

# Follow The Child



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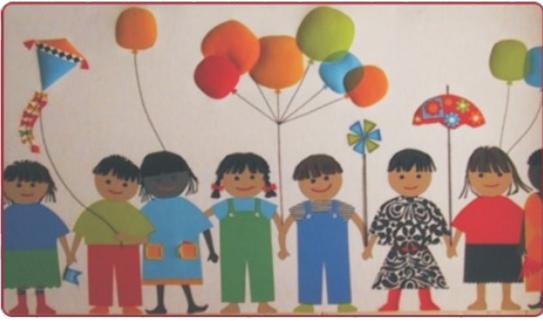
**Education and Peace**

**The Beginning of Musical Art**

**The Importance of Montessori Education**

**Value Based Education**

**INSIDE**



Estd. : 2001

# Discover Montessori

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## Editor's Note



It's the question I've been (surprisingly) asked by parents more frequently than any other over the past year. So what *do* you say when your child says, "I'm bored"? Children live in a world where the vast majority of their time is managed and scheduled. The stimulation is structured and the motivation tends to be extrinsic. When a child is presented with nothing but free time, after a while all the external stimulators lose a little luster.

Using technology as a "Free babysitting service" is, in fact, not free at all. The payment is waiting for us just around the corner. We pay with our children's nervous systems, with their attention, and with their ability for delayed gratification. Compared to virtual reality, everyday life is boring.

"I am Hungry!" "In a second I will stop at the restaurant, "I am Thirsty!" "Here is a juice." "I am bored!" "Use my phone!" My son doesn't like vegetables." "She doesn't like going to bed early." "He doesn't like to eat breakfast." "She doesn't like toys, but she is very good at her iPad" "He doesn't want to get dressed on his own." "She is too lazy to eat on her own." This is what I hear from parents most of the time.

We have created an artificial fun world for our children. There are no dull moments. The moment it becomes quiet, we run to entertain them again, because otherwise, we feel that we are not doing our parenting duty.

We live in two separate worlds. They have their "fun" world, and we have our "work"

world. Why aren't children helping us in the kitchen or with cleaning, taking care of themselves? Why don't they tidy up their toys?

This is basic monotonous work that trains the brain to be workable and function under "boredom," which is the same "muscle" that is required to be eventually teachable at school. When they come to school and it is time for handwriting their answer is "I can't. It is too hard. Too boring." Why? Because the workable "muscle" is not getting trained enough.

We are all busy, so we give our children digital gadgets and make them "busy" too. Children used to play outside, where, in unstructured natural environments, they learned and practiced their social skills. Unfortunately, technology replaced the outdoor time. Also, technology made the parents less available to socially interact. Obviously, our little ones fall behind... the babysitting gadget is not equipped to help children develop social skills.

**Normalization** is a technical word borrowed from the field of **anthropology**. It means becoming a contributing member of society. Normalization is the term Dr. Montessori used to refer to children who are able to concentrate and work freely in the Montessori environment, exercising self-discipline and peace. It is in no way meant to suggest that children who are not able to do this are not normal. It simply means they are in a different stage of their development and personal journey.

Dr. Montessori said there were three stages each child goes through on the way to normalization. The first stage is when children do something because they want to. This is typical behavior of toddler's and two year olds. As the child matures, they move to stage two and do things when they are asked of them. The third stage is when the child does something because they know it is the right thing to do.

Upon hearing the term "normalization" for the first time, most people cringe. "What do you mean my child isn't normal?" Normalization describes the process that occurs in the Montessori classroom, where young children (usually with short attention spans) learn to focus and concentrate for sustained periods of time, while deriving self-satisfaction from their work. Normalization occurs when development is proceeding normally.

As they grow, Montessori children, given a free and beneficial environment, learn to approach challenges with gusto and find true joy in acquiring knowledge. A spirit of vivacious activity pervades the Montessori classroom as the students undertake the ongoing work of self-revelation. In addition to this being a wonderful planet, it can be a tough place to live, but 'normalized' Montessori traits cultivated early in life will carry a child far in the future.

*Sumathi Ramindranath*

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# Education and Peace

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

*Education cannot be dismissed as an insignificant factor in peoples' lives. It must be viewed from the perspective of the development of the human value in the individual. The individual has grown to adult hood after being repressed taking care of his personal interests throughout childhood and adolescence.*

*In this regard following article has been chosen from "Education and Peace", one of the greatest works of Montessori on the form of Education.*

What is the task confronting education? It is above all the task of mending breaches, filling gaps that are vast and serious. Its primary goals must be the realization of values of the human personality and the development of mankind.

Anyone who sets these two goals for himself might be inclined to believe that mankind's progress depends on the formation of a peace-loving human personality and that the sum total of individuals educated with such goals in mind would be a peaceful society by that very fact alone.

If we add that the effort to realize the values of man must be based on his very nature and take the natural inclinations of the child as its point of departure, people might think that it will be necessary first to determine the probable activity or future profession of the child. But I do not believe that we will attain our objective by following this path. This path would merely lead to speculation with regard to

professional orientation rather than bringing about a reform of the basic organization of society. On the other hand, every time an attempt has been made to discover the true nature of the child by offering him the possibility of revealing his inner tendencies, surprising revelations have been forthcoming. The child has shown something quite of it that the facts are in controvertible. The child has said, "Don't help me. Don't bother me. Leave me alone."

All adults have had this experience, but have paid no attention, or they have failed to act on the child's suggestion, for it has seemed too simple.

