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IMF Events

Mumbai

- Mehak Hemnani

The Indian Montessori Foundation (IMF) organised a talk on September 20, 2018 at Discovery Montessori, Mumbai. Zarin Malva, who spearheads the Teacher Training Programme at Sir Ratan Tata (RTI) Institute in Mumbai spoke on 'Linking Montessori School Practices to the Child's Home'. Zarin Malva highlighted different ways in which Montessori principles can be applied at the child's home according to the child's age group. The highlights of the talk according to Merlyn Poojari from Discovery Montessori are;



- 1) The crucial years – Womb to Two years
How the parents have to prepare themselves and the environment for their child within the means available. The bond built by the family should be strong for that completes the relationship.
- 2) The child from 2-5 years is developing his intelligence, will and personality. It is important that the parents give the child opportunities to explore independence through trust, order at home and respecting him by treating him as another individual.
- 3) The child from 5-6 years is progressing to be a man and parents face various challenges during this time. Patience and acceptance will aid the parents to understand the child better.

The biggest take away from the talk was that collaboration is the key to build a bond so strong and secure. We have to follow the child as he will show his needs for his development. We should be lovingly firm, aid when required and accept and love the child.

Bangalore

- Kavneet Chadha

A Talk was held in PEP School V2, Bangalore on September 27, 2018. Clinical psychologist, Priya Pothan spoke on 'Let's Simplify Child Development', questioning the audience about what they felt was important in a child's life from 0-6 years and then linking that to Montessori philosophy. She spoke about the importance of having a few aspects in a young child's life.

#order and structure- these are important tools for development and from a parenting angle, this means routine

#consistency and the parents being approachable- parents should follow rules that have been set up as well as give scope for errors

#encourage social development- to make them aware of how society works

#allow boredom- as it encourages the child to explore, become curious thus leading to creativity and intelligence

Hyderabad

- Vidhya Ramalingam

IMF organized a talk in Springs Montessori, Madinaguda, Hyderabad on September 27, 2018. AMI Elementary Trainer in Training, Madhavi Gaddam spoke on the topic 'The Need to Ask Why – How We Can Support the Reasoning Mind of The Child.'



The talk explored on how the second plane child through the power of imagination and intelligence will reason about everything that becomes a part of his life and how one can nurture this child's mind who has a hunger for knowledge.

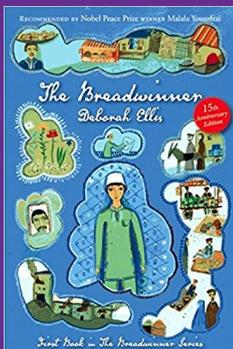
"The biggest take away for me is the analogy of the germinating seed in the soil that which cannot be pulled out to check growth. Similarly, the child should be allowed to blossom at his/her own pace." - Siva Kanth, Participant

Titles & Tales

- Prabha Karthik



Books are real and magical, simple and transcendent, right here and beyond, and an essential part of children's lives! We bring you a series of reviews of books suitable for children over six. Watch this space in every issue for a different book!



The Breadwinner

Author - Deborah Ellis

Publisher - Groundwood Books

ISBN - 978-1554987658

The Breadwinner is a beautiful story written by Deborah Ellis about an 11-year-old girl Parvana in Taliban occupied Afghanistan. When her father is arrested, Parvana is forced to dress up as a boy in order to feed her family. She is amazed by how much the world opens up for her once she is a boy. In the course of her adventures she meets another of her friends who has also disguised herself in order to help her family survive.

The simple, evocative narrative often lies at odds with the seriousness of the ideas being experienced. This story was made into a critically acclaimed animated film in 2017 and received the prize for best-animated picture in the 90th Academy Awards. The book would be a lovely one to read to Upper Elementary children (9-12 years) and could open up a wide range of topics for discussion.



School Events !

Mumbai - Grandparents Day Celebration

-Mehak Hemnani

Casa Vista Montessori Preschool, Mumbai held a field trip on the occasion of Grandparents Day on September 7, 2018. The trip involved the grandparents and the children working together in a cooking workshop at 29-Twenty-Nine restaurant. The grandparent and the child together used their culinary skills to prepare a North Indian dish, called 'The Delhi Tokri Chaat' by assimilating all the ingredients together. Later, they enjoyed the meal together. "We specifically chose this restaurant as it has a unique concept of serving dishes from 29 states of India. In class, we have been learning about the Indian culture and we chose to integrate this experience to make the classroom learning more meaningful."- Aksheeta Parikh, Founder, Casa Vista



Chennai - First Aid Workshop

-Aditi Ganesh



A First Aid Workshop was conducted at Redwood Montessori School for the teachers and support staff on September 14, 2018. Dr. Srikanth, from Apollo OMR Specialty Emergency Department, along with a paramedic staff highlighted the basic first aid steps that need to be followed in school for young children during certain emergencies such as fever, burns, bleeding nose, fractures, animal bites, convulsions and so on.

