

## Exploration in Collaboration

Children examining the origin of words through suffixes

Photo Courtesy - Anugraha Montessori House of Children, Hyderabad



The photo series brings you a glimpse of Elementary (6-12 years) communities where children work collaboratively in their quest for intellectual, social and moral independence.

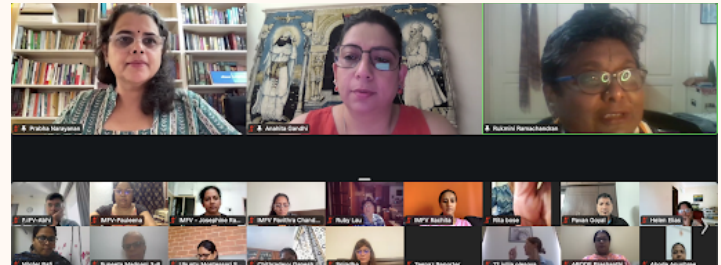
## IMF Events

### IMF Talk - 'The Significance of the Hand in Education'

Meera Ghelani | Online

To commemorate the birth anniversary of Maria Montessori on August 31, IMF brought together around 350 Montessorians from across the globe to reflect on the workings of the hand in education. AMI Trainers Anahita Gandhi and Prabha Narayanan shed light on the building of intelligence through work with hands from the perspective of different developmental planes/ages. Anju Asokan found it particularly fascinating that humans had the opportunity to explore and imagine, thanks to our hands not having a rigid purpose.

AMI Trainer and IMF Trustee Rukmini Ramachandran shared about the various training centers across India and encouraged participants to widen this community so we can take the message of the child even further. "So much significance lies in hands-on experiential learning than restricting a young child's movements to a desk", adds Sejal Shah, Founder of Ubuntu Montessori



"Science says that a disproportionately large part of the surface area of the brain is dedicated to the hands, therefore what Montessori realized just by observing children and their behaviour has been borne out by cutting edge neuroscience." - Prabha Narayanan

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# IMF Talk - 'Understanding Adolescents'

Aditi Ganesh | Chennai



On September 12, Supraja Montessori Study Centre was bustling with eager faces waiting to hear AMI Trainer (6-18 years) Jenny Marie Hoglund share her decades of experience working with adolescents. She shared how adolescents need a space where their contributions are welcome, their thoughts included, their compassion seen and their emotions validated.

Attendees left with a deeper appreciation of the complexities of adolescence and practical tools to foster healthy communication and growth during this crucial stage of life.

# IMF Talk - 'Path to Self Expression - Role of Language in Development'

Vidhya Ramalingam, Meera Ghelani, Kavneet Chadha | Hyderabad, Mumbai, Bangalore

Onsite talks began in different cities in September with language being the focus. Language development was discussed in the light of being a means of self expression like music, dance and other arts. *"The talk sent out a strong message that it is vital to listen to the child's conversation wholeheartedly without interrupting and correcting the grammar or sentences to understand the child's feelings and emotions promoting healthy growth and strong emotional bond."* Vikas Mankala, Parent



In the serene outdoors of Sparkles Montessori School, Hyderabad, AMI Primary Trainer Teenaz Reporter highlighted the importance of life experiences and the vocabulary connected with those life experiences in the progress of self-expression



*"AMI Primary Trainer Zarin Malva beautifully brought across the idea that the child is really reflecting us, wanting to be part of our community and taking in all that is present in the environment including expressions, tone, gestures, etc. So to develop a language, everything is important."* - Karuna Lulla, Parent and Guide, Mumbai



*"A lot of emphasis was laid on enriching the child's life, exposing them to different languages, art forms, mediums, a needed reminder in a parent's life"*, Ninu Ahluwalia's take on AMI Primary Trainer Anahita's talk in Bangalore

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# AMI Primary Diploma Course Inauguration

Meera Ghelani, Aditi Ganesh, Vidhya Ramalingam | Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad

***"I feel, being able to make a difference in young lives is one of the most beautiful ways to devote one's time and I hope through this Montessori training, I will be able to find what I am looking for" - Khushboo Bafna, Student, RTI***