When the child is given freedom to move about in a world of objects, he is naturally inclined to perform the tasks necessary for his development entirely on his own. Let us say it straight out-the child wants to do everything all by himself. But the adult does not understand this, and a blind





struggle begins. The child likes neither to play idly, nor to waste time doing useless things, nor to flit about aimlessly, as most people believe. He seeks some very precise goal, and he seeks it with an instinctive directness of purpose. This instinct that impels him to do things by himself makes it incumbent upon us to prepare an environment that truly allows him to develop. When he has freed himself of the oppressive adults who act *for* him, the child also achieves his second goal, working positively toward his own independence.

It is a commonplace that the child must be free. But what kind of freedom has he been given? The only true freedom for an individual is to have the opportunity to act independently. That is the condition *sine qua non* of individuality. There is no such thing

as an individual until a person can act by himself. The instinct guiding the child to seek his independence leads us to realize what the whole of nature demonstrates that any sort of association is composed of separate individuals. Otherwise there would be no such thing as societies, but only colonies. In the realm of nature, we find a lower level, represented by colonies, in which individuals are only physically distinct but not autonomous, and a higher level in which each individual is separate and independent and functions on its own. Individuality is the basic unit, the fundamental building block of a society, which is made up of many individuals, each functioning autonomously but associating with others for a common purpose. We find many examples of this in nature. Many members of the same species fulfill a special function together in the

maintenance of a balanced terrestrial economy. Their action may be unlimited, whereas the function fulfilled by colonies is always limited. The individual rarely lives a life entirely apart from others; rather, he is meant to associate with many others. Such an association may or may not be organized. In the latter case it does not constitute a society, but rather an aggregate of individuals, each functioning separately.

We can thus see more clearly what these two concepts imply. Education must foster both the development of individuality and that of society. Society cannot develop unless the individual develops, as we learn from observing the child, who immediately uses his newly won independence to act on a social environment. Most of our actions would have no reason for being if

there were no other people around us, and we do most of the things we do because we live in association with others. As soon as the child begins to develop in an environment built for him and succeeds in acting on his own, independently of the adult, a harmony is soon established by the child not only between himself and the environment, but also between himself and the adult.

This process of liberation is extremely important, because the child who is free to act becomes cured of all his psychic deformities, or escapes them altogether, and becomes the master of his own energies. The fact that such a transformation can come about only through free activity of such a deformed child.

It is interesting to see how character traits that are considered

normal and are found in children of all races and social backgrounds (lying, disorderliness, temper tantrums, idle daydreaming, and so on) disappear in such an environment, making way for totally different traits. Children's characters change by means of a calm, constructive activity that develops their intelligence.

Education must concern itself with the development of individuality and allow the individual child to remain independent not only in the earliest years of childhood but through all stages of his development. Two things are necessary: the development of individuality and the participation of the individual in a truly social life. This development and this participation in social activities will take different forms in the various periods of childhood. But one principle will remain

unchanged during all these stages: the child must be furnished at all times the means necessary for him to act and gain experience. His life as a social being will then develop throughout, his formative years, becoming more and more complex as he grows older.

The child cannot develop if does not have objects around him permitting him to act. Until the present, it was believed that the most effective learning took place when knowledge was passed on directly to the child by his teachers. The child needs objects to act; they are like nourishment for his spirit.

If we think of the many things men have built in the world, of the enormous improvement that men have brought about in their environment, we may be led to believe that mankind's mission in the cosmos is to transform nature.





It has been said that man's greatest delight is to possess things. No! Man's greatest delight is using them! Using them to perfect himself and at the same time to improve his environment.

There is a constant interaction between the individual and his environment. The use of things shapes man, and man shapes things. This reciprocal shaping is a manifestation of man's love for his surroundings. And this relationship is one of love. Love impels the child not toward the possession of an object, but toward the work he can do with it, and when work begins in a certain environment, association with one's fellows also begins, for no one can work alone. And that is how life evolves: an interesting form of work appears; it enhances the value of individuality; and that in turn exalts the individual person. But if this does not happen – if something

prevents the individual from acting—he begins to want to possess the things all around him. Rather than working together with others, the child quarrels with them. The result of his association with others is not collaboration but conflict.

This great revelation we owe to the child. Two paths lie open in the development of personality – one that leads to the man who loves and one that leads to the man who possesses. One leads to the man who has won his independence and works harmoniously with others, and the other to the human slave who becomes the prisoner of his possessions as he tries to free himself and who comes to hate his fellows.

These two paths might be called the paths of Good and of Evil; one leads to Heaven and the other to Hell; one leads man to his supernatural perfection, and the

other takes him below his own natural level.

Man does not take one or the other of these paths through his own free choice; the one he takes depends on whether he has developed normally or abnormally.

When individuals develop normally, they plainly feel a love not only for things, but for all living creatures. This love is not something that was taught; it is the natural result of leading the right kind of life. We might say that if love appears, we are within the range of the normal, and if it does not, within the range of the abnormal, and if it does not, within the range of the abnormal. Love is not the cause but the effect of the normal development of the individual. Certain situations in life offer the same experience.

What we call love between a man and a woman, for example, is possible only when the people have reached a certain stage of development, likewise the love of a mother for her child.

Can love perhaps be taught by example? How can it be, in the absence of the cause of which this love is the effect? Can we perhaps teach brotherly love, the love of humanity, as an abstract ideal? If we are ever to realize his ideal, we will first have to organize mankind properly, in accordance with the laws of humanity. In order to be able to speak of this love, in order to be able to experience it, we must first obey the laws of human nature, or rather of human

supernature. We have had many proofs that such love is possible. Many men have proofs that such love is possible. Many men have felt this sort of love for humanity, and it is the real essence of every individual. A few men have “rescued” themselves from the shipwreck of humanity and lived simple, active lives - the lives, in fact, of children. These men, who have won their own salvation, whom we call saints, have given the world proof of a love capable of benefiting all mankind.

