

The Touch Board

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2019-20 ISSUES PLANNED

July
August
September
October
November
January
February
March

IMF Events

CHENNAI

- Aditi Ganesh



Prabha Karthik, AMI Elementary Trainer in Training, spoke on 'Connecting with Children through Stories' on August 22, 2019 at Navadisha Montessori School. She spoke about what a story is, who can tell one and to whom, what makes a story and the different kinds of stories that can be read to children between birth to twelve years of age. She also highlighted the benefits of reading books and the different ways of narrating stories. It was an interactive session where participants were clubbed into groups to share their personal experiences with their children.

"It is inspiring to know how a young child is benefited by short stories, what the child gets from it and the idea that a story can be said in different ways to a child!" - Ashwini Rayan, Teacher

"I realised that sharing your struggles, your failures, how you tried to overcome or failed to overcome a situation as stories, go a long way with children and help in creating a special bond with them." Subha Ramanathan, Parent

HYDERABAD

- Vidhya Ramalingam

A talk was held on August 22, 2019 at Our Sacred Space on 'Supporting the Child's Growing Independence'. AMI Primary Trainer, Teenaz Reporter, focused on how we can offer the child useful help in his journey towards becoming an independent individual. She spoke about making physical changes in the home environment to make the child increasingly independent. Children should be trusted of their capability and should be provided with opportunities to do things for themselves rather than taking verbal

Continued.....

instructions from the adults, thus letting them gain intellectual and physical independence.

She marked the difference between giving the child freedom with limits and freedom without boundaries and how it will help and hamper their path to independence respectively.



“The biggest take away was the idea of working in harmony with nature to develop independence in the child.” – Surekha Reddy, Teacher

“An insightful talk indeed which made me understand that humanity needs independent adults which can only be brought out by nurturing independence in children from a very early age.” – Sudeepta Rao, Parent

Following the Child

A Mother's Anecdote

- Karuna Garuda



Most days of the week we try to explore a new park near our area and, today was one of those days. Unsure of her surroundings, my daughter wanted to be picked up but instead I offered to hold her hand and walk slowly. As we walked I described the surroundings and named a few things that she spotted. As we continued, my daughter suddenly left my hand and took a step backwards. When I turned to see what caught her attention I saw my sweetheart keenly observing a stream of big, fat red ants who were busy doing their business. She was tempted to touch the ants but fortunately she listened to me when I said “We only watch the red ants”.

We took a couple more steps and reached a Y junction in the park. I asked her if she wanted to go on the left or the right, she chose left. A few workers were busy cleaning and fixing the beautiful mosaic water fountain. As she couldn't view the scene entirely, she requested to be picked up.

As we were walking, her eyes fell on the ladybird that was walking in front of us. Suddenly, my daughter went on all fours and started following the terrified bug for a good 10 -12 minutes and while she was at it her hand gently brushed a small branch of leaves, “Touch-me-not” plants I said. However fascinating it was, she was more intrigued by the smell of the lemongrass bushes behind. She ran away with a piece of lemon grass. With a big smile on her face, she was busy smelling the leaf.

Continued.....

What was that noise? She overheard a noise and quickly gazed up at the sky. "It's a jet" I said. Without a cue from my end she simply decided to lie down on the cobbled stones and observe the jet.

After about 15 minutes, she was finally ready to go to the play area. She made a few friends on the merry-go-round. As she was sliding down the slide she noticed a slightly older boy running and doing another slide over and over again. Something about the action fascinated her and she was content sitting there and observing him. "Ahhhh" came a yawn, that was my cue to take her home.

Independence in Adolescence - Cooking

The foundation of Montessori philosophy being freedom and independence, in this series, we bring forward manifestations of independence across different age levels and how the environment is prepared to support it.

- Vidhya Ramalingam



Tanishta Kapur, a 13-year-old teenager confidently cooks meals for her family once a week, a great sign of independence that demonstrates the preparation and support instilled during her early childhood by her family and school environment.

