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New Beginnings !

Chennai

- Aditi Ganesh

The 15th AMI Primary Montessori Training Course at Navadisha Montessori Foundation (NMF) was inaugurated on Thursday, August 16, 2018. The students arrived early and appeared eager to begin their Montessori journey.



The day began with the children of Navadisha Montessori School chanting hymns followed by Rukmini Ramachandran, Director of Training, welcoming the gathering and briefly updating the students about the importance of the path they had chosen to bring harmony in the life of the child. The students were then invited to plant a variety of saplings while the children sang a Tamil song about trees. This was symbolic of the development of the plants and the students, as well as the children they would serve one day.



Mumbai

- Mehak Hemnani

The 22nd AMI Primary Diploma Course at the Sir Ratan Tata Institute (RTI), Mumbai commenced with great excitement and fervour on August 20, 2018. The nine-month course will be conducted under the directorship of Zarin Malva. This course has 56 students in the age group of 21 to 46 years. The staff of the course are excited and looking forward to start off with this huge batch.

Pavithra Rajagopalan, Trainer-in-Training, says, "The students were excited to begin the course, as we jumped into the orientation and they got to hear what the course entails and the work that is expected of them, they got more serious and were full of questions." All in all, a great beginning to a year filled with assignments, observations, practice sessions and thoughts of 'the child'!

Hyderabad

- Vidhya Ramalingam

The inauguration of the 18th AMI Montessori Primary Diploma Course under the auspices of the Montessori Training and Research Trust (MTRT), Hyderabad took place on August 23, 2018. The course has 27 students onboard under the guidance of Teenaz Reporter, Director of Training. The inauguration was attended by Trust members, alumni and representatives from schools.



Following the lighting of the lamp as a mark of good luck for the academic year, Usha Naik, Trustee, MTRT, welcomed the students and expressed her best wishes. Later a sapling was planted and each of the students put a handful of soil and watered them. Amidst mixed feelings of happiness, excitement and a bit of anxiety, the new batch of students began their Montessori journey.

Bangalore*-Kavneet Chadha*

The inauguration of the first AMI Primary Diploma Course at Montessori Institute of Bangalore (MIB) took place on August 27, 2018 at Banashankari, Bangalore with 10 students. Rukmini Ramachandran and Ruby Lao are the consultants for the course and Suneeta Madnani along with Anahita Gandhi are the trainers.

The students and staff lit the five faces of the lamp and everyone was in a buoyant mood, which was further uplifted when the 'Universal Prayer by Annie Besant' was read out. 'O Hidden Life, vibrant in every atom; O Hidden Light, shining in every creature; O Hidden Love, embracing in all oneness; May all those who feel themselves as one with thee; Know they are therefore one with every other.'

A Day to Remember!*- Aditi Ganesh & Kavneet Chadha*

On the occasion of Maria Montessori's 148th birthday on August 31, Montessori schools in Chennai and Bangalore share with us, their ways of celebrating it.

**CHENNAI**

"At Navadisha Montessori School, sessions were planned for the teachers to view history with a new perspective and to reflect on Montessori principles. A talk on 'Appreciating Temple Architecture and Sculpture of India' by Chithra Madhavan, a renowned historian was organised which was followed by a lecture emphasizing the 'Importance of Prepared Environment for Children'."

- Loga Balasubramanian, Navadisha Montessori School

"In Kidoz Montessori School, the directresses of each environment brought a photograph of Maria Montessori and spoke to the children about her life and her work with children. A sapling was planted in the campus by the children and the directress drew the child's attention to Montessori's age, by counting the number of seeds kept in a bowl and making the number '148' with the Decimal Cards."

- Ashwini Rayan, Kidoz Montessori School

"We at Cascade Family Learning Society presented the Life story of Maria Montessori by screening a documentary on her. This was followed by a presentation of the Black Strip to parents who attended as a symbolic representation of how the big story of creation unfolds in the mind of the child, with a simple piece of material."

*- Team, Cascade Family Learning Society***BANGALORE**

"At Touch International School a group of children engaged the parents by presenting activities from the different areas like the sensorial games with the botany cabinet and sound box, math materials for the four operations and prepared their own timelines with their parents."

- Indrakshi Dcosta, Touch Internationale School

"In the Elementary environment in The Montessori School, the children and the adults sat through an informative, short reading session by Archana Narayanan (Directress) about Montessori's journey and her life.