The child who has felt a strong love for his surroundings and for all living creatures, who has discovered joy and enthusiasm in work, gives us reason to hope that humanity can develop in a new direction. Our hope for peace in the future lies not in the formal

knowledge the adult can pass on to the child, but in the normal development of the new man.

This is precisely what allows us to believe that a great possibility still lies before us, that there is still one hope for our salvation—a normal development that, fortunately, does not depend on what we attempt to teach the child.

What we can do is investigate this phenomenon with the objectivity of the scientist—study the facts that determine it, discover what conditions are necessary to produce it, and keep following the path that leads to normality. What we can and must do is undertake the construction of an environment that will provide the proper conditions for his normal development.

The child's psychic energy, once awakened, will develop according to its own laws and have an effect on us as well. The mere contact with a human being developing in this way can renew our own energies. The child developing harmoniously and the adult improving himself at his side make a very exciting and attractive picture.

This is the treasure we need today—helping the child become independent of us and make his way by himself and receiving in return his gifts of hope and light. In this new picture, the adult will appear not only as the builder of the external world, but, even more importantly, as the protector of the moral and spiritual forces that appear anew in every human being born.





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***Collaboration is the hallmark of children of this age group.***



**Who an Elementary child is today, has come from the process he/she went through in a primary Montessori**



This process starts at around 2 years of age and goes on up to the age 6. The child is mostly free to explore the environment. The adults present material when they sense that the child is ready. Each child is on his/her own path, and works with the materials as he/she needs and for as long as is necessary. Working independently, the child develops concentration and focus which continues through their life in varying degrees as per need.



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# Value Based Education

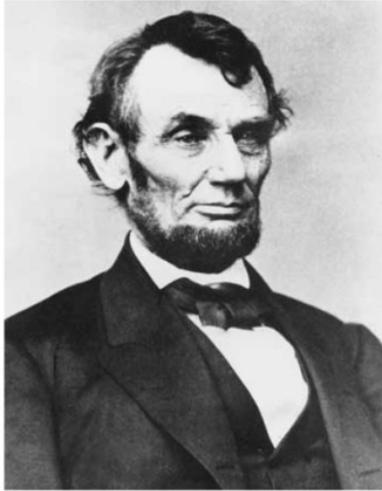
**Dr. Ing. B.V.A. Rao**

President, IMC, FNAE, FIE, Adjunct Faculty, NIAS,  
& Ex-Pro Chancellor, VITU, Vellore, Prof. (Retd.) IIT, Madras

Today the moral and social values are on the decline. Values are the ideals which the society expects its members to observe in their day to day life. Values are, thus the underlying foundations of human behavior. Education should therefore be value-oriented, if it is to be of use to the society

Any father who sends his child to the school would expect that not only his child should learn to read and write, but should acquire knowledge and wisdom and develop good character.





There is a nice anecdote about Abraham Lincoln's letter to his Head Master. This letter clearly documents, what father or the public would expect from a School/ College/University.

*"He will have to learn. I know, that all men are not just, all men are not true. But teach him also that for every scoundrel there is a hero. That for every selfish politician, there is a dedicated leader. Teach him that for every enemy there is a friend, It will take time, I know, but teach him if you can that a dollar earned is of far more value than five pound..."*

*Teach him to learn to lose and also to enjoy winning; steer him away from envy, if you can, Teach him the secret of quiet laughter.*

*Let him learn early that the bullies are the easiest to lick. Teach him, if you can, the wonder of a book... but also give him quiet time to ponder, the eternal mystery of birds in the sky, bees in the sun, and flowers of green hillside.*

*In School teach him, it is far more honorable to fail than to cheat... Teach him to have faith in his own ideas, even if everyone tells him they are wrong.... Teach him to be gentle with gentle people, and tough with the tough.*

*Try to give my son the strength not to follow the crowd when everyone is getting on the bandwagon... Teach him to listen to all men... but teach him also to filter all he hears on a screen of truth, and take only the good that come through.*

*Teach him if you can how to laugh when he is sad.... Teach him there is no shame in tears. Teach him to scoff at cynics and to beware of too much sweetness....*

*Teach him to sell his brawn and brain to the highest bidder, but never to put a price tag on his heart and soul. Teach him to close his ears a howling mob.... and to stand and fight if he thinks he is right*

*Teach him gently, but do not cuddle him because only the test of fire makes fine steel. Let him have the courage to be impatient... Let him have the patience to be brave. Teach him always to have sublime faith in himself, because then he will always have sublime faith in mankind."*

We often mistake literacy for education. One may be literate but uneducated. Literacy opens the

eyes and provides the capacity to increase ones standard of living and to live in any part of the world.

But Education, i.e. result of learning and acquiring of knowledge and wisdom, makes life worth living.

"The wise is rich, with every blessing blessed. The fool is poor, of every thing possessed."

The Preamble to our Constitution clearly indicates the broad outline of our National Values :

*"Justice, Social, Economic and Political; Liberty of Thought, Expression, Belief, Faith & Worship; Equality of Status and Opportunity and to promote among all Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation".*

These national values have to be constantly inculcated in the minds of all our children irrespective of their social group.

Many Education Commissions which plan documents and policy statements, emphasized the importance of **value oriented education**. But they are all on papers only.

No education is worth name, which does not inculcate the qualities necessary for living graciously, harmoniously and efficiently with one's fellowmen.

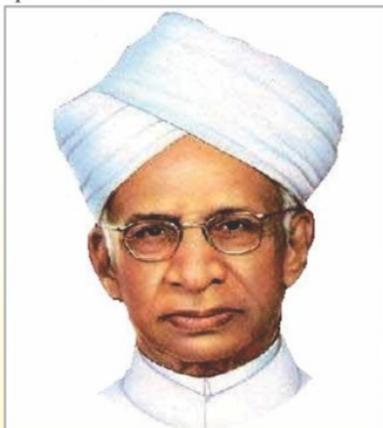
Amongst the qualities which should be cultivated for this



purpose are discipline, cooperation, social sensitiveness and tolerance. Each one of them has its own special part to play in humanizing and socializing one's personality.