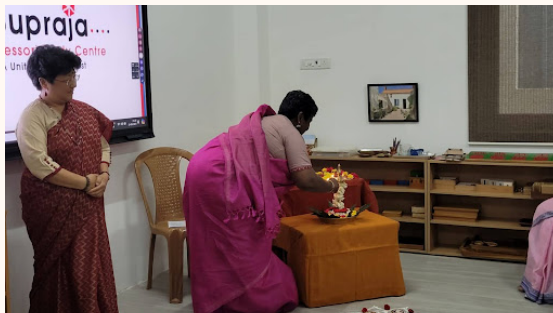
August saw the beginning of multiple Diploma courses across the country. Around 100 enthusiastic adults embarked on the journey of understanding the child and creating an environment that supports and nourishes their every need. *"It felt wonderful to see so many other students who joined the course with the same dream"*, shares Sahana Krishnamoorthy from Chennai. The students were oriented to the new space in which they were going to be spending a lot of time as a community and the structure and expectations of the course. *"I was fascinated by the environment in Montessori schools and wanted to deepen my knowledge to help young minds in their healthy development."*, Shruti Badri, Hyderabad



Students from the Montessori Training and Research Trust with AMI Primary Trainer Teenaz Reporter planted a lemon sapling as their tradition is each year with a new course



AMI Primary Trainer Zarin Malva with the 28th batch of students from Ratan Tata Institute, Mumbai



The 21st Diploma Course commenced with great enthusiasm at the new venue of Supraja Montessori Study Centre (formerly Navadisha Montessori Foundation), Chennai along with AMI Primary Trainers Rukmini Ramachandran, Ruby Lau, Ramya Sridhar and Hemalatha Rangarajan

# Montessori Walk - 'Mile For Montessori'

Vidhya Ramalingam | Hyderabad

There was a burst of enthusiasm and gusto on a cloudy and rainy morning when the Montessori community of Hyderabad turned out in large numbers for the Montessori walk in Sanjeevaiah Park on August 31, 2024. More than 900 children, parents and educators signed up for the walk organized by the Montessori Training and Research Trust to celebrate Maria Montessori's 154th birthday and MTRT's 40th anniversary. The walk by the entire community displayed their solidarity in honouring Montessori's life and work and bringing it to the larger community.

Children sang 'My Hand in your Hand' by Kate Oliver and 'Light a Candle for Peace' as they strolled. They also carried placards reflecting the profound thoughts of Montessori. Anaya and Megh, Elementary children shared that they were happy to be promoting the Montessori way of learning that they have been enjoying all these years. One of the parents spoke of how Montessori education is transformative and that he wished it reached all children.



***"As Montessori's entire message is education and peace, we hope that more schools offer this education to their children, thus making her vision turn into reality of social change through education."*** - Teenaz Reporter, Director of Training, MTRT

# Good Reads – Books for Under Three

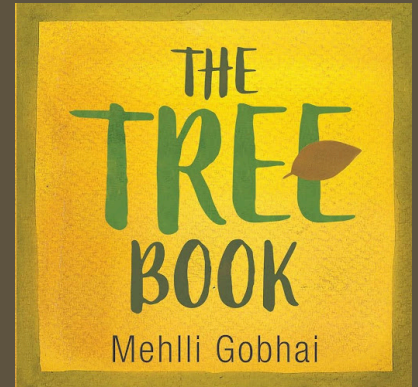
Aarthi Karthik

*Books are an essential and beautiful inclusion in any home and community. This series brings to you book suggestions that come highly recommended for infants (below 1 year) and toddlers (1 to 3 years).*

‘The Tree Book’ by Mehlli Gobhai is a wordless picture board book. The illustrations in this book are soft and pleasant to the eye and bring out the different elements of nature in a calming way. They are thoughtfully placed in the order within the book to contribute to the layering of thought and understanding. All the elements come together in a complete image at the end. They align so beautifully with the Montessori guidelines - they are based in reality, they offer a variety, and there are neither too many elements, nor too few.

The book can be used right from birth and the conversations can be adapted along with the child's growing understanding. This board book lends itself to being of great use during tummy time and for infants and toddlers to use independently. The variety of elements illustrated in the book offers one the freedom to build a story or a conversation around each of them independently or in connection with each other.

