

Greetings!!!

Situated in a quiet neighbourhood, a little away from the hustle and bustle of JSS circle is Anurag, the venue for this month's IMC Connect. The session was a group discussion on "Re-visiting the idea of outing" conducted by Deepa Ravichandran, founder and principal of Floretz Academy. Though being a Masters graduate in Industrial Electronics, she decided to follow her passion for education and profess the Montessori method



Why do children need an outing? I am sure every montessorian knows the need for the child to explore, experience and connect with the real world. Why revisit the idea of outing? That is exactly what the session was all about – to give a 360° view of what it takes to plan an outing.

The highly interactive and vivacious session started off with a question posed to 45 montessorians who attended –“What comes to your mind when we say - outing?” The energy and enthusiasm with which the audience replied was palpable. She spoke about the excitement that children show at the mention of a field trip and that the task of organizing one is huge. She mentioned that the planning the“stakeholders” (children, teachers, school, parents and suppliers) need to do is quite elaborate.

The audience was divided into 8 groups and each group was asked to assume the role of a stakeholder, to discuss and jot down their views on how an outing is useful to each stakeholder. The groups then shared their views with everyone before moving on to discuss what is done before, during and after the outing as that particular stakeholder.

The next part of the discussion was centered on how an outing can be an aid to the developmental plan for the child. The groups were shuffled and asked to choose a theme based on the lesson (Botany, Zoology, Geography, History and Sensorial exploration) given, list the age-appropriate activities for children and how an outing can be arranged based on the theme. She then gave an interesting example on how they had chosen "Coconut" as a theme in their school and planned activities and field trips for the entire year based on it. Right from visiting a coconut grove to cooking your own food to removing the husk – everything was centered on "Coconut". On one of their trips, the children were so enthusiastic that even during their ride on the metro were eagerly spotting coconut trees. She also emphasized that it is not always necessary to have a need. A place can be chosen and the need can then be created. "You can take them out whatever the topic is", she concluded.

As Maria Montessori said, *"Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words but by experiences in the environment."* A field trip or "outing" plays a vital role in the child's education and those who attended the session would agree on the importance of thorough planning from all perspectives in order for an outing to be successful and have the desired impact on the children.

Join us next on Sep 17<sup>th</sup> for a discussion on "Spiritual Preparation and Observation".