Our Secularism doesn't encourage religious Education. But in reality there is only a very thin and subtle line of distinction between **value education** and **religious education**.

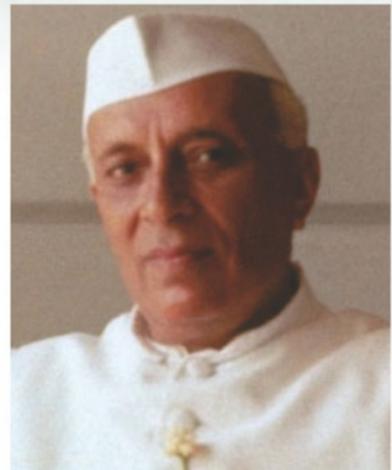
The values are by and large religion specific, and the values become



inspiringly meaningful only within the religious framework. The great philosopher of modern India Sir. S. Radhakrishnan, once wrote :

*“Religion is the soul’s response and adjustment in the presence of supreme realities of the transcendent order; ethics deal with the right adjustments of life on earth, especially in human society. Both are motivated by a desire to live in the light of ideals; if we are a species of a passing phenomenon, there is no meaning in religion. Religion springs from the conviction that there is another world beyond the visible and the temporal with which man has dealings, and ethics require us to act in the world with the compelling vision of another.”*

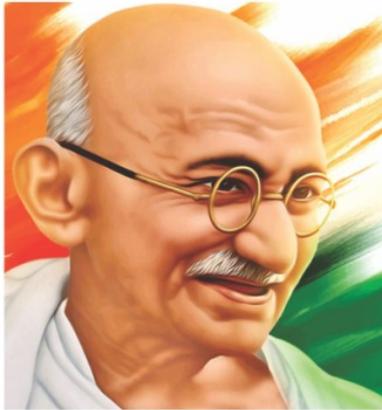
Even Jawaharlal Nehru, who was for secularism and did not believe in superstition said:



*“...and yet some faith is necessary in things of the spirit which are beyond the scope of our physical world; without some reliance on moral, spiritual and idealistic conception, we have no anchorage on objectives or purpose of life.”*

Mahatma Gandhi wrote on religious instruction :

*“A curriculum of religious instruction should include a study of the tenets of faith’s*



*other than one's own. For this purpose the children should be trained to cultivate the habit of understanding and appreciating the doctrines of the various great religion of the world in the spirit of reverence and broadminded tolerance."*

Our History cannot be wiped out. What we are today depends largely on our past. Our value system knowingly or unknowingly depends largely upon the way, our civilization has evolved.

Therefore, in order to understand ourselves and to understand the value system of our community, it is necessary to learn the important texts of our own religions.

Be it religious values or social values, the values must be taught to the children in such a way that they can assimilate them and make them as their way of life.

How far are we successful in teaching the values in a classroom? This is where, we teachers have to play a significant role.

The Teacher has be an exemplary

person and an embodiment of values in his/her thoughts and deeds

The values can be taught through lectures, text books, epics and several co-curricular activities and the young mind does catch them.

But when he finds elders and leaders in the society going the other way, he suffers from moral conflicts.

These conflicts may turn him into a morally debased person or a hypocrite, who bears the façade of morality and does everything immoral

Still others may justify immorality vehemently. Very few may come out as crusaders for establishment of moral values.

They suffer and in their suffering they are condemned as 'fools', 'maladjusted', 'idealists', etc.

On whom should this blame be laid?

Evidently the blame should be laid on the Elders and the Leaders of Society, for they do not provide good "example to" the youngsters, when they try to test the tenets of their moral values.

At least here, example is better than precept. **If morality cannot be caught, it also cannot be taught.**

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good "example to" the youngsters, when they try to test the tenets of their moral values.

At least here, example is better than precept.

**If morality cannot be caught, it also cannot be taught.**

There are many difficulties for the Teachers today to serve as '**moral instructor**' in the midst of a polluted social environment.

But we must understand that the children, if properly approached are most receptive to '**moral persuasion**'.



• As Swami Vivekananda said : **"Education is the manifestation of perfection already in man"**

The Teacher's role in this respect is nothing short of nation building; **the destiny of India is being shaped in her classrooms and this is no rhetoric!**

*"In sandy soil, when deep delve, you reach the springs below" &*

*"The more you learn , the freer streams of wisdom flow."*

# The Importance of Montessori Education

**Sumathi Ravindranath**

Montessori Education formulated more than one hundred years ago is still relevant and effective.

The child of today is the same as the child of yesterday and will be more or less the same of tomorrow. However the tsunami of gadgets are snatching away the natural development and learning tendencies of children. It is true that children are different, and hence their learning patterns vary. The Montessori method of education believes that teaching methods, cannot adopt the 'one size fits all' policy.

Dr Maria Montessori was the first lady doctor in Italy and can be considered as one of the first educators of her time who created her method based on a type of education that involved materials which came to be called as 'didactic apparatus'. Montessori used her keen powers of observation to study the nature of the child across many cultures. Having observed children's behavior through the learning apparatus that she used, as a tool to observe and watch the process of "normalization" is an important piece of knowledge on how children learn and behave.





These recordings were what she termed as “Montessori Method”. Since her name became synonymous with the method, schools that practice the method came to be called as Montessori Schools or Houses of Children.