Tanishta was introduced to cooking in her Montessori primary school days where she used to enjoy churning buttermilk. Later in elementary, she used to clean and cut fresh vegetables and fruits for the community. This was complemented in her home front as well, where she accompanied her parents to the market, participated in choosing and buying the groceries. She watched her mother cook and assisted her by gathering the ingredients, cutting vegetables, rolling and puffing chapattis, etc. Gradually she developed her cooking skills from making dosas, sandwiches and buttermilk, to now preparing simple dishes like chappatis, dal, raitha and dry vegetables for 4 – 6 people comfortably.

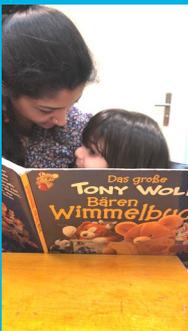
Tanishta's mother, Kamini who is a Montessori Elementary guide says *"I attended a talk by Rukmini Ramachandran at Navadisha Montessori Foundation (NMF), where she suggested elementary children can take on cooking a meal on the weekends. For the mutual benefit, I imposed it! It's a year now; she does it together with her sister. Though it is a pleasure for her to cook and serve the family members, being a typical teenager, she does crib at times but still does it because they love deciding the menu."*

Kamini prepared the kitchen in such a way that Tanishta can easily access the supplies and dishes. Tanishta winds up after cooking by putting the remaining supplies back, cleaning the counters and washing the dishes. Kamini has also spoken to her daughter about fire safety and Tanishta is able to manage situations like minor burns and cuts using first aid.



About the Author:

Janani currently lives in California and is trained in both the 0-3 and 3-6 age levels. She has also worked with children at both age levels. She is currently in the process of finishing her Masters in Montessori Education at the Early Childhood Level. Janani has also recently started a small blog called SrishtiEd (www.srishtied.com) in hopes of connecting with more families of young children. She loves working with the youngest children and their families and feels that the importance of the first three years needs to be taken to the wider society. In her spare time, she loves cooking for her family and friends ; creating new recipes for young children to become independent



Through a Toddler's Eyes

In this column, we bring to you Janani's reflections and practical ideas focusing on the child between the ages of birth and three years.

- Janani Rajyasri Bhuvaneshwaran

Books in the Lives of Children

Every book is a world in itself. When we open a book, we open ourselves to another world; we enter the minds of others and share their thoughts and experiences. Between the pages of a book, we find words which burst to life and evoke emotions, images and thoughts that refresh our perspective, bring us joy, make us shed a tear or motivate us to act. However, to share these experiences, we need to recognise and understand the *language* of the book. So, what role do books play in the lives of young children who can neither read nor write?

Babies are fascinated by the human language. This attraction begins in utero as they hear their mother's voice, and in the months following birth, they turn in the direction of language. They look at our mouths as we speak, showing us how marvelled they are by the sounds coming from them. These little children gravitate towards books because of the spoken language that accompanies it. While the pictures create an attraction, it is language in its entirety that draws them to the books repeatedly. For these children, books burst to life when it is accompanied by rich language.

Role of Books

- For young children who are not yet ready to read, the adult is the voice behind the book that feeds their mind and lays the foundation for language. We can read a book by merely naming the objects and turning over to the next page or use it as an opportunity to feed the hungry mind by expanding and engaging them through rich language.
- Story time can be a very special time when the adult just stops everything else they are doing and is wholly present to bond through the story. This time together is a cherished experience, something that the child will look forward to.
- Eventually, books help babies to sit through an entire story, listen and think about it, share their own response either through a babble or a word and learn the art of conversation.
- As babies grow, they are drawn to stories that speak about experiences similar to theirs. They are instantly able to connect with the characters and share their feelings, even if they themselves don't have the words to articulate yet. By reading a book with them, we are supporting the process by drawing attention and giving voice to details.
- Reading books with children creates a familiarity for them and becomes a part of their lives. It is like introducing a friend for life; a habit that they can take with them into adulthood.