*\*The writer leads a Montessori Toddler Community in Chennai*

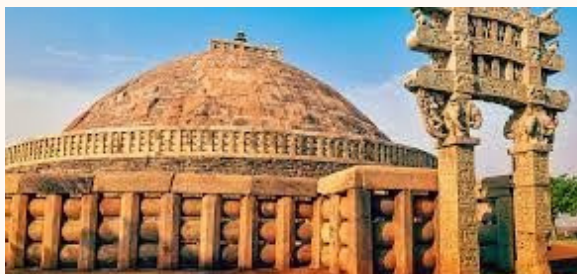


# Bitten by the History Bug

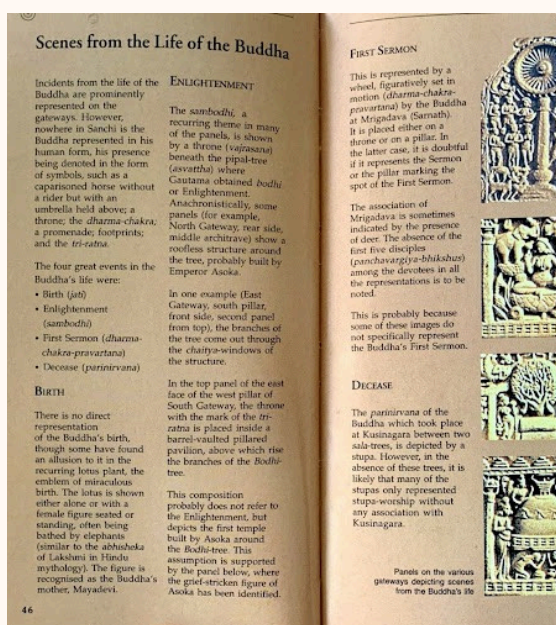
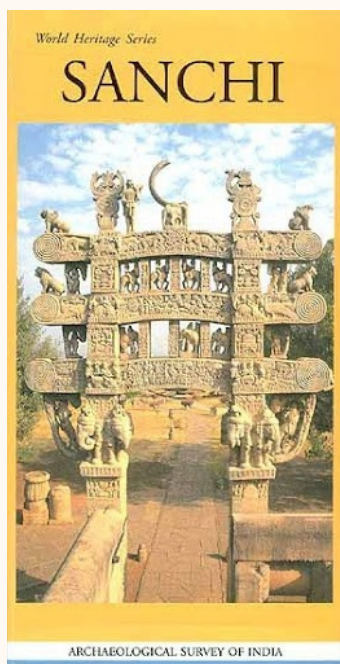
*India is home to innumerable heritage sites that have stood the test of time. This series highlights some of these grand marvels that tell stories of human life and work with some references that children can reach to on visiting these places.*

## Buddhist Monuments at Sanchi

On a hill overlooking the plain and about 40 km from Bhopal, the capital of Madhya Pradesh, the site of Sanchi comprises a group of Buddhist monuments; monolithic pillars, palaces, temples and monasteries. Most of them date back to the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C. It is the oldest Buddhist sanctuary in existence and was a major Buddhist centre in India until the 12th century A.D.



The inception of Sanchi as a sacred centre is attributed to the Mauryan emperor Aśoka. With the establishment of the monolithic Aśoka Stambha (pillar) bearing a highly elaborate capital, Emperor Aśoka distinguished Sanchi as a site of great importance. Since Aśokan times, subsequent powerful empires that reigned over this region – such as the Sunga, Kushana, Kshatrapa, and finally Gupta dynasties – continued to contribute to the expansion of Sanchi



‘ASI World Heritage Series; Sanchi’ by Debala Mitra has everything one wonders about as they witness these intricate gems of human work. It not only carries details of history and architecture of each monument but also the stories behind the carving that adore the gateways and stupas. It is a valuable reference for children visiting this prominent site.

Source:  
<https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/524/>

## Demystifying Montessori Materials

Vidhya Ramalingam

*A Montessori classroom offers a wide range of developmental aids whose aims are more than what meets the eye. This series brings to light why some materials are set up and how they are used by the children in a Primary Montessori community (3-6 years).*

### Fastening and Unfastening Large Buttons

We constantly use the skills of buttoning, buckling, tying bows and laces, in our day to day life as a means of self care. Having watched these activities in their environment, children are instinctively drawn to them. Though they see these activities done on them and also in the environment, they may not know the exact process. Hence all they need is a clear demonstration to gain these skills. The button frame which is used to help children with fastening and unfastening buttons is made up of a wooden frame. Along the parallel sides of the frame are attached 2 cloth flaps with the buttons on one side and the corresponding buttonholes on the other.

Through clear and sequential movements, children are shown how to fasten and unfasten the buttons. While children practice, they develop eye- hand coordination, concentration, agility in fingers and master the skill of buttoning. Once children accomplish this skill of buttoning, they are gradually taken to more complex frames that have buckles, bows and laces. Most importantly, when children acquire these skills they become independent in dressing themselves. When children are capable of taking care of themselves with these acquired skills, they are also able to extend this care to the others in their environment that makes them joyful.