- Elementary Team, The Montessori School

IMF Events

CHENNAI

- Sruthi Kumar (Facilitator, Patasala Montessori School)



An interactive session on the 'Nature of the Child' was conducted by Hemalatha Rangarajan (Primary Trainer) and Ramya Sridhar (Primary Trainer in Training) at Abacus Montessori School on July 21, 2018. The three-hour workshop was conducted in Tamil and was exclusively for the benefit of helpers from various Montessori schools around the city.

The talk covered topics such as the needs and characteristics of children from birth to 12 years, what kind of help is appropriate at each age and how the various features of a Montessori environment support the development of a child in these age groups. The talks given by both speakers comprised of several anecdotes connected to common classroom and home situations that made it easily understandable and relatable to everyone in the audience.

A key feature of the talk was the emphasis that helpers are equally important stakeholders in the raising of the children in their care. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the session and many of them felt reassured to follow the simple guidelines presented in the lecture. The three videos shown of a toddler independently eating, peeling fruit, and cooling milk also made a huge impact on the audience and revealed to them visually the capacity of a very young infant if given only "appropriate" and "necessary" help.

HYDERABAD

-Vidushi Govil (Content Team, Blue Blocks Montessori)



The Indian Montessori Foundation (IMF) organised a Thursday Talk titled 'Living in Harmony with Nature' on July 26, 2018, at Blue Blocks Pre-Schools, Gachibowli, Hyderabad. The speaker was Nayantara Nanda Kumar- an environmental engineer, Odissi dancer and also the founder of 'Our Sacred Place', a space for art in all forms.

"Listening to Nayantara Nanda Kumar added new dimensions to my thought process. There are many ways a child can benefit, draw and get empowered by nature. It's not about climbing mountains, or crossing seas. If we have an eye for nature, it is all around us, right outside our window. A tiny shell with a beautiful texture, a colourful butterfly or an intricate design on a leaf, will have the same effect on us as the great Himalayas would."

The most important thought that Nayantara mentioned was about hooks. Each time we make our children aware of a piece of nature, we give them a hook, a point of contact to connect from. Hence while driving in a car, a simple tree that we pass by, a bird we spot, a butterfly that flutters by, or a breath-taking landscape, each of such experiences can be made as hook, for the child. These hooks develop virtue of patience, reverence to other living things, giving children a new outlook towards plants and animals."

BANGALORE*-Kavneet Chadha*

Ramya Sridhar (Primary Trainer in Training) spoke on 'Mathematics' at KRSTA Montessori on July 26, 2018. She related instances where we use mathematical calculations even without realising it in our daily lives, like while crossing the road or cooking. This followed how the exercises of practical life in a Montessori environment lead the child to such approximations and order, thereby preparing the child for the field of mathematics.

Ramya Sridhar, while speaking about the child's attitude to work, related an incident wherein a lady who observed a Montessori environment was pleasantly surprised to see children arriving at answers by working with the charts and then checking them using control board, instead of just copying from it.

The evening ended on a pleasant note with anecdotes being shared of children's work in a Montessori environment.

CHENNAI*- Aditi Ganesh*

A talk on 'Being a Parent Today' was delivered on August 23, 2018 at Patasala Montessori School, Chennai by Ruby Lau, AMI Trainer and educational consultant of Navadisha Montessori Foundation. Ruby highlighted different aspects such as the importance of giving experiences to children, how they absorb everything from the environment effortlessly, and saying 'no' to them and being committed to the same.

Some of the participants share their biggest take aways...

"The children LOVE what we LOVE. They want to become us. We have to be good role models!" – Mathangi Venkataraman

"The biggest take away for me was the fact that you have to expose your child to everything in our society in a positive manner to create a change in the outlook of the future generation. We can't leave it all up to the grandparents, we as parents have to make sure that we give time to our children and allow the grandparents to play their own role in the child's life."- Khyati Rahil Shah

The session ended with questions and discussions about exposing children to different religions, introducing culture, handling siblings, and sensitizing grandparents about boundaries for children. The participants were left with a lot to think about in terms of responsibilities in raising a child and how there is so much more to offer beyond the physical needs.

*Poetry Corner***The Rainbow Fairies***Juliana Horatia Ewing*

Two little clouds, one summer's day,
Went flying through the sky;
They went so fast they bumped their heads,
And both began to cry.

Old Father Sun looked out and said:
"Oh never mind, my dears,
I'll send my little fairy folk
To dry your falling tears."