Book-reading for young children is a shared and collaborative experience - travelling through the pages of the book and enjoying the experience together. For children under 3, this experience is so much more than focussing on individual words or letters. For these children, books are about bonding with their loved ones and learning ALL of language through that bond!

Tree Stories

- Bhanupriya Mohan

Nature Lover, Home Maker, Freelance Writer



“I lived on a campus in Agra where there was an abundance of nature. It was a delight to observe the children enjoying nature’s bounty. It created a lasting impression on my mind and heart. I share my love for trees, children, people and memories that are a part of me through these experiences.”

THE COPPER POD

The STD call came from Chennai, tsunami had struck with the violent shocking destructive devastating force that only nature's fury can unleash ...And everything humbled in its wake..

Dad was safe and the colony where he resided remained largely unaffected despite being close to the seashore. However, the copper pod tree he had planted had fallen.



I still remember the day about 4 years ago, when dad planted the sapling, “My car will soon have its own shade” he announced quite proudly. The street had many trees and the street side parking was always on first come first served basis. Having lived for forty years on the same street he had no trouble finding a parking space until recently as the number of cars seemed to have doubled and all the trees taken.

The proposed sapling was bought from the seller who regularly traversed the avenue streets with his little mobile nursery on his colourful cart. An assortment of saplings, from curry leaf to moringa, herbs from tulsi to davanam, big pink and yellow orange hibiscus on bent stalks and multi-hued roses, balsams, all forming a huge bouquet, their delicate stems crisscrossing ridiculously so the rose appeared on the hibiscus sapling and bougainville on the rose stalk. The may flower, the jacaranda, copper pod all jostled for space. Mud pots and manure too found their place on this mobile nursery.

Dad watered his gulmohar sapling with care. Soon it stood tall, proudly spreading it's youthful limbs against the blue sky and the buds appeared ...Not the scarlet red of the gulmohar but bright yellow blossoms of the copper pod tree. Ha....Case of exchanged saplings! Now he remembered the lady who had asked for copper pod sapling.

His car had happily sheltered under its thick canopy and they seemed made for each other...The tree and the car. The tree showered it's affection by covering the bonnet with leaves and shimmering yellow golden blossoms. Then tsunami struck, the tree snapped and fell on the compound wall protecting the car even in its fall. Soon the corporation cleared the wood. “We will plant another one uncle”, consoled Latha a concerned neighbor who had known dad for decades.

Continued.....

Trees that have strong roots that may fall but never die. They rise up again, their green shoots rejuvenated by the sun, messengers of love, hope and shelter.

Like Nana always said, “Strong values will help one tide over the storms of life.” We bounce right back looking good and feeling good....Like the copper pod tree.

Montessori in Vulnerable Communities

In this series, we bring out the work of organisations and individuals who have taken Montessori education to disadvantaged communities and closely work in supporting them.

- Kavneet Chadha

Shanti Ashram is an organisation in Kovai Pudur, Coimbatore founded in 1986 by Dr. Aram and Minoti Aram, along with fellow Gandhians. Through a commitment to constructive social action, the Ashram strives to serve as a catalyst to empower the different sections of rural communities and society at large. They run a program called Bala Shanti which is for three to five year old children. In this programme, 220 children are enrolled in the nine schools run by the Ashram. These children come from vulnerable backgrounds from the service villages around the area.



The timings for the children are from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m, ensuring that the children stay in school through the day. The day begins with an interfaith prayer, after which thirukkural is recited. The teachers also use this time to sing songs and have a conversation on a variety of topics. After this group, around 10:30 am children start work with the set up activities until 12:30 pm. The children then break for lunch and then return to work. There is a well-appointed children’s library in every school and the teacher opens it up for the children in the afternoon. In some schools a book corner is set up with a few books for children to access throughout the day. Before children leave for their home, they are given a snack as a nutritional supplement.

