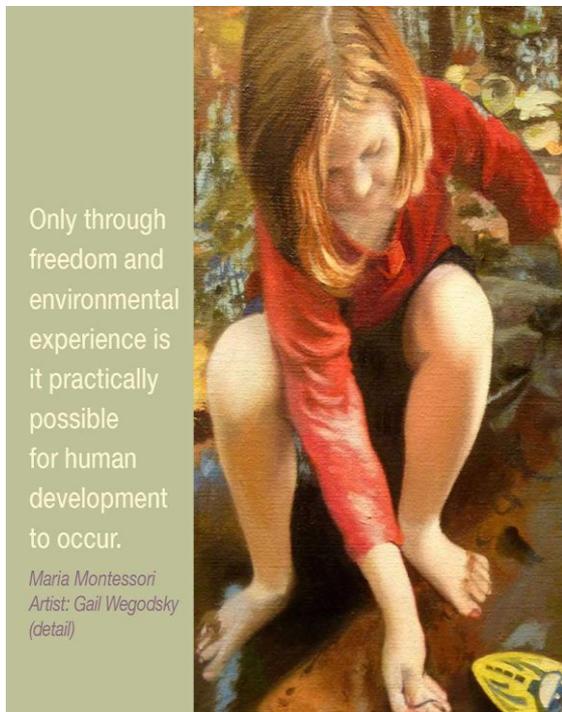




Parent Newsletter

July 2015

Letter from the President



Only through freedom and environmental experience is it practically possible for human development to occur.

Maria Montessori
Artist: Gail Wegodsky
(detail)

Dr Maria Montessori was well ahead of her time, and at a time where when many conversations and new ideas were developing regards education reform. But Dr Montessori was not about education reform, her work begun with a deep interest in the way children learnt and behaved. Through consistent scientific observation of children she began an incredible and remarkable journey into what we know today as Montessori education.

Today's neuroscientists confirm what Maria wrote of her observations of children in the way they develop and learn. On the findings of the 1996 conference, *Rethinking the Brain*; Rima Shore wrote in her 1997 report, the importance of early brain development for the nation's future well-being, thus pointing out major conclusions and implications for programmes in early education and human services.

Five parallels between today's findings in neuroscience and the writings and observations of Montessori and Shore; is that the brain is affected by environmental conditions including the kind of nourishment, care, surroundings, and stimulation an individual receives and the impact of the environment is dramatic and specific thus affecting how the brain is wired. – (1) development hinges on the interplay between nature and nurture; (2) early care has a long-lasting impact on development, the ability to learn, and

the ability to regulate emotion; (3) the brain has a remarkable capacity to change, but timing is crucial; (4) there are times when negative experiences or absence of appropriate stimulation are more likely to have serious and sustained effects; and (5) there is substantial evidence for the efficacy of early intervention. This all resonates with Montessori education from birth as an 'aid to life' in fulfilling each child's potential

"This is education, understood as a help to life; an education from birth, which feeds a peaceful revolution and unites all in a common aim, attracting them as a common single centre. Mothers, fathers, politicians: all must combine in their respect and help for this delicate work of formation."

Maria Montessori
The Absorbent Mind. Pg. 15/16

Rima Shore. *Rethinking the Brain; New Insights into Early Development*. New York: Families and Work Institute, 1997

SAMA office
041 367 4936
admin@samontessori.org.za

A vintage-style illustration of a small blue bird perched on the receiver of a green rotary telephone. Above the bird is a banner that says "call me". The background is a light, textured color.

Montessori schools across South Africa join together in celebrating Heritage Day by paying tribute to the founder and educational heritage of Maria Montessori.

Aims of achievement for our Montessori Walk 2015:

- 1 To create public awareness on Montessori at a national level.
- 2 To create an event where Montessori families can connect.
- 3 To promote unity amongst Montessori schools, families and communities.
- 4 To have fun and exercise outdoors.

DATE: 24 September each year. (Heritage Day)

TIME: 08:30 for 09:00 (Coastal towns are welcome to start earlier if there are weather concerns)

VENUE: Appropriate to each region/city/town/community.



What a pleasure to have had the experience to visit and be part of “20 years in celebration of Montessori” for the International Montessori Preschool in Swaziland. It was heart-warming to see such a dedicated group of parents work together to make an event successful and raise funds to sponsor a child through Montessori education. Congratulations to Shida Sinaei, the staff and parents of this delightful preschool.