One fairy came in violet,
And one wore indigo;
In blue, green, yellow, orange, and red,
They made a pretty row.

They wiped the cloud-tears all away,
And then from out the sky,
Upon a light of sunbeams made,
They hung their gowns to dry.



My Comfy Closet: Clothing for Children (3 to 6 years)

- Priyanka Kumar

In this issue of the Touch Board, we bring you a special feature on Comfortable Clothing for children across various age levels.

From a very early age, we see children manifesting a natural urge to be independent. The young child delights in opportunities to master movements and experience independence. At the age of three, when the child enters the casa, we see that with the right help given from an early age, he has a certain degree of independence with respect to dressing and comfortable clothing plays an essential part in this process.

As much as comfortable clothing can be understood as clothing that is soft on the skin, suited to the weather conditions and the environment, it must also be understood as clothing that is comfortable for the child to manage independently, leaving him with a sense of 'I can do this by myself'.

Here are a few tips for preparing children to dress independently:

- ♣ Have an accessible and organized space for the child's clothes. It must be at a height that is comfortable for the child to reach.

- ♣ Have a clear/noticeable division between clothes for different occasions, involving the child.

- ♣ It is important for the child to be familiar with the clothes in his closet.

- ♣ The child of three can be involved in shopping for clothes and is now ready to pick his clothes from among a few different choices. But it may not always be possible for the child to be involved clothes shopping, so it is a good idea to discuss any new addition to or removal from his closet.

- ♣ Set up a space where the child can dress up. A full-size mirror for the child to look at while dressing up is a valuable addition!

- ♣ After buying new clothes, the child can have a few trials at home to familiarize himself with it before wearing it outside.

- ♣ Accept the child's choice- even of an extremely 'uncoordinated' outfit!

- ♣ Allow plenty of time for the child to dress independently. Choosing an outfit to wear to school the next day or to an upcoming occasion can happen well in advance to avoid last minute rush.

- ♣ Dressing, like every other task that the child undertakes, is a long process that can only be achieved by consistent practice and repetition. It is important to allow plenty of opportunities for this.

* Special thanks to Ms. Prabha Karthik for the Photographs



Accesible and organized space for the child's clothes



A practical and easy solution to facilitating independence in the toilet – a step stool!



Taps, soap dish and a towel rod that the child can reach with comfort !

Books in the IMF Corner!

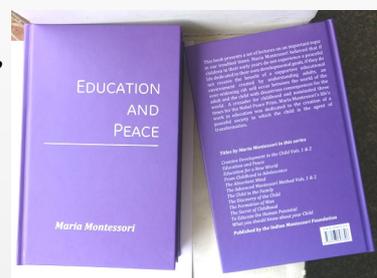
A new addition to Indian Montessori Foundation's publications includes Montessori's **Education and Peace**, which presents a set of lectures on an important topic in our troubled times. Maria Montessori believed that if children in their early years do not experience a peaceful life dedicated to their own developmental goals, if they do not receive the benefit of a supportive educational environment created by understanding adults, an ever-widening rift will occur between the world of the adult and the child with disastrous consequences for the world. A crusader for childhood and nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize, Maria Montessori's life's work in education was dedicated to the creating of a peaceful society in which the child is the agent of transformation.

To get a copy of 'Education and Peace' and other books published by IMF contact,

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IMF Publications - Books	Price
Education for a New World	₹ 360.00
The Child In the Family	₹ 370.00
From Childhood to Adolescence	₹ 430.00
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Education and Peace	₹ 560.00
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AMI Membership

Membership to Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) is open to everyone! Become a part of a worldwide community dedicated to the recognition of the unique nature of childhood, natural human development and the rights of the child. Discounted rates to events, AMI eBulletins and Journals are some of the benefits a member receives. AMI membership is an individual membership and is not available to schools, universities, and other educational organisations.

Membership fees begin at 40 euros.

To join, please visit www.montessori-ami.org

Anyone can become a subscriber!

The Indian Montessori Foundation brings out two publications, a monthly newsletter, The Touch Board (6 copies a year) and an annual journal, Montessori Matters.

Subscriptions:

One year: Rs. 1200

Two years: Rs. 2000

Print out the subscription form from our website (www.montessori-india.org), fill in all the details required and send it along with your payment to the Indian Montessori Foundation.

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Do send in articles or news to thetouchboard@gmail.com

Want to get noticed? Place your advertisements in the Montessori Matters and The Touch Board!

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