The school faces various challenges, like pressure from parents to read and write in order to join private schools in class one and to be fluent in English despite being heavily rooted in Tamil. The schools have one teacher, tiny classrooms (of 12ft X 12ft) and no running water. Support comes from members of the community in the form of substitute teachers when required.



The school needs support to purchase dress frames for 7 of the 9 schools, for which KIDO has quoted an amount of 62,000/- Rupees. Any contribution in cash or kind will be greatly appreciated by the Ashram. Those interested in knowing more can contact Pavithra Rajagopalan at pavithra.rajagopalan@gmail.com or the Coordinator of the BSK Programme, Deepa Kumar at deepalakshmik@hotmail.com.

IMF Materials

To serve Montessori schools and teachers, IMF publishes various educational resource materials. These are intended to help busy teachers to find useful material to enrich the lives of children. All IMF materials are designed with a view of being environmentally conscious and friendly!

Classified Picture Pouches



These are eco-friendly, durable, washable and easy to handle pouches which come in sets of 10. They can be embroidered or tagged to indicate their contents. The Classified Picture Pouches are designed as cloth envelopes with a closing flap.

Price : Rs.2200

Classified Reading Pouches



These are eco-friendly, durable, washable and easy to handle pouches which come in sets of 10 for Classified Reading Cards and Labels. They can be embroidered or tagged to indicate their contents. Classified Reading pouches are designed to hold slips in three languages.

Price : Rs.2600

Buy the Classified Pictures and Reading pouches together for Rs.4800 and receive a FREE CD with 38 sets of ready to print Classified Pictures and Reading cards and labels in English, Hindi and Tamil. It is easy to substitute other languages on the labels.

“When we watch a child in an environment that is his and that evokes response in him, we see that he works by himself towards his own self-perfection. The right way is not only indicated by the objects he picks up, but by the possibility of his recognizing his own errors by means of these objects.”

(Montessori, Maria
The Child in the Family
Indian Montessori
Foundation,
India 2012 Ch 8 P 79)



IMF Infant Furniture

In a world designed primarily for the functioning of adults, it may be challenging to find furniture appropriate for the very young. The Indian Montessori Foundation (IMF) now manufactures small sized furniture suitable for children between birth and six, considering access by children and fostering their independence. This becomes even significant at this point with the beginning of the first Assistants to Infancy course in India, aiming to understand and create environments answering the needs of young children. The furniture is made of durable wood and every item is an invaluable addition to homes and schools.

CHOWKI

Large Chowki

Dimension : Height 10" Length 24" Width 18"

Price : Rs. 3500

This large low table offers a large rectangular work space for children who sit on the floor. It helps them to organise their work independently. The size also makes it possible for the child to carry the table on their own to a place of their choice.



Small Chowki

Dimension : Height 10" Length 18" Width 12"

Price : Rs. 3350

This is a more compact low table. It is possible for even very small children to carry around the table. It is better suited to activities that do not require many materials.



For more information about infant furniture and to request for the complete catalogue write to info@montessori-india.org. The furniture and other IMF publications and materials can soon be availed in an online shop!

Talking Montessori

In this segment, we bring to you links of talks from different settings and of varied people that resonate with Montessori ideas, beliefs and practices and human development.

- Tarunya Gouthaman

Chimamanda Adichie - The Danger of a Single Story

Chimamanda Adichie, a Nigerian novelist and storyteller, emphasizes that stories play a vital role in creating perceptions, both negative and positive. Therefore, it is very important for us to think about the kind of stories we are exposing our children to and how it is influencing their outlook towards other people and life. She beautifully explains, "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9lhs24Izeg>



Ideas for a Green Tomorrow !

With Global Warming and accumulation of waste affecting all life, schools have started to think about ways in which they can contribute for a better and greener tomorrow. In this series, we bring to you few environment friendly practices that have been adopted by schools.

