

THE TOUCH BOARD

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montessori
foundation



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AMI Elementary Orientation Course - Hyderabad

- Vidhya Ramalingam

An online AMI Elementary Orientation Course directed by AMI Elementary Trainer Madhavi Gaddam was organized by Medha Montessori School. The course which started on October 15 and came to a close on November 13, 2021 had students from the country and abroad.

“For me, this course was an intercultural exchange. This reminds us that all of us are different but we are able to see education in the same direction.”, shares Océane Masure from France. The course concluded with many students expressing their hope to pursue the AMI Elementary Diploma Course.



The Touch Board Team wishes it's readers a wonderful New Year ahead !

IMF Events

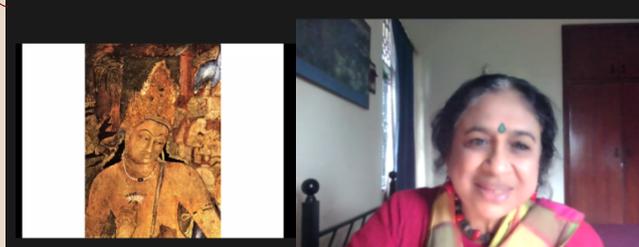
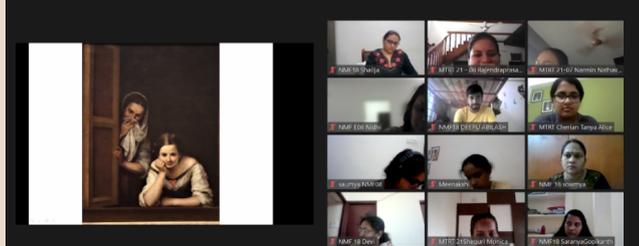
Workshop - 'Art Appreciation'

- Vidhya Ramalingam

Gowri Ramnarayan spoke to the AMI students pursuing Diplomas at various levels and Training Centres on November 18, 2021. The workshop was offered by IMF (Indian Montessori Foundation) to support the training centres and to bring the students of all the training centres across India together. Gowri passionately touched upon various art forms like paintings, music and poetry from different time periods and how these have served as a means to understand another's life and mind. *"Dr. Gowri just flew us to time immemorial where we delved into the thoughts of poets, musicians, singers, sculptors and cultures"*, shares Pallavi Siddhanthi, pursuing her Primary Diploma in Hyderabad.

Gowri shared how art appreciation can be instilled in children to a greater extent only if the adults around them, especially the teachers and parents respond to any form of art deeply. And this laid a huge impact on Alisha Pais from Mumbai. *"As Montessori teachers in the making, we hope to be able to impart this love and admiration for all forms of art and any forms of artistic expression in our children."*

Art Appreciation with Gowri Ramnarayan



"Art is a universal phenomenon and a bonding device for humanity. Art is created as the expression of the highest emotions, thoughts, imagination and instinct that a human being can be."

- Gowri Ramnarayan

Workshop - 'Introduction to Montessori Elementary'

- Meera Ghelani

What do you envision for the children in your home and in your community? What traits or characteristics are the most important to nurture?



Around 100 participants from all over India participated in Alison Awes's three-hour workshop on November 27, 2021. Alison showed a glimpse of how the Montessori method works in the second plane between 6 and 12 years with many anecdotes from her experiences in the elementary classroom.

Tina Mehta, who works with Primary children shares how she now better understands the workings of the elementary child. *"Understanding characteristics and behavior helps to assist children better and lead them to become confident and independent in thought and action."*

Notes & Notations



We bring to you songs for young children with their tunes.
Take out an instrument and play along!

Pushing My Pram



Hearty Congratulations!

Dipa Sreekumar is now an AMI Primary Auxiliary Trainer! Dipa Sreekumar, an Economics graduate from the Delhi University, completed her AMI Primary Diploma from the Indian Montessori Training Course in 1991. She worked closely with parents and teachers while she headed Pebble Creek Montessori House of Children. She has assisted in Training Courses in Chennai and Hyderabad and is currently part of the Training Team at Montessori Training and Research Trust at Hyderabad. We wish Dipa Sreekumar the very best in her pursuits and endeavors.