Montessori created an environment that produced hands-on learning through a prepared environment-or the classrooms specifically designed to meet the needs of children through the variety of materials. The classroom structure and the overall appeal of the environment that engages natural learning and mixed age group create tutoring opportunities. The materials are developmentally appropriate and meets every child's individualized needs of learning. The didactic material offers to the child the means for what may be called “sensory education”. Using real objects instead of toy replications help develop functional skills and independence.

Montessori Children are able to make their choices from the material that is displayed to the hands and eyes of the child in each area of learning, which promotes freedom and independence. Freedom to interact, move around the environment as there are no restriction of benches and desks, to make choice in any area of learning and to consciously complete the work cycle are seamlessly integrated into the child's development. This enhances maximum sitting capacity and concentration. This is unlike the traditional classrooms, where we see young children who are expected to sit and listen without interaction.

Applying the fundamental principles of nature to the education of children is perhaps the most enduring legacy and lasting value of the life and work of Maria Montessori. There are three basic elements to this form of education are,

- The classroom known as a specially prepared environment,
- The didactic materials, referred to as prepared materials and
- A teacher who is a spiritually prepared adult.

Why the Montessori method of education is relevant...

The child's reality is defined as what he actually sees, hears, touches and lives from birth to 6 years old. It discusses the role of the child in society. A Montessori school establishes the atmosphere of a human community in its classrooms. The Montessori philosophy advocates that every child is a reflection of the person he/she will become, which is why; people in the Montessori system of education treat every child with respect and dignity.

Montessori believed that every infant, toddler or child carried within him/her an innate intelligence and integrity that is

unique to it. The need to be useful is one of the most fundamental needs of humans of all ages. The Montessori system is unique as it takes into consideration the overall development of the child as against mere academic skills. Montessori professionals are free to adapt the lessons as they lead the child/children towards their learning development. The Montessori approach blends seamlessly with other models and guide children to be peaceful, tolerant and cooperative, like adults for which the world is striving today.

Freedom is an essential element of the Montessori classroom. The teacher and the child are not in a power struggle but in a relationship

of co-existence.

One of the major challenges is the necessity to address the different needs of all children. Montessori method of education is the most relevant method as it addresses the different needs of all children. It is important for us to accept that our society is facing a crisis in education. Television, video games, smart phones and other components affect our children's ability to concentrate, absorb and analyze information. In the present day when both parents are busy working and have no time to enhance the basic life skills of children there is a decrement in reading, play and lack of imagination and interactive communication.

We all believe that the place of a child is in the Centre of society, and by assisting this child, catering to their developmental needs and providing them with creative opportunities, which is not just limited to drawing and coloring, supports the children to reach self-actualization, leading to a harmonious and peaceful humanity.

Montessori education is an education for life. It is relevant even after 100 years because her methods are one of the best ways to fulfill the developmental needs of children as endowed by the natural laws. When nature and nurture work together, a healthy child is definitely the result as this is the answer to a healthy humanity.





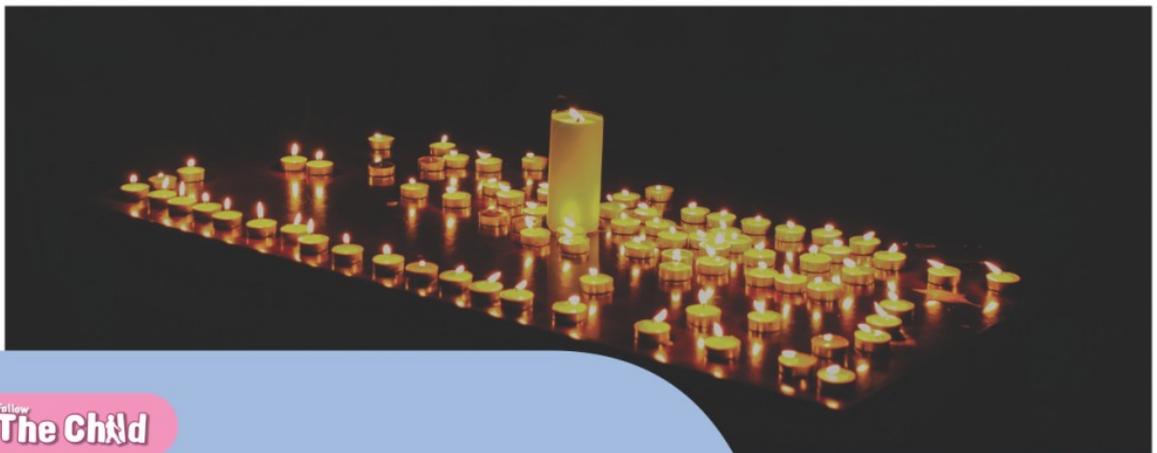
I had the fortune to be part of the facilitator's group to Vietnam for the second IMTC course at Vietnam. The inaugural function was arranged with lot of care and all the 70 students were present. It was a pleasure being in the midst of enthusiastic people.

We started the program talking about IMTC and ProEdu Vietnam. There was sharing by us, a few new students and a few of the last year students. That helped build a context for the new students.

There was a round of ice breakers to help the students know each other. It was followed by the solemn lamp lighting ceremony in which Ms Sheila Viswanath lit the big candle and the facilitators (Mr Anantha Padmanabha and Ms Sujata R Kumar) and the organisers- Ms Huong, CEO, Pro Edu ... All the students lighting lamps which spontaneously led to reciting the shloka --- "*Asathoma sadgamaya*".

It was then followed by lunch and then back to the initial session of the course.  
We wish all the students and Mr Ananth all the best.

Reported by  
**Sujata R Kumar**  
20 Aug 18







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## Spontaneity in Children!

We all know that science is everywhere. When children are made conscious of this through scientific activities, they explore the world around them making wonderful discoveries!