- Archana Narayanan & Jezreena Jezer

Paper usage

Paper wastage is a growing issue now. Schools are waking up to this and are taking the initiative to reduce wastage, recycle and up-cycle paper. KRTSA Montessori, Bangalore uses one-sided paper for drawing, painting and cutting.

In The Montessori School, Bangalore, the paper that is used on both sides is collected and kept as square papers to make origami or as strips for children to practice cutting. Children are also shown the process of how to make paper mache, soaking the paper and making a paste which is later used for making projects, bowls and pencil stands.



In the Primary environments at Navadisha Montessori School, Chennai, one sided cards from invitations, cardboard from used boxes and other packaging materials are collected and used for cutting and pasting activities. As part of the art festival, the older children also learnt how to make baskets and bags out of old newspapers.

Poetry Corner

At the Seaside

Robert Louis Stevenson

When I was beside the sea
A wooden spade they gave to me
To dig the sandy shore.
My holes were empty like a cup,
In every hole the sea came up,
Till it could come no more.



IMF Events 2019

Date	City	Event	Topic	Speaker	Venue
12-Sep-19	Mumbai	Thursday Talk	Home environment for Children 0 to 6 years	Zarin Malva / Pavithra	Champion School
19-Sep-19	Bangalore	Thursday Talk	Poetry in the Child's Life	Rukmini Ramachandran	TBC
19-Sep-19	Chennai	Thursday Talk	Education through Movement	Ramya Sridhar	Kidoz
28-Sep-19	Mumbai	Thursday Talk	Dramatization and Story Telling	Shaili Sathiyu	RTI
17-Oct-19	Chennai	Thursday Talk	Helping Children to be Problem Solvers	Michaela Kuh	Redwood Montessori School
19-Oct-19	Bangalore	Workshop	Supporting a Child's Independence	Julia Hilson	TBC
24-Oct-19	Mumbai	Thursday Talk	Montessori and the Working Parent	Zarin/Anahita	Deloitte
21-Nov-19	Hyderabad	Thursday Talk	Talking with Children	Suneeta Madnani	Little Scholars Montessori House Of Children
28-Nov-19	Mumbai	Thursday Talk	Movement and the Young Child	Suneeta Madnani	Harmony
7-Dec-19	Chennai	Workshop	Parenting Challenges in the Global Village	Rukmini Ramachandran	TBC
19-Dec-19	Mumbai	Thursday Talk	Independence at Meal times	Zarin/Neelima/Suneeta/Anahita/Pavitra/Geeta	Casa Vista
10-Jan-20	Hyderabad	Conference	5th National Montessori Conference	Programme to be decided	TBC
11-Jan-20	Hyderabad	Conference	5th National Montessori Conference	Programme to be decided	TBC
16-Jan-20	Mumbai	Thursday Talk	Childhood: Gathering Life Experience	Zarin/Neelima/Suneeta/Anahita/Pavitra/Geeta	Any apartment
23-Jan-20	Bangalore	Thursday Talk	Weaning: Supporting the Child's Transition	Kavya Chandrashekhar	Any Apartment
23-Jan-20	Chennai	Thursday Talk	A Child's Journey to a Rich Vocabulary	Hemalatha Rangarajan	Venkateswara Hospital
25-Jan-20	Chennai	Meeting	IMF Volunteers Meeting		Navadisha
20-Feb-20	Bangalore	Thursday Talk	Alternatives to Screen Time	Anahita Gandhi	KRSTA
20-Feb-20	Mumbai	Thursday Talk	Building a Home Library	Zarin/Neelima/Suneeta/Anahita/Pavitra/Geeta	Montessori International

Butterfly Series

We bring to you a butterfly series in the format of 'Who am I?' - A great way to introduce common butterflies that children see often in their natural environment.

- Tarunya Gouthaman

Who am I?



