

THE TOUCH BOARD

Indian
montessori
foundation



AUGUST 2022

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ISSUE 2



Photo Courtesy : Touch Internationale

Workshop on 'Basic Life Support & First Aid Training Program'

- Vidhya Ramalingam

The Montessori Training and Research Trust (MTRT) organised a First Aid training program on June 18, 2022 at their center. It was conducted by Senior Emergency Physicians from Apollo Hospitals who are also American Heart Association Certified Life Support Instructors. *"I learned to give CPR and how to treat children when there is any cut, burn, insect bite, dog bite, choking and nose bleed which we generally come across with young children"*, shares Shivani Pandit, Primary directress.

Around 40 participants were certified and benefitted from the program which was designed for non-medical professionals. For Surekha Monala, who works with young children, this was a great platform to understand the do's and don'ts during medical emergencies. Questions about panic, emergency numbers, emergencies in children and things to be kept in a first aid box in a school were raised.



Literary Finds!

Books are the pathway to the love for literature. And we are on the lookout to offer the ones that are best suited for young children. We bring reviews of neighborhood book stores that have a wonderful collection of Children's books to satisfy those hungry minds.

- Vidhya Ramalingam



Serene, lush green ambiance welcomes anyone into Saptaparni, the book store and a space for children and adults to reconnect with cultural traditions. Saptaparni, situated in one of the bustling streets in Banjara Hills, Hyderabad was established in 2003 on Children's day, November 14.

The store houses a fine curation of books for young children till age 12 and also traditional Indian toys and games. The collections of books are largely based on everyday Indian lives that will help children to connect with their immediate environment and their life experiences. The books are well organised on shelves for easy accessibility for children. There are bilingual books for English-Telugu and English-Hindi especially for children who are starting to learn an additional language. They also have board books and feel and touch books for toddlers.

Saptaparni, being a cultural space, also lends their facility for various cultural and traditional events like music, storytelling, creative writing classes, pottery, shloka chanting and theatre workshops.

Saptaparni is a well designed space for children and adults to spend their time reconnecting with our tradition and culture with respect to Indian books and stories, Indian music and dance and Indian games. A must-visit space for children to enjoy the rich variety of books and games.



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Peek into the Insect World

Children are innately curious about the environment around them, insects being a big part of it. Unless adults take an interest in this natural world, we will be unable to share this richness and joy with children. To aid in this journey of awareness, we bring to you snippets of information about these fascinating creatures in our very own backyards.

- Jezreena Jezer

Domino Cockroach

The Indian Domino Cockroach (*Therea petiveriana*) is polka-dotted and sometimes referred to as the desert cockroach or seven-spotted cockroach. They are somewhat roundish and contrastingly marked. The white spots only appear once the cockroach is mature. The adult is about 2-3cm long and both the sexes look alike. Though they are popular as pets in various parts of the world and are easy to keep, they are native to South India.

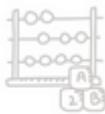


This species of cockroach that is said to be with grace and beauty is usually found on the ground amidst leaf litter or loose soil where they can burrow during the heat of the day. They are active during twilight which is early morning and late evening. During the monsoon, they can be spotted all through the day. They mainly feed on dried leaves and decaying plant matter. The presence of the domino cockroach is an indicator of good soil health.

They use chemical pheromones to communicate with each other. Once a female has copulated with a male, other males are not allowed to approach her. The approaching males are kicked away with her hind legs. The female lays eggs on leaf litter. The nymphs stay hidden below the ground and go as deep as 30cm during the dry season. An aggressive ground beetle mimics the black and white pattern of the domino cockroach.



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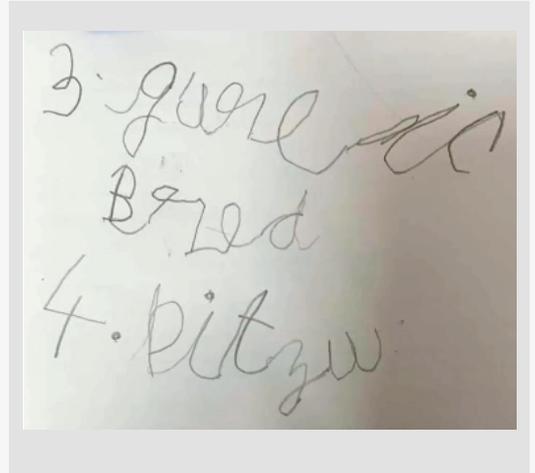
Montessori – Misconception to Learning

- Aditi Ganesh

The term 'Montessori' has been used and understood in many and different ways. In this segment, parents share how their perception of Montessori and child development has changed and grown along with their child in a Montessori School.