They spoke of how it was important not to panic, but to be conscious and take quick action in handling a medical situation. They focused on the simple steps to be followed on the spot to handle common medical emergencies before the ambulance reaches the spot. They demonstrated how to give chest compressions and mouth to mouth respirations for an adult and infant, using a mannequin. All the teachers got an opportunity to try the same.

At the end of the session, questions were raised and addressed about helping a person who is choking or has convulsions, helping children when they put something inside their nose and about the first aid to be given for an insect bite.

Chennai - Elementary Field Trip to Pollachi

-Aditi Ganesh



The Upper Elementary children (9- 12 years) of Navadisha Montessori School went on a field trip to Vanavarayar Institute of Agriculture, Pollachi, between September 23 and September 26, 2018. The group of 27 children, accompanied by 3 adults travelled by the Shatabdi Express. As a preparation for the trip children were introduced to different kinds of maps of Tamil Nadu and India, given a brief of the history of Coimbatore, its flora and fauna and the occupations of the people, especially farming. A practicing farmer cum banker and a professional who grew up in a farmer's family in Pollachi shared his experiences and stories with the children prior to the trip.

At the farm, children were involved in cleaning the cow shed, feeding the cattle, paddy transplanting, lime harvesting and sorting. They also participated in village crafts like weaving coconut leaves into mats, whistle blowers and brooms. They made thoranamams with mango leaves, decorated the temple and danced kummiattam with the village women. They also played traditional games like pandi, nondi and marbles.



Cont...

“The independence observed was surely overwhelming for us. The children packed and managed their luggage on their own throughout the trip. They were up early every day and were ready before the specified time in spite of the limited bathrooms. During meals, they served themselves well, made sure that no food was wasted and washed their vessels. They occupied themselves with creative games during the unscheduled times. They made their beds (coir mats and razai) at night and folded and put them away in the morning. They took notes during the talks and wrote in their journal every day. They took turns and asked thoughtful questions to the various resource people. Overall, they adjusted well to unforeseen changes in the schedule. They also expressed their love and gratitude to the people who hosted them by making beautiful cards for them with personalized notes.” - Kamini Kapur, Elementary teacher, Navadisha Montessori School

Literature Festival— Bangalore

- Kavneet Chadha



From L-R (Radhika Menon from Tulika Books, authors Maya Thiagarajan, Rasil Ahuja, Nadine Bailey, Katie Day, Colin Kelman, Dhooleka Raj during Neev Book Awards Ceremony)

A three-day Children’s Literature festival organized by Neev Academy witnessed the presence of 1500 children from the ages of 5-18 from schools all over Bangalore. The event was held between September 27 and September 29, 2018 in the Yemalur Campus of Neev Academy. The event had a plethora of reading sessions, book launches, discussions, interactions with writers and the book awards too. Eminent authors, poets, illustrators, librarians and educators were part of the festival which was attended by parents, teachers, educators, librarians and students.

Following are excerpts from an interview with Kavita Gupta Saharwal, Managing Trustee of Neev Academy and Curator of Neev Literature Festival.

What was the thought behind the Literature Festival for Children?

One was the idea that reading matters. Also, how much reading takes place; what kind of reading takes place and what is read by the children. In this era of technology these questions are far more prevalent as children have many more mediums to explore. Reading is a conversation between people, between oneself as well as between the reader and the author. It is an opportunity for the reader to unite with the author and have a conversation. The Literature Festival is like an “intellectual buffet”. If one misses a type of interaction/reading, there are others to get a flavour of.

The Literature Festival requires involvement with a lot of authors, hence the question- are writers able to find publishers who print diverse topics related to children?

This space is changing rapidly and increasing incredibly. Children’s literature isn’t limited to entertainment. Children need to see various aspects to recognize themselves. Characters which are real, nuanced, example in the book “The Queen of Ice”, Queen Didda is loving, ruthless and ambitious (qualities which are not always seen together). As India has its own standing in the world, people around the world want to understand stories, ideas and thoughts from here.

Can you suggest a few ways to encourage reading as a habit?