My scientific name is **Anaus Chrysippus** and belong to the Danainae subfamily of the brush-footed butterfly family Nymphaliade. I am found in Asia, Australia and Africa. Usually in drier, wider-open areas rather than jungles. My wings have a range of tones from orange to russet and brown, sharply outlined in black with my body and head covered in striking white polka dots. My caterpillars feed on Milkweed plants, storing up the toxic alkaloids from their milky sap, enough to make an unwary predator vomit. The females lay eggs singly on the underside of the leaves and the eggs are most often laid close to the ground. When first laid it is white, but gradually turns brown over time. Depending on temperature, the egg is typically hatched in 3-5 days. My bright colourful wings also serve as a warning to the predators that I am quite distasteful! A number of my butterfly friends have evolved to save themselves from predators, by mimicking my bright colours. Guess who am I?

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

THE MONTESSORI HOUSE

<p>PROGRAMS OFFERED</p> <p>Toddler Environment 1-2 yrs to 2.5 yrs</p> <p>Primary Environment 2.5 yrs to 6 yrs</p>	<p>AFTER SCHOOL CLUB</p> <p>Chess Yoga Dance Story Telling Language Art & Craft Activities</p>
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Admission
OPENS
2019

TIMINGS
School - 8.30am to 2.00pm
After School Club - 3.00pm to 6.00pm

DAY CARE FACILITY
AVAILABLE: 2PM TO 5PM
Email : admissions@themonessorihouse.in
www.themonessorihouse.in

98402 42151 | 98410 68282 | #17A, Income Tax Colony, 1st Street, Adambakkam, Chennai - 68.

Abacus Montessori School is looking for trained teachers in Primary (3 to 6 years) and Elementary (6 to 12 Years). If you understand children, have excellent communication skills in English, and a Bachelor's or Master's degree and are open, responsible and reflective, please

apply to

abacusmontessorischool@gmail.com

Phone: 24960904, 24963823

2019-2020

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AL-204, 14th Main Road,
Anna Nagar, Chennai - 40.

Orange Tree

Montessori House of Children

Toddlers
PreSchool
After School

5/147, Karthikeyapuram 2nd Cross St
Madipakkam, Chennai-91.Ph-9600083420

Anyone can become a subscriber!

The Indian Montessori Foundation brings out two publications, a monthly newsletter, The Touch Board (8 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.

Touch Board Team

Editorial Team - Roopa Sundar & Tarunya Gouthaman

Reporting Team - Aditi Ganesh, Kavneet Chadha, Meera Ghelani & Vidhya Ramalingam

Layout Designer - Priyanka Kumar

Advertising Coordinators - Archana Narayanan, Jezreena Jezer

Press Liaison - Khyati Shah

New opportunity to reach the Montessori community!

The Montessori community is growing! Parents are more aware of Montessori education than ever before. The Indian Montessori Foundation (IMF) publishes **The Touch Board** (newsletter, 8 issues: July, August, September, October, November, January, February, March) and **Montessori Matters** (Annual Journal). Communication to target the Montessori community can be published as per the following new tariff.

The Touch Board (colour; 4 x 5cms)

1 issue	₹ 500
4 issues	₹1500
8 issues	₹2800

Montessori Matters (black and white; [full page] 20 x 12cms)

1 issue	₹1000
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The advertisements can be sent to thetouchboard@gmail.com to reach us on or before the 5th of the previous month.

MIB
Train To Be an Educator
Registration Open
Second AMI Primary Diploma Course
3-6 Age Level
Course Duration : August 2019 to March 2021
Email: course@montessoribangalore.org
For more details visit : www.montessoribangalore.org
Contact : 9972866443 / 7483590999

Registrations Open!
AMI Elementary Diploma
(Age level 6 to 12)
commences on October 9, 2019
at
NAVADISHA MONTESSORI FOUNDATION
Email: course@navadisha.org | Ph: 9884669104

TMS
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Answer to the Question in the Butterfly Series: Plain Tiger