sing too.
The wind blows around me
and whispers "what can you do."
The grass grows beneath me
sheltering the earth.
And peace is within me
To give friendship it's birth.

Author unknown

Practical Life for 9 - 12 or High School

Selfone in Skole - Drik Greeff

"Môre klas. Sit, los julle boeke en haal uit julle selfone."

Miskien wonder jy nou: Is hierdie ou nou heeltemal van lotjie getik? Selfone in skole is mos 'n pes. Die koerante is vol van skoolgevegte wat met selfone afgeneem is, pornografie, elektroniese "crib notes" en allerhande ander euwels.

Maar miskien is dit tyd dat ons ophou kla oor selfone in skole en dat ons dit liever beheer en benut. Die rede: selfone is wonderlike tegnologie en kan op baie positiewe maniere in skole gebruik word. En die meeste kinders het buitendien reeds selfone.

Die Lewensoriëntering-onderwyser se selfoonnommer behoort op elke kind se selfoon te wees. Dis die persoon wat 24 uur per dag beskikbaar moet wees vir kinders wat ernstige persoonlike nood ondervind, soos slagoffers van gesinsgeweld, verkragting, ens.

Die Wiskunde-onderwyser kan dan en wan 'n woordprobleem aan die leerlinge per SMS stuur (of MXit). Ondervinding het getoon dat bykans alle leerders die antwoord terug SMS of die volgende dag die antwoord in die skool verskaf. Moenie bekommerd wees oor die hulp van ouers of maats nie, want wat saak maak, is dat die kinders sulke Wiskunde geniet!

Goeie nuus! Kinders wat hulp soek met Wiskunde kan op Maandae, Woensdae, Donderdae en Vrydae van 14:00 – 15:00 kontak maak met Dr. Math, 'n Gautengse onderwyser, d.m.v. MXit by dr.math.help.me@jabber.org.

Selfoonkameras kan nuttig gebruik word in byvoorbeeld Lewenswetenskappe. In tale kan die video-funksie gebruik word om byvoorbeeld 'n rolspel af te neem. In plaas van om kinders in taal 'n opsomming te laat skryf, vra hulle om soms 'n SMS te stuur oor dieselfde leesstuk. 'n SMS is mos niks anders as 'n opsomming nie.

Sommige selfone bied Internet- en e-postoegang. Deur middel van jou selfoonverbinding kan mens ook goedkoop Internettoegang in die klaskamer hê deur byvoorbeeld die nodige sagteware, bv. Bluetooth, op jou rekenaar te installeer. Die nuutste skootrekenaars het reeds die nodige tegnologie. Sodoende het mens toegang tot die magdom Internet-onderwysbronne wat daar is.

SMS'e kan mos deesdae met rekenaars gestuur word op 'n soortgelyke wyse as e-pos. Op hierdie manier kan ouers in 'n kits ingelig word oor belangrikke vergaderings, sportbyeenkomste of skoolnuus. Een van die talle diensverskaffers is byvoorbeeld www.bulksms.com.

"Goed, klas. Skakel af julle selfone. SMS nommer 9 se antwoord vir my voor vanaand 8-uur."

Drik Greeff

Book Corner

The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics, RIANE EISLER shows how we can shift to a way of living and making a living that is more fulfilling, less stressful, and truly meets human needs.

The Real Wealth of Nations shows that the real wealth of nations consists of the contributions of people and of nature - and that we need economic policies and business practices that give visibility and value to the essential work of caring for both. In fact a "caring economics" is not only more humane and environmentally sound, but far more cost-effective.

Because it is a powerful tool for shifting to the kind of world we so need, The Real Wealth of Nations has been hailed by Nobel Peace

Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu as "a template for the better world that we have been so urgently seeking," by Gloria Steinem as "revolutionary," by Peter Senge as "desperately needed," and by Jane Goodall as "a call to action."

"None of us can do everything, but all of us can do something." Riane Eisler

For discounts on purchasing this book contact: sharon@freedomtolearn.co.za

Workshops

Mahatma Gandhi told his grandson Srun Gandhi the Seven Blunders of the World in the days before he died. They are:

Wealth without Work
Pleasure without Conscience
Knowledge without Character
Commerce without Morality
Science without Humanity
Worship without Sacrifice
Politics without Principle

Congratulations!

Montessori College entered an equestrian team in the South African National Equestrian Schools Association competition.

Three riders from the Montessori College paired up with a rider from the British International College and came first in the small schools league (4 riders or less per team) in Gauteng North. All three riders from our school were also awarded their Gauteng colours for their level and the junior rider was awarded a place in the top 15 riders in Gauteng North.