One such incident is worth sharing that occurred in our Montessori environment. I was presenting Dhruthi, (around 5½ years of age) Candle Burning Experiment. The presentation included two tea candles, two glass jars and a match box, all in a tray. I lit both the candles and then I closed one candle with a glass jar. I explained the fact that when you limit the amount of air by placing the glass jar, the candle eventually stops burning. The other candle (let's call it as the control candle) continues to burn drawing the oxygen from the air. I wound up the experiment by blowing off the burning candle.

Dhruthi then repeated the experiment as presented. But the interesting part was at the end when she had to turn off the burning control candle. She effortlessly turned off the candle by placing the glass jar!

How spontaneous is the child's ability to apply!! The presence of mind what children naturally possess is what we have to nurture and imbibe.

**- Sudha Rao**

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“ Early  
childhood education  
is the key  
to the betterment of  
society. ”

***Dr. Maria Montessori***

# IMC Karnataka Chapter



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# The Beginning of Musical Art

**Dr. Maria Montessori**

The briefness of the reference to musical education which is made in this book is not due to disparagement of the value of music in education, but to the fact that with the child of tender age music can only have a beginning; it has its development somewhat later. Besides, success is bound up with the need for the production of plenty of music around the child, so that there is set up an environment calculated to develop musical sense and intelligence. To have available a good musical performer, or to possess simple instruments adapted to children, like those which Dolmetch makes today, for the equipment of his marvelous children's orchestras are things which we cannot lay down as being absolute essentials in a school which has to be accessible to all. In the model Montessori schools, however, musical education is cultivated in a serious manner, trying to leave to the child free choice and free expression, as in all branches of its development.

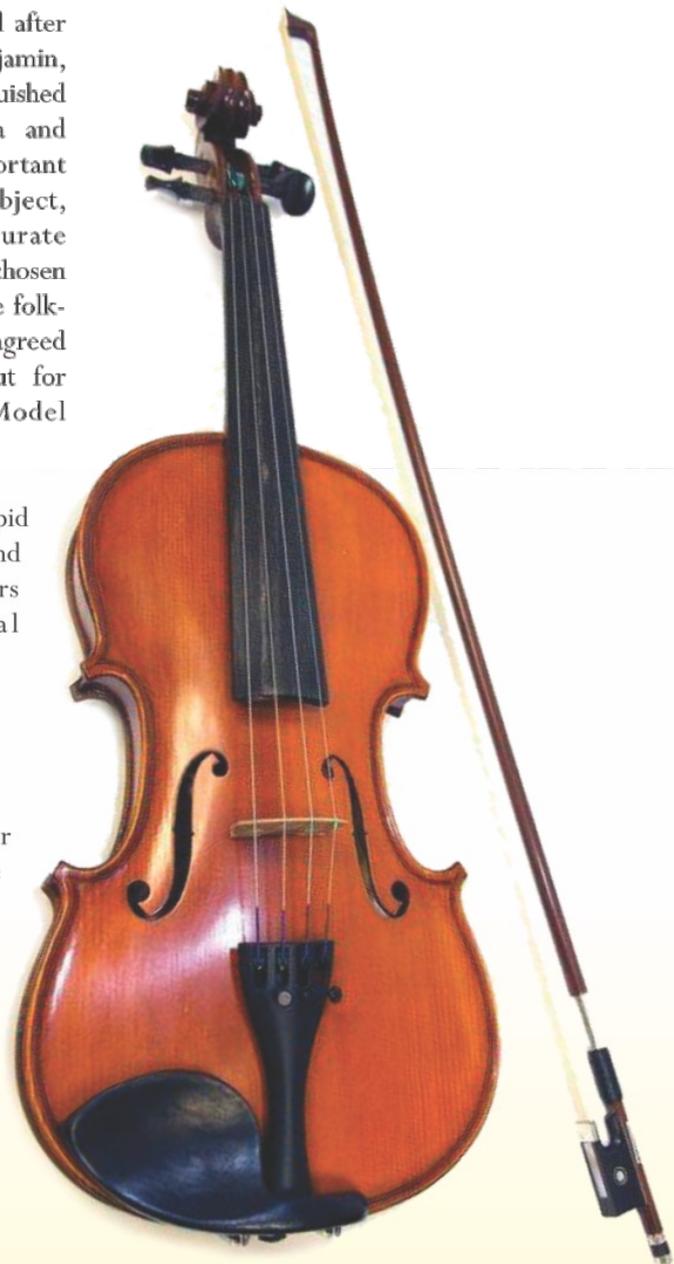
Already Signorina Maccheroni has made some beautiful experiments, published in part in my book *L'Autoeducazione* (The Advanced

Montessori Method II); and after some time, Lawrence A. Benjamin, with the help of distinguished music teachers in Vienna and London, has made important contributions to the subject, especially with an accurate collection of musical pieces chosen from classical music and the folk-music of every country, agreed upon after being tried out for several years in the Model Montessori School in Vienna.

Let us proceed now to a rapid review of the analysis and development of the factors concerned in musical education.

## **RHYTHM AND RHYTHEMICAL GYMNASTICS**

The motor preparation for rhythmic gymnastics may be considered in reference to that exercise called "walking on the line", through which little children acquire perfect assurance in equilibrium, and at the same time learn to control the movements of the feet and hands.