Good Reels

- Aditi Ganesh & Roopa Sundar

One of the complications of the current age is abundancy in choice, which makes children and even us as adults overwhelmed. In this series, we narrow down and bring to you reviews of a handful of documentaries that are suitable for children/parents.



. THE SOCIAL DILEMMA .



Although technology has helped people connect in remarkable ways, it has also led to us being manipulated in questionable ways! In this film, director Jeff Orlowski, breaks down the intent of social media by bringing in the very people who designed them.

This 90 minute docudrama on Netflix is a must watch for parents and caregivers to understand the depth and impact social media has on everyday life. Everything we do or put out there is analysed and monetised by predicting and nudging our behaviour. And different apps and features are attractively designed to keep users hooked. The effects this can potentially have on children's self-worth is devastating.

It leads to a conversation of how imperative it has now become to consciously switch off and detox from the media in order to have any semblance of family life. Be it conversations at meal times without looking into screens or playing a sport or board game together. It leads us to be more aware of what we model to children. Are we on the phone all the time? Do we look up from our screens and give our undivided attention to children? Do we have the discipline to switch off or do we give in and continue watching? As what we do is what children learn.

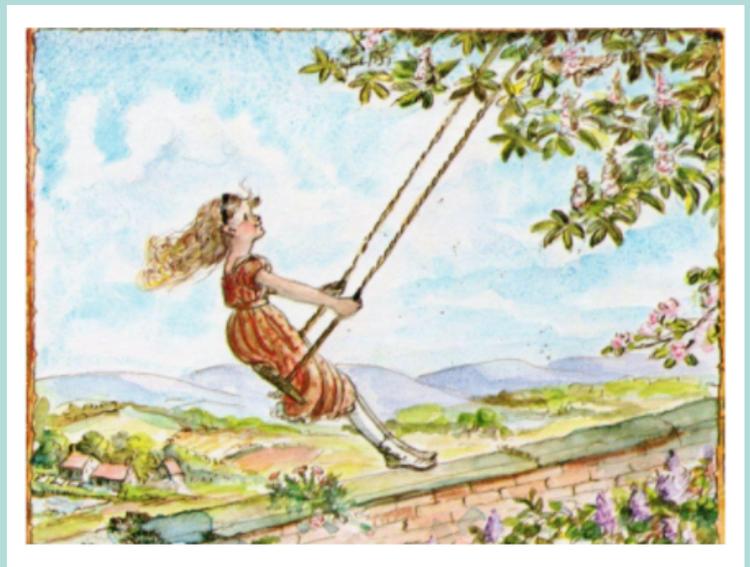
THE SWING

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
River and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside--

Till I look down on the garden green,
Down on the roof so brown--
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!



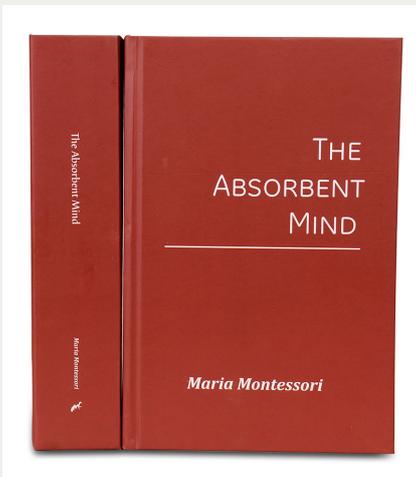
What's in the IMF Store ?

In the quest to bring Montessori philosophy and principles to families and communities and supporting schools and training centres in their work, the Indian Montessori Foundation (IMF) has on sale Montessori books, didactic language material and furniture that aids independence in young children.

Montessori books are an invaluable resource for students of Montessori practice and parents who wish to understand the developmental needs of the child to better support them. All the books are easy on the eyes with their large font and carry extensive and useful footnotes for the readers. The publications under the IMF banner are listed below :