## Prepared Social Experiences

Aditi Ganesh & Roopa Sundar

*A child's life very soon extends beyond the immediate home and into the larger society. How can this transition be enjoyable by all parties? In this series parents and teachers share their strategies for preparation and planning for these new social experiences.*

The hustle and bustle of a train station may be something adults are familiar with, but can be initially overwhelming for young children. Swathi Raghav, an educator and parent to an almost 4 year old Rohanraj shares about her experience of traveling with her son by train.

*"The first rule of parenting is preparation, it is the key and it has played a huge role in our child's life."* Preparation helps the child to remain calm and also anticipate what is going to happen, rather than be shocked. When rules are reiterated many times, the child and the parents are in harmony and can enjoy a trip peacefully with lesser conflicts.

As adults the first thing for us to keep in mind is giving enough time for the child to take in the experiences so that they don't feel rushed and lost. Comfortable and temperature based clothing and footwear also comes a long way in making them feel up for the journey. It is ideal for them to have their own backpack with essentials, like water and snacks and travel friendly activities so that they can get to it without needing our help.

*"Well before we were going to travel via train, we started talking about it with our child, including as many details as possible. We laid down a few ground rules for us to follow as a family, because I believe that children learn from us",* shares Swathi. It may not be enough to speak to the child once and for all together, but we can focus on different aspects each time and also repeat them over time. We can create lists of what are the things necessary to carry in the journey and involve the child in procuring and packing them. Conversations around safety in crowds become an essential and ways to be safe like holding hands is a must. *"We spoke of expected behaviour of lowering our voices on the train and walking in the corridors so that we do not disturb our co-passengers."*





# Understanding the Adolescent

Chaithanya Yalamanchili

*This segment aims to throw light on the needs of adolescents as they integrate academics with purposeful work and prepare to become contributing citizens who are self-confident and possess skills needed to thrive in society.*

## Agriculture in Erdkinder

Agriculture is a foundational component of the Erdkinder program, serving as a vital aspect of the adolescent community and a source of self-sustenance. Adolescents engage in the cultivation of crops, both for their own needs and for exchange, thus connecting with the historical roots of human civilization. Agriculture marks the period when humans transitioned to settled communities, forming civilizations after mastering the art of cultivation. Through this practice, students are introduced to the origins of human society and the essential role of agriculture in community development. The process exposes them to real and natural consequences and reinforces a connection with nature, while simultaneously offering opportunities for academic inquiry, as they strive to enhance their agricultural output. Additionally, agriculture fosters links with the broader society, providing adolescents with both the means to serve and opportunities to learn as they grow their enterprise.



At Pragnya Montessori, the initial agricultural project involved terrace gardening. Adolescents experimented with small-scale cultivation to understand soil types and nutrients that promote optimal plant growth. Challenges, such as pest infestations, prompted further study into organic and inorganic cultivation methods. They successfully developed organic sprays, which yielded positive results. Due to space constraints in the urban setting students explored hydroponic cultivation, acquiring a small setup and eventually expanding to a commercial scale after successful trials.

Mushroom cultivation is another key initiative, requiring constant monitoring due to the crop's sensitivity to environmental conditions. Adolescents took turns maintaining the mushroom farm, even during school holidays. These agricultural experiences not only instill a sense of responsibility but also help students understand the impact of their efforts on their community, fostering economic independence and personal growth.



Academic study plays a pivotal role in deepening students' understanding of their work. The study of nature is broad in scope, encompassing a wide range of academic disciplines. Through research, students explore innovative technologies and processes to enhance their agricultural productivity. Additionally, they develop an understanding of environmentally sustainable cultivation techniques, fostering a heightened sensitivity and respect for the natural world.

*Chaithanya Yalamanchili heads the Erdkinder program at Pragnya Montessori School, Hyderabad. He holds an AMI diploma in elementary education and Adolescent studies. He also holds a bachelor's degree in Engineering and a master's degree in Mathematics.*

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-Maria Montessori

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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 queries to help us in this journey.*



### How can we convey to the child that something is dangerous, without letting it affect his confidence levels?

**Vibhuti Jain - Assistants to Infancy Trainer**

The very young child is constructing the foundation of their personality. We must remember that our responses are engraved in the psyche of the child and impact the way they will interact with the world. At the same time, we also need to ensure the safety of the child. Thus we must respond in a manner that they do not feel fearful and hesitant to interact with the world.