The adults should be seen reading! If adults read; children tend to follow. We need to start reading early to children as well as read with children. Reading should be a routine for younger children, as routines become habits. Reading is a verbal cuddle and these should be a daily part of a child’s life.

Pack your Bags!

While adults are always on the lookout for places that children can visit, in this segment, we bring to you some interesting choices of places to take children in different cities!

Pune

-Priyanka Kumar

The Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum



The Raja Dinkar Kelkar Museum in Pune, is a true celebration of Indian Art through the ages. Collected by Kelkar, each artefact on display offers a glimpse into Indian Culture, expressing appreciation for the life of the people in times gone by. The rare and vast collection includes objects dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries.

It contains rustic household materials, intricately crafted sculptures and murals, arms and armour, handicrafts, textiles, and musical instruments used over time. It also houses a small but stunning recreation of the Mastani Mahal, parts of which are dismantled from the original palace of Mastani (built by warrior Peshawe Bajiro). The Museum provides an ideal foundation for research into the History of Indian People and Art over the ages for the Elementary Children!



The museum is located at 1377-78, NatuBaug, Off Bajirao Road, ShukrawarPeth, Pune - 411 002 and is open from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm. The entry fee is Rs.10 for children below 12 years and Rs.50 for those above 12 years.

Mumbai

-Mehak Hemnani

Traffic Park

The park is a circuit of two-lane tar roads with a four-way junction, a T-junction, one-way street, roundabout and real live traffic signals. A telephone booth, post box, petrol pump and potholed and waterlogged roads complete the track. It is a good simulation of the actual roads and educates the children about road safety and traffic discipline in a miniature model of the world outside.

Police constable Yashwant Rathod, who has been posted at the park said that some schools bring battery-operated cars and drive around the circuit so that children get a real-life experience of the park. The traffic police, which handles the instructional part at the park, also has 40 bicycles to provide children with a live traffic simulation. The manner and medium of instruction vary with the ages of visiting children.



There are two such parks located in Mumbai. One is at Colaba in South Mumbai and the other is at Ghatkopar in Central Mumbai and is open every day from 10 am to 7pm. For visiting or conducting any school picnic a written application has to be submitted at Traffic Training School, Byculla, post which entry to this park is allowed.

Taraporewala Aquarium



Taraporewala Aquarium is India's oldest aquarium and one of Mumbai's main attractions. It hosts marine and freshwater fishes. The renovated aquarium has a 12-foot long and 180-degree acrylic glass tunnel. The aquarium has an amphitheater with 50 seats, screening documentaries on fish, marine ecosystems and environment conservation.

Another attraction is a Touch pool, where curious visitors can touch star fish, sea urchins, sea cucumbers, and turtles. The aquarium also hosts coral and rocky ecosystems with aquascape and LED lighting. The aquarium provides a great educational opportunity about the water life existing in the world for children of all age groups.

The aquarium is located at Marine Drive in Mumbai and is open for visitors from 10 am to 8 pm for ground floor only, except Mondays. The entry fee for adults is Rs.60/- and for children below 12 years, it is Rs. 30/-.

Strengthening Communities for a Sustainable Future

- Tarunya Gouthaman

The sixth EsF Assembly took place from September 4 – 17, 2018 at the Sustainability University, Stellenbosch, Cape Town, South Africa with nearly 90 participants from 24 countries. The theme of the event was ‘*Strengthening Communities for a Sustainable Future*’.



Lynne Lawrence, AMI Executive Director and Anne Kelly at the 6th EsF Assembly

Setting the tone for the event, Lynne Lawrence, AMI Executive Director, spoke about the history, mission and vision of EsF and Phillip O’Brien, AMI President, talked about *Working towards a Sustainable Future*, explaining how Montessori education links to the global agenda. Speakers presented topics ranging from brain development in the early years to the importance of learning the mother tongue. Delegates from all over the world also presented initiatives undertaken in their country and workshops on various topics were conducted for the attendees. The participants were touched and turned emotional when Anne Kelly from Australia presented *Montessori for Ageing and Dementia - The Promise, may you live every day of your life*.

The sessions started off with the *3 pearls of wisdom*, where participants wrote their take away from the previous day followed by a brief about the day’s schedule, a quote and a song to begin the day. Gradually, the Pearls of Wisdom writing from each participant turned into a beautiful peacock at the end of the event.



The Pearls of Wisdom Peacock!