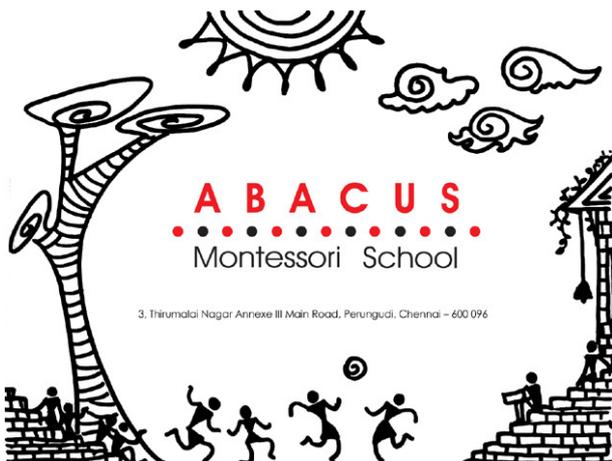
THE ABSORBENT MIND

Published : May 2017
ISBN : 978-81-929891-8-1
Price : Rs.1060



Maria Montessori's educational philosophy is set out in this book which is considered her seminal work. Drawing on the work of the greatest minds of her time she presents a vision of the young child not as helpless and needy, but as a powerful being who from the moment of birth has the limitless potential for the construction of a harmonious adult. This book is not only important to students of Montessori work but also to all those who take an interest in human development and its implications for a better future for all of humanity. The vision presented in these pages reiterates her optimistic vision of a caring society in which freedom and responsibility play an equal role.

All our books can be purchased at events organised by the IMF in your city or at <https://montessori-india.org/store/>



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OPENS 2021**



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Demystifying Montessori Materials

- Archana Narayanan & Khyati Shah

Many times, the child's reply to 'What did you do in class today?' mystifies the adult even more. Either incomprehensible names or mundane activities are encountered. This series brings to light how and why some materials are set up and how they are used by the children in a Primary Montessori community (3-6 years).

WASHING HANDS

In the times that we are in, 'washing hands' has become a crucial part of our routine and hygiene. This is also a wonderful activity for a 3 year old. Walking into a Montessori class, one is likely to see a child deeply engaged and enjoying themselves, washing their hands.

The activity is neatly set up near a water source, on a table or a low chowki. The table would hold a basin, a jug to pour water from, a soap bar, a jewellery holder (for the little rings, bangles or bracelets that the children may be wearing) and a towel to dry their hands at the end of the activity.

A child who may have used this activity is also shown how important it is to leave the activity in a state that it may be ready for another to use. And so, step by step, everything is washed up, dried and kept ready with fresh towels for another child to work with it.

Through this activity, we help the child towards preparation of the hands for all the work to come!



IMF EVENTS

2021-22



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on
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Day	Month	Time	Online Event	Topic	Speaker
Saturday	24 Jul-21	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Supporting Children through the Pandemic	Rukmini Ramachandran
Saturday	28 Aug-21	4 PM - 5 PM	Workshop	Helping Children deal with Disappointment	Hemalatha Rangarajan
Thursday	16 Sep-21	9 AM - 12 PM	AMI Students	Orientation to IMF	IMF Events Team
Saturday	25 Sep-21	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Real Life: Getting Beyond the Screen	Suneeta Madnani
Saturday	23-Oct-21	9 AM - 12 PM	Workshop	Joy of Mathematics	Vibhuti Jain, Ruby Lau, Madhavi Gaddam
Thursday	18-Nov-21	9 AM - 12 PM	AMI Students	Art Appreciation	Gowri Ramnarayan
Saturday	27-Nov-21	5:30 PM - 8:30 PM	Workshop	Introduction to Montessori Elementary	Alison Awes
Saturday	18 Dec-21	4 PM - 5 PM	School Heads	TBD	
Saturday	22-Jan-22	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Consistency - the Key to Parenting	Amy Kirkham
Saturday	26-Feb-22	3 PM - 6 PM	Conference	TBD	TBD
Saturday	26-Mar-22	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Education beyond Worksheets	Teenaz Reporter

A Play with Numbers

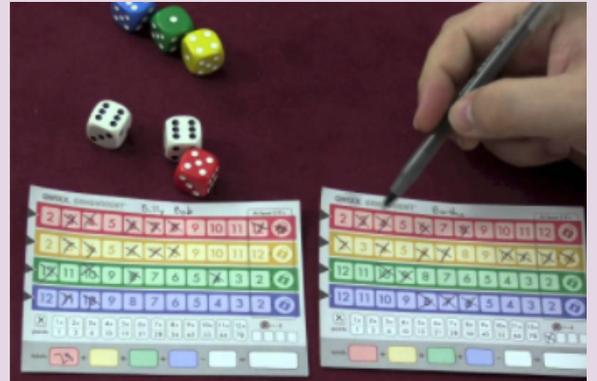
- Kavneet Chadha & Jezreena Jezer

In this era of technology where online games have become the 'go to' option this series aims to bring back the charm of playing traditional games that build memories, allow for families to bond as well as build cognitive skills, laying a foundation for mathematics for children under 6.

