May 2007

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Southern African Montessori Association

Message from the President

Dear SAMA Members

Thank you for the honour of serving as the SAMA President for the next year. I am extremely positive about the year ahead and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible during this time.

The unbelievably successful conference in Durban has set such a strong, supportive tone for the year. I am sure those who were able to make it will agree that it was the best SAMA Conference yet. Having had the privilege of attending the centenary conferences in Rome and New York, I can honestly say that Durban held the best energy and spirit of Montessori. Barbara Isaacs, our keynote speaker and Head of MCI London, who was also at the Rome conference, wholeheartedly supports this view. Congratulations again to the KZN Conference Committee for their dedication and hard work.

For the next SAMA year, I am going to take the advice of a loyal SAMA member, Lindsay van den Berg who suggested to me that SAMA should have a theme for each year. This year that theme should be “Respect for All”. This message was so clear in Durban and seems to capture what many members have asked for.

Respect is the cornerstone of Montessori education. At times though, we may forget to extend this beyond the children. Our task is to show respect for each other, the children, the parents, our student teachers, our families, our environment and, equally important, ourselves.

Included in this newsletter are the contact details of the National Executive Committee (Exco) for 2007/2008. Communication between Exco and members is absolutely critical for the success for SAMA as an organisation. We are still finding our feet in our new roles and will provide detailed feedback of goals and aims in the next newsletter. One aim this year is to increase SAMA membership and visibility through actively being as inclusive as possible – a key to SAMA’s sustainability.

Please let us know what you are thinking, how and where you need help and what you expect from SAMA. I would only ask that the task of “Respect for All” extend to this communication as well.

Maria Montessori said “Growth is not merely a harmonious increase in size, but a transformation.” (To Educate The Human Potential). May we all have a year of such growth in SAMA.

Warm Regards
Sam Streak
SAMA President

SAMAS

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REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

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KwaZulu Natal 084 649 8477
Eastern Cape: 083 565 8733
2007 SAMA Annual Conference Durban

This took place over the long weekend in Durban where we were blessed with sunshine not only in the weather but also in the hospitality and friendliness of the Durbanites and all attending.

Barbara Isaacs, a gracious and warm personality gave us her words of the Montessori spirit that led us to reflect what we do as teachers in a Montessori environment and why. The thrust of her opening talk was in regards to the child in the 21st century and focussed on the modern child, how we use today’s terms or language of child education and development to reach our parents and the communities in which we live. She echoed once again the acknowledgement of the programmes we run using the 3 hour work cycle and mixed aged groups and inclusion of parents as partners in the care of the child. Barbara allowed us to take into consideration the challenges that face us before leading us to turn our chairs and discuss with other participants some challenges around health, political, parents and training issues of our work with children. These were placed on post its to be read by all.

Barbara opened again the second day with reflection on the role of the Montessori Directress in today’s classrooms with emphasis on the spiritual preparation of the teacher, again leaving us with questions to reflect on our true role as teachers.

The conference held many interesting and varied talks in keeping with child development today. We were treated to some valuable insights into eco teaching, sustainability, emotional intelligence, importance of movement and drama games. The highlight was the sharing of a network of organisations who have taken Montessori education to those with limited resources. There were displays of materials made and we were treated to a musical representation of the dynamic spirit in which this is all done. These ladies then went on to lead us in unity singing the National Anthem.

Christine Clark and Barbara Isaacs
materials by woz’abona

The conference allowed delegates to reach across the wide distances that the country divides us into making connections with other educators. It provided a forum for management issues and workshops to take back new ideas to our classrooms.

Without the handful of dedicated teachers this conference could not have taken place and with heartfelt thanks to all those involved in structuring the conference, delegates and invited guest and suppliers. We left with a sense of how strong the Southern African Montessori Association is becoming in unity and spirit.

Jacky Price
Newsletter coordinator
My Swaziland visit: observation and workshops: March 2007
by Cané Lake (Montessori consultant and lecturer)

The International Montessori School in Mbabane, Swaziland, which is run by Shida Sinaei, is definitely a Montessori school that I would highly recommend (and I have visited over 40 different Montessori schools in South Africa and abroad). I was excited by the children’s self-motivation, concentration and industriousness.

Each teacher is in charge of an area (practical life, sensorial, maths, language, culture and art). The 66 pre-schoolers moved from room to room working in the different areas. Everyone was busy, each area was as fully utilised as the next, and there was an atmosphere of calmness and productiveness. The teachers spoke calmly and with respect, and gave lots of positive reinforcement. One really got the feeling that the children were self-disciplined and were enjoying the learning process. I was extremely impressed with the school, and take my hat off to Shida – who not only is principal, administrator, etc. – but also teaches full-time. I would advise everyone to go and visit this school.