We think that this is a FANTASTIC feat, and shows that Montessori children do take part in sport and can be competitive in a healthy way.

Equestrian sport teaches patience, endurance and care for another living being. Team work and cooperation between the rider and the horse is essential - skills for life!

Heidi van Staden

The Brain Connection

Centre for Neuro-Education Assessment

**GAUTENG WORKSHOP – 04/05 AUGUST 2007
TWO-DAY MOVEMENT TRAINING WORKSHOP**

Addressing Learning Difficulties through Movement

Do you work with, know or have children who

- *Work slowly or leave work incomplete?*
- *Have a disorganized approach to work?*
- *Show poor coordination and are clumsy?*
- *Display poor muscle tone?*
- *Daydream and are unfocused?*
- *Have poor listening skills?*
- *Are restless?*
- *Display reversals?*
- *Find it difficult to read, do maths, and spell?*
- *Are untidy and can't colour or write neatly?*
- *Generally struggle at school?*
- *Have recurring tummy aches / headaches?*

....amongst other issues.

The two-day workshop comprises of a hands-on interactive seminar that includes:

- A detailed neuro-educational development lecture giving an understanding of the basic supporting systems necessary for learning readiness.
- An understanding of primitive and postural reflexes and their impact on learning readiness.
- An overview of the 'symptoms' of inefficient systems that are commonly mistaken for learning disorders such as AD/HD etc.
- The importance of purposeful movement for the various supporting systems.
- Understanding the categories of movement and how these may be used to build strong foundations for body and brain.
- An understanding of role of the visual and auditory systems in learning.
- The importance of nurturing and training efficient inter-hemispheric integration.
- The importance of correct nutrition and adequate supplementation.
- Advice on movement lesson planning.
- Sample lessons for in- and out-door movement programmes for one school term contained in a detailed workshop manual, and assessment tools.

Workshop Costs

This workshop runs over 2 days and costs ZAR500.00 per person. Booking is essential.

Next workshop:

Date: **Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 August 2007**

Venue: Village Montessori School, 245 Glover Avenue, Lyttelton, Gauteng.

Please contact **Susanne van Niekerk** on 082 900 3192 or susannev@mweb.co.za for more information.

Marketing

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For Sale: Wooden boxes and trays in all sizes
(painted and unpainted) for storing and
displaying of Montessori material.

Craft classes offered: relating specifically to the
Montessori curriculum and craft materials in kit
form available for purchasing. Contact Details:

Shahida Asmall – Phone: 0312090675,
0848177867. Email: shaber.asmall@huletts.co.za

Posts Available

Chameleon's Montessori School, Durbanville, Cape Town is seeking an experienced
Directress for their preschool class.

Please contact Emma/Claire on 021 9135213/976 9611 or email:

montessorichameleons@hotmail.com

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

*The greatest gifts my parents gave to me...were their unconditional love and a set
of values. Values that they lived and didn't just lecture about.*

Colin Powell

[Please ensure that all your SAMA staff members have the opportunity to read this newsletter.](#)

The following products are available:

- **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 categories of membership may purchase the CDs for R500 per set.

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

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All articles were 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

ADVERTISING POLICY IN SAMA PUBLICATIONS:

- All advertisements must be supportive of Montessori Education.

Free Adverts:

- FULL MEMBERS get one free 3-line ad in all SAMA publications throughout the year.
- SCHOOL MEMBERS will be listed on the website at no cost for the duration of the validity of their membership. School members also get one free 3-line advert in all SAMA publications throughout the year.
- TRAINING CENTRES will be listed on the website at no cost for the duration of the validity of their membership. Training centres get one free quarter page ad per year in the National Newsletter only.
- SUPPLIERS get one free quarter page advert per year on renewal/application of associate membership. Thereafter, they will get free banner listing in all publications.

Paid Adverts (Members):

- Additional 3-line ad (National Newsletter): R50
- Quarter Page ad (National Newsletter): R100
- Half page ad (National Newsletter): R200
- Three quarter page ad (National Newsletter): R300
- Full page ad (National Newsletter): R400

Paid Adverts (non-members):

- Additional 3-line ad (National Newsletter): R100
- Quarter Page ad (National Newsletter): R200
- Half page ad (National Newsletter): R400
- Three quarter page ad (National Newsletter): R600
- Full page ad (National Newsletter): R800

Adverts placed in Regional Newsflashes at 50% of the above costs.

All advertisers must be checked by the general administrator for membership status and will be billed accordingly by the general administrator. Where payments are due, ads will only be placed once payment is received.