Dice Games - Qwixx

Dice and their predecessors are considered to be the oldest gaming instruments known to man, used for around 5000 years. Cubical dice with markings almost equivalent to the modern dice have been found in Egyptian tombs tracing back to 2000 BCE. There are more than 200 games that involve dice like snakes and ladders, ludo and backgammon.

The dice game discussed here is Qwixx. Unlike many other dice games, this game was invented less than ten years back in 2012 by Steffen Benndorf. It involves strategic thinking where the players have to be alert throughout, even if it is not their turn. It is also a great reinforcement of addition combinations.



How to Play

- Qwixx consists of 6 dice of the colours white (2), red (1), green (1), blue (1) and yellow (1) and score sheets for each player. The goal is to mark off as many numbers as possible. A number can be marked off only if it is to the right of all the previously marked numbers in that row.
- To start the game, the active player rolls all the six dice together. All the players may choose to mark the sum of both the white dice on any one of the four rows; it is optional. The active player has two options;
 - A. Make two markings: Mark off the sum of both the white dice in any row first and then the sum of any one white die and one coloured die in the respective coloured row.
 - B. Make one marking: Sum of both the white dice in any row or sum of any one white die and one coloured die in the respective coloured row.
- When an active player fails to do either A or B, they mark one of the four penalty boxes.
- A player can lock a row when they have marked at least five boxes including the 2 or 12 that is near the padlock symbol. This locks everyone out of this colour and the respective coloured die is removed from the game. When a player locks a row he can also mark the padlock box which is also counted for calculating the score.
- The game ends when two colours are locked or if a player marks all the four penalty boxes. The points for each colour is calculated based on the chart given in the scoresheet and the number of boxes marked (including the padlock box). The players then add the points of each colour and subtract 5 points for each marked penalty box to find the score. The player with the highest score wins the game.

“

“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 recognising his own errors by means of these objects.”

FROM GLOWING LIGHTHOUSES TO HUNGRY DRAGONS !

Tales from Elementary Children

This series brings to you stories conceived, written, edited and illustrated by elementary children!

A Loved Plant

Written + Illustrated by Aarna Tiwari, 11 years



Vedika was a little girl who lived in Kochi. Her parents worked for a company that cleaned Kochi's beaches. This increased her interest and passion for nature. Vedika's school was near the Cherai beach, so she and her classmates would visit the beach every day.

One day, Vedika and her classmates saw a small stall surrounded by many people. She asked the man in the stall what was happening. He replied, "Hello! This is a grow-a-plant stall. You can pick a plant, name it and leave it here. You have to come here every day and grow your plant for 10 days and then keep it! Do you want one?". Vedika said, "Wait, I need to ask my teacher". She ran to her teacher and asked her if her classmates could also get plants and have a competition on whose plant would grow the best. Her teacher agreed and everyone bought their plants.

Vedika's cousin Sanjana also participated. Both Sanjana and Vedika selected periwinkles. After buying her plant, Sanjana said, "I bet you anything that I am going to win".

"How are you so sure?", Vedika asked. Sanjana, spoiled by her rich parents, scowled at her and replied over-confidently, "I will win because I am rich! I will give my plant the cleanest water in Kochi and feed it expensive organic fertilizers that you can't afford even in your dreams!".

Sanjana, true to her word, was always seen carrying baskets full of bottles and packets when she visited her plant. Unlike Sanjana, Vedika gave her plant normal water and didn't use expensive fertilizers; she would sit next to the plant and talk to it. All her classmates ridiculed her for it but Vedika simply smiled back and continued speaking to her plant.

Many were sure that Sanjana would win; she was diligent and never missed a single bottle of fertilizer or medicine but no one could say she enjoyed it. She would wrinkle her nose every time she smelt mud and hated putting her finger in the soil to check if it was dry or wet. Her complaints could be heard all over the beach.

As the 10th day arrived, all the students gasped at how Sanjana's plant had flourished; to them the winner was obvious. As everyone walked towards their teacher who would declare the winner, they noticed a plant that looked exactly like Sanjana's but had flourished a lot more.