It is during this slow, sustained walking that music may be introduced as an aid to the effort which has to be sustained. Having attained balance, however, education in rhythm must be begun. Many lullabies are suitable for accompanying these slow, uniform movements, which may be compared with the movement of rocking. The addition of music to movement is in this case a real accompaniment to the step which is already fixed, and it penetrates it. In contrast with such music, there is a rhythm are those to which small children are most responsive. As contrasts formed the first introduction to the education of the senses, the same is true for rhythmic education. The steps slow and controlled by the difficulty of maintaining balance, and the run are, besides, the two ways of moving preferred by children between three and four years of age. On the contrary, the rhythmic jump is not only a movement which follows the establishment of perfect balance but it calls for a muscular effort to which the child is not equal, owing to the special proportions of the child body. As for the various steps corresponding to various rhythms, which would correspond to the graduations in sense education, they can be appreciated only at a later age. (above five years of age.)

The rhythmic marches on the line should be distinguished from the gymnastics done on the line which have as its aim to establish perfect balance and control of movements. These gymnastic exercises which consist of so many items (holding a banner in one hand, a glass of

water, a burning candle or carrying a small basket on the head) require the line traced on the floor to guide the feet in a certain way. It is this definite direction that makes it rather difficult to keep balance and hence establishes and strengthens perfect equilibrium. In these exercises a uniform and delicate music accompanies the exercise in order to sustain the necessary effort to perform it exactly.

When, however, rhythmic exercises are started, the feet should be free and the line is merely a guide and helps to keep the children who walk, run, skip, etc., in line. It is then clear too, that passing on to the performance of dances the line has no reason of existence any longer, but perhaps to serve as an ornament useful to give a conscious order to movement.

The technique for the execution of music consists of grasping a single musical phrase of easy interpretation and repeating it many times. That is analogous to repeating an exercise. Besides the two initial contrasting steps

specially suited to the little ones, there may be chosen and repeated rhythmic musical phrases in order to develop sensitiveness to music in the children, who have no other chance of receiving such impressions from the environment, as happens with colours and visual sensations in general. By repeating each phrase a very great number of times, some children between five and six become able to interpret rhythms which call for movements slightly dissimilar, such as the slow step, the marching step, etc. (gradation).

Some teaching may usefully be given by the mistress, in showing the step corresponding to a particular rhythm, as is done in the lessons when the teacher says- "This is big, this is small". However, after such a demonstration has been made, the child must be left to give his own interpretation of it, that is to the recognizing of the same rhythms in different musical phrases. Children feel the rhythm when it is played with musical expression, and often reproduce the rhythm not only





with the foot but with the arms and with movements of the whole body. Sometimes even the smallest children show rhythmic expression. Beppino, about four years old, beats time with the index finger of his right hand extended; the music (a song) has two alternating parts, one *legato*, and the other *staccato*. Beppino moves his hand with a smooth motion for the *legato* and with a jerky one for the *staccato*.

Four-year old Nannina, when following sweetly melodious music, gracefully spreads out her wide skirt and thows her head back smiling happily; then, at the sound of a military march she stiffens up

her body, assumes a grave expression and marches along with a firm step.

To intervene with an opportune lesson for teaching some step simply, or to improve some movement, gives the children pleasure.

In one class taken by Signorina Maccheroni, her small pupils Eriminia, Graziella, Peppinella, Sofia and Amelia embrace one another and their teacher enthusiastically after having learnt some movement in a rhythmic dance. Otello, Vincenzino, Teresa, having had their steps and gestures improved by a lesson, thank the

mistress who has helped them.

Sometimes the children listen to music whilst they are seated round the room watching their companions walking on the line; they often beat time with their hands, and reproduce it correctly. Occasionally a child specializes as what we call a conductor. Vincenzo, aged four and a half, used to stand with his two feet together in the middle of the ellipse drawn on the floor (the line) on which the children were walking, and beat time with his extended arm, bending his body at the correct angle at every beat. He lowered and raised his body in exact correspondence with the



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period between the beats, and assumed an expression perfectly in accord with that of the melody.

The exactitude with which the child succeeds in marking the tempo of the beat, without anyone having taught him the divisions of three-beat, four beat, etc., is a proof of the sense-education due to musical rhythm. At first the children follow the tempo without paying attention to the beat.

But there comes a moment in which, suddenly, they feel the beat, and then they mark it; that is, their movements correspond only to the first beat of the bar.

Marie Louise, little more than four, was walking to the sound of a march. Suddenly she cried out to the mistress- "Watch, see what I am doing". She was making a leaping step, and raising her arms gracefully at the first beat of each bar.

The study of the value of notes is made only by children of more advanced age. (For particulars of method see L. A. Benjamin, op. cit.). The interest in such a study will be associated with the fact that the children have already developed and analyzed in themselves the sense of rhythm.

### **MUSICAL REPRODUCTIONS**

Music heard and accompanied by rhythmic movements forms only one element of musical education, dealing with the succession of sounds in time and the expressive tone of the phrase.

There follows the study of melody and harmony, which lends itself to individual performances only when the child has at his disposal instruments adapted to him not only in their dimensions but, especially, in their simplicity. He must be left free to use them, hampered by too rigid a technique. Then, with short initiations or lessons, similar to those which our

mistresses give by our method to make useful the material in general, the child is rendered capable of carrying out his own performance, deriving from it, because of the simplicity of the musical instruments, a continually increasing interest. The musical performances of the children reach a surprising standard, when, united as a band, they give concerts, made possible by the fact that each one has made on his own instrument individual studies from which it is possible that true musical sentiment may be derived.

These results have been attained in England by Dolmetch, who, wishing to bring back into use the exquisite musical instruments of the past, now fallen into disuse owing to the predominance of the pianoforte, has had the brilliant idea of constructing simple instruments for children. The faith which Dolmetch has in the divine power of music, and also in the mind of the child, has led him to

formulate a method which corresponds in principle with mine. (Properly adapted material; short introductions having the sole purpose of putting the child in touch with the material; and then the child left at liberty to play on his instrument.).