In February 2006 I had presented a one-day workshop on sensorial extensions and games to about 25 teachers. This year, Shida had asked me to give two workshops for teachers from 11 different schools in Swaziland. A total of 30 teachers attended the three-hour workshop on the Friday afternoon. The topic was themes, and we brainstormed all the possible types of theme topics and drew spider diagrams, looking at what to include as well as what to collect. I also put on my felt floppy “crazy scientist” hat and presented some science experiments. On the Saturday, 37 teachers took part in a seven-hour workshop. I presented story telling, group time ideas, mediation skills, “what if?” role-plays as well as numerous interactive drama games. There was a lot of laughter as the teachers were a creative thinking bunch! The children are lucky to have such keen and fun teachers.
**Centenary of the Montessori Movement**

**“Champion the Cause of All Children”**

The Centenary of the Montessori Movement is not only a cause for celebration and a reason to be very proud of our achievement, but a unique occasion to launch a new start and to face the challenges together. In simple terms, the framework for the Centenary activities will be to:
- Honour the past
- Celebrate the present
- Create the future

[www.montessoricentenary.org](http://www.montessoricentenary.org)

--- Special Interests ---

If looking for interesting visitors or two to your school then…….

The *Wildlife Society* has a variety of shows or exhibitions that they present to the children. They bring snakes, birds of prey and cheetahs to name a few. If wanting them to visit your school contact:

**S.A. National Bird of Prey Centre Wildlife Sanctuary.**

Att: Glodel Oertel (083 585 9540) Fax: 058 913 1816 E-mail: raptor@icon.co.za

WWW: [birdsofprey.org.za](http://birdsofprey.org.za)

--- Appreciative Inquiry ---

I have a dedicated staff at my school and to show my appreciation for this I invited Ally Connolly and Jacky Price to run an Appreciative Inquiry workshop for my staff. An intense working day and lots of laughter, tears and insights to each other we resolved much and made forward looking commitments to our work at Rainbow Montessori School.

The process takes us through a journey of sharing stories about the positive experiences in our work and how to create more of these in nurturing ourselves, the children and parents.

All principals or head teachers need their staff to be positive about the school they work in and support a productive working environment.

Christine Clark
Rainbow Montessori School CT

--- Quotation ---

"There is no single effort more radical in its potential for saving the world than a transformation of the way we raise our children."

--- Marianne Williamson ---

--- Singing and Poster Creation ---

Singing a song composed on the day which represented what Rainbow Montessori meant to us.

Cresting a poster to reflect our dream
### Marketing

**Childrens House**  
Official Distributors of Nienhuis Montessori Materials  
Tel: (021) 788 3160  
Fax: (086) 619 5182  
Email: childrenshouse@absamail.co.za

**Classroom Creations**  
Is now supplying Montessori materials in PDF formats at a more affordable rate. Materials can be reprinted when cards are missing or damaged. The license entitles schools to print copies for all of their classrooms. Visit their website at [www.classroomcreations.co.za](http://www.classroomcreations.co.za) or e-mail Dianne on dianne@classroomcreations.co.za.

**M.E.S.A. Montessori Equipment South Africa**  
[www.montessoriequipmentsa.com](http://www.montessoriequipmentsa.com).  
We supply the full range of Montessori Materials. All products carefully manufactured. As direct importers, we are able to maintain excellent prices for our valued clients.  
contact Leigh at 082 490 4944 or email us at leigh.mesa@telkomsa.net

**Montessori Supplier**  
[www.montessorisupplier.co.za](http://www.montessorisupplier.co.za)  
We supply the full Gonzagarredi range of Montessori Materials. All equipment is AMI approved & spare parts are available. We also have a large local range.  
Contact Janinne – 0833044762  
email - sales@montessorisupplier.co.za / fax 0866846556

**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

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

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

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**Teacher’s aide required for Montessori at the Sands**, Umhlanga; this position would suit a newly qualified Montessori teacher or a Montessori student. Please contact Nicky on 0724447277

**Children Workshop, Claremont.** Requires nursery class assistant(2-3yrs). Need to have experience. Training in Montessori or Educare preferred. Contact Liesel or Jenny on 021 671 7538

**School Principal and Primary Montessori Directress needed in Barhain.** Contact Aseel Alkhaifa: ayjaalmontessori.com

**Posts Wanted**

Hi my name is Melissa Brookstein and I am a qualified Montessori Directress and have been working in a Montessori Environment for the past 3 and a half years. I am looking for a position for January 2008.

For more information on Job Vacancies, Associate Member(suppliers), Member schools and more, visit SAMA website [samontessori.org.za](http://samontessori.org.za)
Workshops: Appreciative Inquiry: Ally Connelly, Jacky Price at: allycon@iafrica.com
Cane Lake: Classroom management and assessment. cane@gonet.co.za
Maths Workshop: Headstart Mercy Montessori, Cape Town, Saturday June 9th 09h30 – 16h00, R300 per person: mmatc@mweb.co.za

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, e-mail Sam Streak at president@samontessori.org.za The curriculum is printed and bound, and the curriculum is available to paid up SAMA Institutional Members for R250.00

- **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. Contact Sam Streak to order. Again, this is only available to SAMA Institutional Members.

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

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<td>Jacky Price</td>
<td>Newsletter Co-ordinator</td>
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All articles contributed by SAMA members. If you feel you would like to contribute, please send to Jacky via: admin@samontessori.org.za