The first step is then to reflect on our own responses, and make sure we are not overreacting. Many times our responses arise from our own fears and attitudes. Our extreme responses, even though they come from the safety of the child, can undermine their confidence and instill fear in them. Once we self-reflect, we become aware of who we are, and our own triggers. This helps us to moderate our responses to speak in a firm and gentle manner so that the child gets the message to be careful yet not instill fear in the child.

Another aspect is that of creating a structure within limits. Young children often act on their impulses. They are also naturally driven to move and explore. Denying young children freedom to move is restricting their developmental need. Young children are in the process of creating their own unique movement patterns, language, emotions, intellect and will. However they need the help of the adult to set few consistent limits and offer limited choices between known experiences.

Instead of resorting to a power struggle, threats or punishments we need to set firm limits related to their movement as well as create a safe environment for them. For example, one limit is that we walk indoors and run at an appropriate space. For example when they are trying to climb something too high or run on the road, we need to firmly say, you need to hold my hand, which hand would you like to hold, this one or that one. Another example, you cannot climb that ladder, but you can climb this one. Would you like to climb by yourself or do you need help? Hence by giving these firm choices, we create a structure of limits within which the child is free to explore.

## AMI Membership

Membership of AMI is open to all individuals. AMI members form an active community with a strong international presence, 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 their latest 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.

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## Children and Safety

*Dr Chetan Ginigeri, Consultant Pediatrics & Pediatric Intensive Care Unit of Aster Hospital, shares tools to be equipped with by different parties for safeguarding children. Contact Dr Chetan at [drchetanmd@yahoo.com](mailto:drchetanmd@yahoo.com).*

### Childproofing Your Home: Do It The Right Way - II

**Childproofing Your Home To Prevent Injuries:** Falls may cause various injuries and fractures to the soft bones of your child. Wipe any spillage as fast as possible. Take care while the child crawls over stairs and show him to do it safely. While sleeping, don't forget to keep pillows aside from your baby's bed, so he doesn't fall while changing sides. Never keep your gun loaded. Cover the electrical outlets with baby-safe latches. Make sure to remove all chargers from the plugs and cover them when not in use. Never leave your child inside the car. Keep all the threads and plastic bags away from the reach of your child.

**Childproofing Your Home For Water Safety:** Lock the doors of your bathroom so that your baby can't reach them without your presence. Be attentive in the pool with your child and ensure to make him wear a life jacket while swimming. While giving a bath to your child in the bathtub, make sure not to leave him alone and check the level of the water is not more than his chest area.

Keep the toilet-seat lid down, put in a latch, and ask the visitors also to use it. Unfortunately, the toilet is just the correct height for your toddler to stick his head in. For the reason that a toddler is top-heavy, he or she could fall over and not be able to get up. The water in the toilet is more than enough for drowning!





# EVENTS 2024-'25

Sat   20th July 2024	Talk	Montessori Education - Its relevance today	Online
Thu   31 August 2024	Talk	The Significance of the Hand in Education	Online
Thu   12 September 2024	Talk	Understanding Adolescents - <b>Jenny Hoglund</b>	Onsite - Chennai
Thu   12 September 2024	Talk	Path to Self Expression- Role of Language in Development Speaker - <b>Teenaz Reporter</b>	Onsite - Hyderabad
Thu   12 September 2024	Talk	Path to Self Expression- Role of Language in Development Speaker - <b>Anahita Gandhi</b>	Onsite - Bangalore
Thu   19 September 2024	Talk	Path to Self Expression- Role of Language in Development Speaker - <b>Zarin Malva</b>	Onsite - Mumbai
Sat   23 November 2024	Talk	Transitions in Montessori and Beyond	Online
Thu   5 December 2024	Workshop	AMI Students Orientation Present work of IMF	Online
Thu   23 January 2025	Talk	Setting Boundaries - Road to Self Discipline (3-6 topic) Speaker - <b>Kavya C</b>	Onsite - Bangalore
Thu   23 January 2025	Talk	Setting Boundaries - Road to Self Discipline (3-6 topic) Speaker - <b>Madhavi Latha</b>	Onsite - Hyderabad
Thu   23 January 2025	Talk	Setting Boundaries - Road to Self Discipline (3-6 topic) Speaker - <b>Hemalatha Rangarajan</b>	Onsite - Chennai
Thu   23 January 2025	Talk	Setting Boundaries - Road to Self Discipline (3-6 topic) Speaker - <b>Suneeta M</b>	Onsite - Mumbai
Sat   22 February 2025	Talk	A Day in a Montessori Environment	Online

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