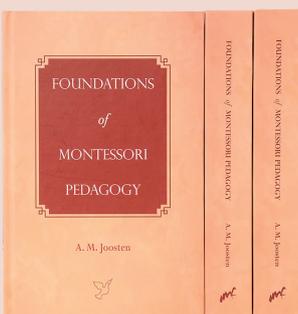
Neetha Ramakrishnan's idea of Montessori was that it was a very child directed and child specific approach. She further understood how the methodology promotes an organic overall development of a child with adequate freedom within boundaries.

As a mother of two children, who have grown into the Montessori system, she often questioned the phonetics method of learning languages. She was initially very skeptical when it came to Nidhrav, her 9 year old son's writing, Since this methodology involves a pattern wherein a child can write by merely decoding the sounds in a word, she had concerns if the child would ever get his spellings right. But in due course, the transition happened beautifully and during the elementary level he was able to flawlessly write by substituting with correct spellings.



Books in the IMF Corner

IMF has published several Montessori books to create awareness about the philosophy in the community and to support students training to lead Montessori classrooms. Montessorians share their favourite snippets from the IMF publication.



“Generally silence, whether in the home or in the school, is one of the things, which is not 'taught' but imposed; usually by making more noise than that made by those, one wants to keep quiet, and thus creating an atmosphere of fear and emotional tension which is the very opposite of the state of relaxation required to obtain real silence.”

Joosten A.M, Foundations of Montessori Pedagogy, Chapter 20, Page 260

“

“These lines resonated with me because these are not mere words but wisdom, which was the result of A M Joosten's continuous and comprehensive observation of adults and children. These words open up a new dimension for us to look at the problem of maintaining silence in the classroom or home. Silence can be achieved by silence alone, not just silence by speech but also by silence of mind (thoughts or emotional reaction).”

Rakesh Chandra Kumar, Educator, Hyderabad

To get your copy of Foundations of Montessori Pedagogy, visit www.montessori-india.org/store/

Beginnings of Life - The First Year

Vibhuti Jain, the first Indian AMI Assistants to Infancy (0-3 years) Trainer lays focus on the child in the very first year of life and how adults can prepare both themselves and create a loving space to welcome and nurture the spirit of new life.



The period of 6-8 weeks after birth is called Symbiotic period, also known as puerperium. In this period, the nursing relationship is established between the birth mother and the child with the support and protection of the partner/father/ significant other. Although short, this period is of great significance. When the caregiver responds to every cry and need of the child with love, care and spontaneity, the child forms the basic trust that the world is a good place and will always meet his or her needs. The child develops a strong sense of security and attachment which becomes the foundation of his/ her life.

Photo Courtesy : Amritha Sengottuvel

AMI Talks – Digging Deep



Nicolina Montesano
Montessori

On Wednesday, August 31, 2022, AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) is organizing an Online Talk by Nicolina Montesano Montessori and Yoliswa Mahobe who will be speaking on “Digging Deep – Connecting to Nature for a Healthy Society”.

Both speakers have a deep interest in the laws of life and the role of nature for humankind’s true wellbeing; they have a keen eye for the interdependencies of this world – which they will be certain to highlight.

To register for the talk, visit <https://montessori-ami.org/events/ami-talks-digging-deep>

If you have not registered for this event, you will be able to watch the recording on AMI’s YouTube channel.



Yoliswa Mahobe

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Offerings to a Montessori Environment

Parents are always looking to make meaningful contributions to the Montessori community during special occasions. In this series, Montessori teachers share ideas for gifting to a Montessori environment - Toddler, Primary & Elementary.

- Roopa Sundar & Aditi Ganesh

Art, intricate work of the hands, speaks to one's very soul. A Montessori Classroom would endeavour to display beautiful and relatable art. Any form of artistic work is a wonderful addition to the children's world. With young children, art can inspire conversations, work and stands as an essential form of self expression. In Elementary, art inspires as well, and it's history adds more meaning. "Like a painting representing a particular group of people. This helps children view art from an early human's perspective", adds Aishwarya Janarthanam, Elementary Guide.