They started whispering to each other about it but their teacher quieted them as she carefully examined each plant. After a long time, she pointed towards the plant that everyone was whispering about and declared it the winner. Everyone was shocked when they saw that the person who the plant belonged to was Vedika! She smiled, "I know you thought that Sanjana would be the winner, but you have forgotten that along with water and sunshine, each plant needs love".

Experiences & Explorations

In this segment, Christina Dias shares her thoughts and experiences with young children and how adults can support their love for work and exploration of their environment.

Christina Dias Remedios is currently a Montessori Elementary directress at the Chiang Mai Montessori International School, Thailand. Her 16-year journey includes working in Primary (3-6 years) and Elementary (6-12 years) classrooms in Vietnam, Belgium, Thailand and across India. Her passion lies in being an advocate for Montessori principles and holistic education that are child and community centric.



Inner Motivation

When I did my very first children's observation in a Montessori classroom, I was attracted to seeing children persevering at one activity with absolute determination.

Motivation, then, must be something that drives one from within, it's intrinsic. It causes us to act on things, as we simply enjoy them. It also offers the opportunity to create something for ourselves.

Hence when our children are learning with us through daily life, we need to examine closely; what does my child really enjoy or seek more of, and how can we help foster internal motivation in my child?

The one thing that stood out with my English teacher was her knack at acknowledging things that she knew I enjoyed. Hence start by **acknowledging the child's effort** e.g. *"I can see you spent a lot of time making the dragon's head and used only recycled cardboard. That is quite something!!"*

The adult's tendency is to feel pressured to try to praise or use superlative expressions like "good job", "excellent". Instead, we could help draw the child's attention to **think about the experience**; what he or she enjoyed about in the activity or task. *"Daddy noticed you used many vibrant colours in that painting, how was it trying all those colours?"* Also provide constructive **feedback** if needed that helps the child make mental notes and learn that success also requires collaboration with the ideas and efforts of others, even a team.

Some activities seem arduous yet just when an activity gets challenging and a person perseveres, they are able to go beyond and complete the task or achieve success. In such times, it's important to **remind the child of your support**, that he need not give up, *"You have been working really hard on that frame, if you need some help, I'm in the living room."* We need to remember to put aside our impatience and stir up the support when children learn hard tasks.

What also helps them is, **identifying and dealing with the challenging/ difficult emotions** they feel/felt when things were getting tough; *"I could see you almost felt like giving up, but you didn't and put in more effort, that is admirable"*. Soon they get better at recognizing those feelings and can learn how to cope with them next time.

When a child completes an activity independently, he will realize that **perseverance** pays off. The child we are looking at is one who can listen to his own voice, learns that it's okay to make mistakes, and try again. He learns how to push himself to try harder, he self-actualizes a goal he set for himself not an external one set by praise or rewards.

The process of recognizing inner strength helps a child develop **inner motivation**, he learns he is the driver of his triumph.

In this whole process, we must never forget **to express gratitude and what helped us**. *"Thank you for arranging all those beads, Sara. When your friends need them, they will be happy to see it well organized"* or *"I really appreciate you helping Ms. Nina!"*

Praise can gather a meaningful dimension, if we merely pause and think about what we are going to say and especially if our words help fuel the growth that takes place within a child where he counts on his decision, his choice, and is rewarded by listening to his own strong voice.

Silver Lining Stories

- Roopa Sundar

The past year has been challenging. It has also been an opportunity for children to spend more time with parents and for parents to observe their little ones like never before. In this series, parents share moments of learning during these homebound times.

Food is an essential part of our family life and being home for most parts has allowed for much interest and explorations. There are many more opportunities for joint meals, cooking together and planning as a family for the weeks ahead.

Vishnu Sharma shares how his 7 year old daughter Maya and her older brother Suhith got involved in the planning and preparation of breakfast and dinner. They would plan the menu ahead, do the preparation of cleaning and chopping of vegetables the day before and execute. *“Since all of us were working from home and many of our meetings used to extend beyond the scheduled time, my kids started to cook by themselves on many occasions.”* Vishnu made sure that all the ingredients and recipe books were accessible to the children.