There were many cultural activities during the event like singing, drumming, dancing, and a market with items handcrafted by the local artisans. This gave the participants a glimpse into the rich culture of South Africa! The participants experienced a sense of belonging to the place by doing community work each morning for 45 minutes with groups working in the kitchen, woodlands, wetland and vegetable garden in the main building as well as the guesthouse. Material making and visit to Lynedoch children’s house were added in the second week.

Experience of the attendees (Excerpts from the participants)

Helen Mohan Elias - India

“Most people are aware and measures also have been taken to conserve water and other natural resources, but not many are aware of the most precious resource is being wasted, ‘the potential of the CHILD’. None of the other goals can be met without making sure that every child’s potential is recognized and supported as the child is the only agent of change and this is our responsibility as a community.”

Aga Khan IV says in his speech at Ceremony to inaugurate the restored Humayun’s Tomb gardens (2003), ‘Pluralism is no longer simply an asset or a prerequisite of progress and development, it is vital to our existence’ and Ayi Kwei Armah, Ghana, ‘Alone, I am nothing. I have nothing. We have power, but we will never know it, we will never see it work. Unless we come together to make it work.’ Both the quotes were taken from *Sense of Place - A compilation of Poems and Quotes*, this booklet was given to all the participants during the reading group session and was a great inspiration for them. The feeling of being inclusive was strongly felt by everyone in the assembly and there was something common in all the stories that were shared.”

Tundun Osanyin - Nigeria

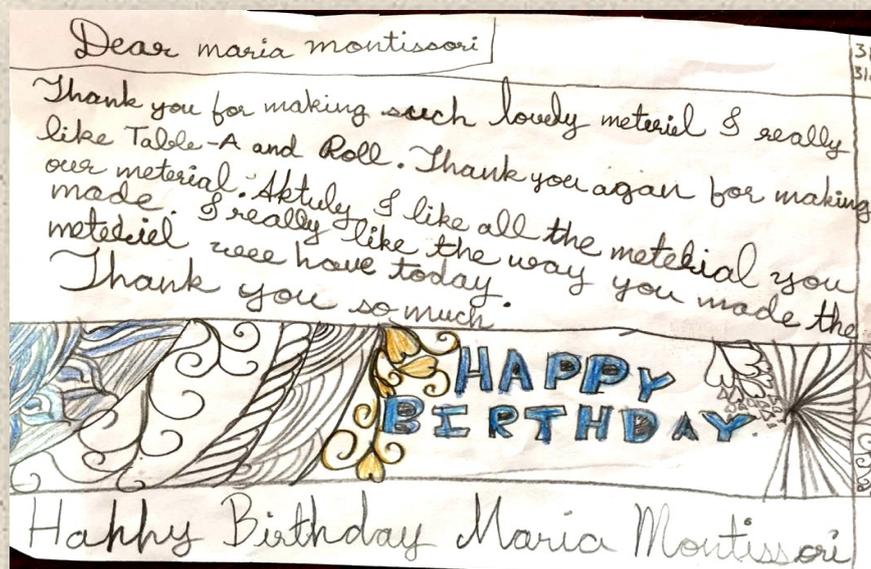
“The people, the presentations, the workshops, the reading groups, the one on one discussions, the place, the hospitality, the food, the tears, the laughter, the friendships formed, the network built, the singing, the dancing, the wisdom of the old, the energy of the youth, the love for humanity, the passion, the hope, the change agents, the educateurs sans frontières. What a life changing experience! My heart is full.”

The next EsF Assembly will take place between July 21 – August 3, 2019 in Mexico and the theme is, *The Hand and the Mind, Community in Action*. To be more involved in the EsF initiative we can become members of AMI and volunteer in a Montessori outreach program. Further information is available on the website <http://montessori-esf.org/>

* The Touch Board Team thanks Helen Mohan Elias, EsF India Coordinator for sharing information about the event with us.

Dear Maria Montessori

In this series, we bring you, letters written by Elementary Children, to Dr. Montessori on the occasion of her 148th Birthday!



Block your Dates! - Upcoming IMF Events

Check out the annual schedule of all the events happening in your city at the Indian Montessori Foundation website – www.montessori-india.org.

DATE	TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER	VENUE
Thursday, 15-Nov-2018	4:30 PM to 5:30 PM	The Importance of Childhood	Amol Gupte	Casa Montessori, Mumbai
Thursday 13-Dec- 2018	4:30 PM to 5:30 PM	Role of the Child in the Family	Pavithra Rajagopalan & Geeta Savla	Trillium Montessori , Mumbai

* The Entry Fee for the Thursday Talks is Rs. 100 for IMF subscribers and Rs.150 for others

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

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

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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

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