Prasannalakshmi Srinivasan, also an Elementary Guide, shares how including simple local art adds aesthetics to the classroom and can get children to research about the same. "There are so many examples; palm leaf painting, hand sculpted stone for paper weights, wall hangings, brass/wooden/terracotta figurines; the list is endless."



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Demystifying Montessori Materials

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).

- Archana Narayanan & Khyati Shah

BINOMIAL AND TRINOMIAL CUBES

The Binomial Cube, a 3D puzzle, comprises of different sized cubes and cuboids which when put together make a bigger Cube. This Cube is made inside a box in which it fits exactly. Like several other materials in the class, it has the quality where the control of error lies in the material itself. This is a quality within the materials that enables a child to complete and correct the task without assistance from a teacher or an older child. Thus giving the child the freedom and joy of discovering for himself if he has completed the activity. The lid of the box has the same pattern painted on it, which also gives the child a few clues on how to build it. Unknown to the children, the Cube embodies the mathematical formula of $(a + b)^3$ - an indirect preparation for elementary Math.

The activity relies on the children's ability to discriminate between size, shape and colour. All of these are skills the child has been working on separately through other activities. The Binomial Cube brings it all together, providing a new challenge.

Once they have mastered this, we offer the children the Trinomial Cube. This is a similar puzzle which consists of more pieces, making it more challenging. This Cube represents the mathematical formula $(a + b + c)^3$.

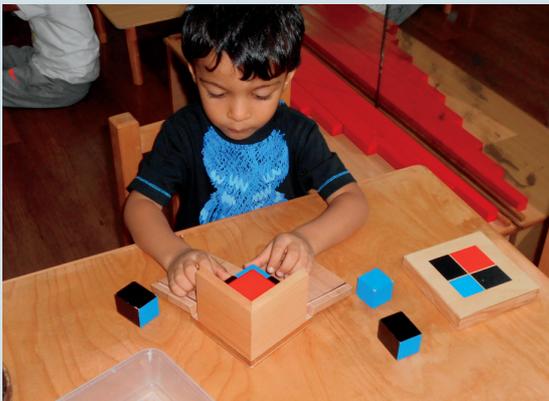


Photo Courtesy :
(Left) Casa Vista Montessori School,
(Right) Navadisha Montessori School



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Sports in Montessori – Casa de Bambini

Having worked with young children and certified in the Montessori Sports Fundamentals, Josephine Ramya, a sports enthusiast and Montessori Guide, shares ideas to inspire movement and games in the Montessori environments.



The children who have had experiences in the toddler environment, can be introduced to activities to refine their movements and work on building their skills so that they can pursue dance or sports in the second plane of development. These children between the ages of 3 and 6 can walk, run, jump and climb with so much more ease and coordination than the children between 1.5 and 2.5 years of age. Here we need to introduce activities that help in the refinement of movement and hand-eye coordination. We can introduce objects and obstacles to build strength and skills in this phase of development.

Children cannot understand competitive sports at this stage and any sport that they play to score a point/win is a worthless exercise. We should rather use this stage of development to build and hone their skills. I've seen children as young as four with a tennis racquet happy just to hit a few balls and to make contact with the ball using the racquet, then focusing on hitting it over the net/playing to win. We must keep in mind that children in this age group need demonstrations and not instructions.

INDOORS

Through the world of culture we can introduce movement patterns through SPORTS/DANCE to the primary children. Classified pictures and classified reading are a great way of introducing sports/dance to these children. One way to offer movement lessons in class is by using picture cards to perform the action, like for example, dance mudras. This can be done for a single child or for a small group of children, say three. Cards on yoga asanas are a great way of introducing yoga postures to the children. You will need a set of yoga postures in cards, a yoga mat and you are set to make the presentation. The adult can do a few and then handover the activity to the child. The child can then choose to do that activity whenever he wants to.

OUTDOORS

A shelf with a few movement activities is a good setup to start with.

1. Animal walks

- We can demonstrate different types of animal walks for the child to practice. Eg. Duck walk (squatting and moving while in the same position), spider walk (hand and feet in the floor with the chest facing upwards and moving forward using alternate hands and legs), penguin walk (walking by swaying the body side to side, the challenge can be increased by holding a ball between the legs), and so on.