A similar situation unfolded in Chitradevy Munisamy’s household with her 7 year old son Harshad and his elder sister Hasini of 10. Children got to try their hands at cooking a variety of snacks - pakoda, potato nuggets, ompodi etc. *“We would have continuous meetings and they would surprise us with interesting snacks when we stepped out. Sometimes they would also make preparations for a home restaurant experience.”* She also shares how the family meals together allowed for many discussions, conversation and sharing.



Everyday Wonders !

Kamini Kapur, Elementary Trainer in training and nature enthusiast, takes us on a photo trail as she ponders on the marvels of nature in everyday life. Join her in exploring your own backyards with children !



' Thank you for your support ! '

Frequently asked Questions answered by AMI Trainers!

We often wonder during the developmental years if we, as caretakers of young children, are making the right decisions and providing our children with the support they need. In this segment, we have trained educationalists answer a series of queries and help us in this journey.



Teenaz Reporter, is the Director of Training of the MTRT AMI 3-6 Course in Hyderabad. She gained her AMI Montessori Diploma in 1999 and has worked in Hyderabad, New York and Maryland. She is currently on the faculty of AMI courses in Shenzhen and Chongqing, China.

Question:

When it comes to eating meals should there be any time limit or can the child take hours to eat ?

Answered by Teenaz Reporter:

Usually this problem occurs when the adult has decided the quantity of food to be eaten and the child is reluctant to finish. It is important to study why the child takes hours to eat. Is the decision of how much to eat the child's decision. Do not worry about physical hunger. Get the child to serve himself with a teaspoon, and you need to be satisfied even if he eats only that little in the beginning. The child needs to feel successful. Usually the child feels defeated by the quantity of food you have served. Eat with the child. Have long leisure family meals so that the child gets some time to eat at his pace. Everyone eating together offers the child spiritual food. Conversations, discussions about the food, the flavours, watching the movements by which the adults eat, how you serve yourself are experiences that will help the child with eating meals. At the end of the meal, it is important to help the child put his plate away and bring an end to the meal.

***Become a donor to access Teenaz's article 'The Child's Need for Time' with other interesting questions raised. Visit the donor's section in our website <https://montessori-india.org/>**

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FOR IMF EVENT ALERTS, COURSE UPDATES AND MORE...



@indianmontessorifoundation

Montessori Institute of Bangalore (MIB) has been set up in Bangalore to bring AMI Montessori training and practice to the city.

Mission
The Mission of the Institute is to revive AMI training in the city and to help establish a strong school community in which the principles of child development, and educational practices set out by Maria Montessori are implemented and practiced.

Vision
The Vision of the Institute is to offer a full range of Montessori Courses for different age levels. The organization hopes to reach out to serve the needs of the community through a variety of AMI courses and programmes.

Courses Offered

Orientation Courses	Diploma Courses
Assistants to Infancy (0-3)	Assistants to Infancy (0-3)
Primary (3-6)	Primary (3-6)
Elementary (6-12)	



We are looking for trained adults to lead our Elementary environments in Pune, starting April 2022.

If you are looking to further your career in an organisation that puts people first and gives you the freedom to implement your ideas, please email us on info@diyamontessori.in

We are offering a highly competitive remuneration along with accommodation allowance.



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

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 tariff.

The Touch Board (colour; 6 x 8 cms)

1 issue	₹ 500
4 issues	₹1500
7 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.

Donate generously to IMF!

Your donation will help us keep our work of reaching Montessori ideas to children and families alive.

Friend of IMF - Silver Card - Two years validity

Donations of Rs. 2000

Donor Benefits : Special access to Donor's section on the IMF website ; 16 issues of the newsletter; 2 issues of annual journal ; Special Donor pass to IMF events

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For more information, Contact : 8248010258 or email us at info@montessori-india.org

AMI MEMBERSHIP

Membership of AMI is open to all individuals. AMI members are a stronghold in the Montessori community, putting Montessori education in the spotlight and making a difference to the lives of children. AMI membership brings with it: educational publications such as the AMI Journal, digital newsletters keeping you up to date with the latest on AMI's work and news from across the globe, and discounted offers at congresses, refreshers and other events.

Become part of a worldwide community dedicated to the rights of the child and to supporting human development.

Membership fees begin at 40 euros.

To become a member, please visit www.montessori-ami.org