2. Knocking down the cone using a football

- Using a child sized football, kick towards the cone placed at a distance to knock the cone down. The child can repeat this activity as long as she is interested.
- This can also be done by rolling the ball using your hands, both or one.

3. Shooting a basket

- Child sized basketball and a hoop fitted at an appropriate height/a basket placed at a distance
- The child can shoot the ball into the hoop/basket as long as she wants.

4. Jumping over hoops

- Set up hoops on the floor and jump from one hoop to another using both feet/by hopping/jumping backwards, etc. Make your own variations based on the skill of the child.

Continued....

5. Dribbling the ball

- Use a child sized basketball to dribble the ball using the dominant hand. This can also be just bounce and hold exercise using both hands, based on the skill level of the child. The level of complexity can be increased by transferring the ball from one hand to another while dribbling, or dribbling between the legs and so on. This gives the child many opportunities to practice and hone her skills.

6. Running drill

- Roll the ball and run. If you have the luxury of a large playground, roll the ball like you would at a bowling alley and run alongside it to improve your running speed.

The balancing beam mentioned in the previous article also helps with this age group. The inclined climbing wall, the sand bags of different weights, etc., all work well with these children too.

Our observations during these exercises will help us identify the needs of the children and we can then come up with creative solutions to help these young children in their journey to discover their hidden potential.



Photo Courtesy : Radhika Sundar

Celebrating 152 years of Maria Montessori !



"Times have changed, and science has made great progress, and so has our work; but our principles have only been confirmed, and along with them our conviction that mankind can hope for a solution to its problems, among which the most urgent are those of peace and unity, only by turning its attention and energies to the discovery of the child and to the development of the great potentialities of the human personality in the course of its formation."

Dr. Maria Montessori

(From the foreword to 'The Discovery of the Child', Poona 1948)

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Adolescents at Work



Adolescents working on a thatched roof for their Study Hall, Vruksha Montessori School

Over the past few years, the 'Erdkinder' program has been gaining momentum, establishing strong roots for the AMI Adolescent Training (12 - 18 years) to take-off here in India. In this series, we bring to you glimpses of the adolescent community engaged in purposeful work across various prepared environments.

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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.



Pavithra Rajagopalan is an AMI Primary Trainer. She has over 20 years of experience in the field of Montessori education. Pavithra is faculty at the Sir Ratan Tata Institute, Bombay, India. She is also part of the faculty for the Diploma course in Taiwan and Beijing and has conducted Assistant/ Orientation courses in India, Israel, Singapore and China.

Question:

My child is hesitant to try new food, how can I encourage them to taste different things?

Answered by Pavithra Rajagopalan :

Food and children are always a source of some concern and, even anxiety, for adults. In the process, sometimes, we overlook the social aspect of mealtimes. It might also be difficult to make time to eat together during the week. And over the weekends, our schedules tend to be a bit loose. If we are able to make at least 4 meals in the week a family meal, where everyone at home eats together (away from a TV or computer screen of any sort), this goes a long way in helping children eat what the rest of the family is eating. Of these 4 meals, making time to prepare for 2-3 meals with the child would be an added bonus. And of course, there is all the shopping that is involved as well. It is also about doing some of these things without stressing too much on seeing one kind of result immediately. If we were to approach meal times as happy, fun family events (even if they are short), the nature of our interactions around food and children could also change in the process. This makes it possible to talk about food that is on the plate, what we like, where we have had different kinds of food, what we don't like, etc. This might not be possible all the time, but to be mindful that we don't focus only on the quantity of food, or what kind of food, and making it a more rounded experience will go a long way in helping children develop healthy equations with food. Once we do all of this, we also have to wait - to see how children take on these experiences and what relationships they develop with food.

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.

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2022-23



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Saturday	27-Aug-22	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Relevance of Montessori Today	Virginia Viscovic
Saturday	22-Oct-22	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Supporting the Intellect in the Second Plane	Carol Hicks
Saturday	19-Nov-22	9 AM - 12 PM	AMI Students Workshop	Stories in Human Life	Gowri Ramnarayan
Saturday	26-Nov-22	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Living peacefully with Children	Irene Fafalios
Saturday	28-Jan-23	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Supporting the Development of Movement in the First Plane	TBD
Saturday	25-Feb-23	4 PM - 5 PM	Talk	Preparing the Child's Environment	TBD

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)

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