In the magnificent English institution of Bedales, where there are held classes on the Montessori model, one may come across in the wood children playing the violin under a tree, or small groups trying to put together the tunes from some singular stringed instrument (between the simplified harp and the lyre), Again, we may hear delicate harmonies issuing from windows. Many of these children know nothing about theory of musical notes; they have never done rhythmic exercises. Musical development is fostered by the delightful performances which the old, impassioned Master breaks out into wherever he may happen to be - in rooms, in the woods or in the fields. And the children sit all round about him, stretched out on the grass, listening with rapt attention. In addition to that, the training is represented by the opportunity which the children have of taking an instrument when

the inspiration seizes them and trying to find some harmony which is rooted in their heart.

### MUSICAL READING AND WRITING

It is also possible to make a start with the writing of musical notes in the Children's House.

It is based upon sense exercises consisting of the musical sounds of the material of the bells, which, in the first exercises are paired, and afterwards are placed in graduated order. It is a great help to be able to 'handle' the notes (that is, the objects which produce them) all alike in every respect (except in sound) separating them, mixing them up, and putting them together again, because it represents the notes in material form, in the same way as for the other objects used in the education of the senses. The next thing to do is to attach its name to the note, as the children did in similar exercises. The names *do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si*, are incised on separate wooden discs (representing the signs of the notes) and the children place one at the foot of each bell, according to its sound. In this way the child, by the repetition of the exercise, learns with certainty the names

pertaining to the sounds. The discs which bear the names of the notes are thus not only signs to be arranged on the musical scale, but first of all are signs which signify a sound. When the children begin to study the notes on the scale, they will therefore do it as a written exercise based on musical facts already known.

In order that the child may be able to work alone, helped by his love of touching objects and moving them about, we have prepared for him a wooden board, on which are hollowed out circular spaces, corresponding to the places occupied by the notes *do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si, do*. Into these spaces there can be inserted the discs corresponding to the notes which bear the names of them written on the upper face. To get the placing correct there is a corresponding number (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) in every space and on the under face of every disc. In this way the child, by placing the objects according to the numbers, finds that he has set out on the scale all the notes of an octave.

For another exercise there exists another board of wood like the first but without the hollows and their numbers; accompanying this board there is a box of unnumbered discs, each of which has the name of a note inscribed on its upper face. The same name is repeated on several discs. The exercise tests the child's memory for the positions of the notes, and proceeds thus. The discs are put into position as they chance to come to hand, each in its place on the staff, but as they are made to rest on the face which





bears the written name, the black faces of the discs are thus exposed. Evidently many discs will find places on the same line or along the same space. When the notes are all placed they must be turned up without displacing them; the names can now be read, and reveal to the child any mistake which he has made.

The third piece of material is a double board on which the notes are placed in a rhombus. By detaching the two boards, the notes are disposed as in the treble and bass staves. Having learnt this the children are able to read little tunes and reproduce them on the bells. And, *vice versa*, they can write down little tunes after having played them from ear on the bells or on an instrument, and have thus found out the notes for

them.

This part of musical writing has a noteworthy development at a slightly more advanced age, that is, in the elementary classes. In the Montessori school at Barcelona the children have music copy-books almost like those for writing.

It is seen that the three exercise dealt with-rhythmic movement, performances on musical instruments, and the writing of music - may go on separately and independently. As an instance of this fact there may be cited not only the existence of independent exercises but also of complete methods which cover only one of these items. One example of the latter is the Dalcroze method

which develops only rhythmic gymnastics, and also that of Dolmetsch which cultivates the art of drawing harmonies from an instrument. The old methods of teaching music began with knowledge of the notes on the musical scale, independently of music. But ours is an example of what we call analysis, that is, separating out the parts of a very difficult and complex whole into exercises which may by themselves constitute interesting work.

Rhythm, harmony, writing and reading are joined together in the end, and form three interests, three stories of graded work and joyful experiences, which burst out into the full splendor of one single victory.



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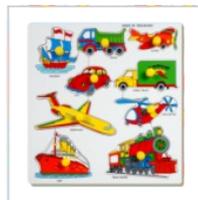
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# Sneaking Inside

**V. Anupama Eswar**

Mankind has devised ways to look beyond the stars.

But we will have to go an extra mile to look into children.

“Mummy...?”

“Hmm..?”

“Where does the sun go when it gets dark?” Niki wondered aloud.

“Go to sleep baby” mummy said while yawning.

Niki finds magic in many little things in her little world and she thinks of stories to explain why they happen. Niki thinks that god

was trying to wrap the sky around the world. But the world was so big that he lost the other end. No wonder the sky has no end to it! She had found the answer!

Niki waits to go to school the next day to tell ma'am about all her discoveries. Her teacher loves listening to Niki. She lets her learn anything that she finds interesting and also enjoys answering her endless stream of delightful questions. Niki loves going to school. Every morning, Niki is like a mug brewing with childish

excitement.

A caged bird does not sing. A locked mind does not wander. Montessori method does not squeeze a child's personality into predefined moulds. It allows the child's thoughts, ideas and potential to develop in complete freedom. Learning and discovering becomes a delightful journey for children in a Montessori environment, where they are loved as they are. Nobody tells them to color the apples red or the mangoes yellow. Nobody puts a



leash over a child's imagination or over their freedom to express, because a child is beyond definition. Niki goes to school each day with an urge to discover something new. The Montessori method being a true education system, would never stamp out this zest for learning in a child.

Nine year old Anush ran to Dad as soon as he returned from work, restless to tell him about his rather interesting day.

"I learnt about Pi today at school today, Dad. It is amazing. One day, I will grow up to be a mathematician like you!"

"That's wonderful. So what is the

value of Pi?"

"Well, the value is 3.141...and on. But the interesting part is how it came into being."

"How Pi came into being??"

"Yes dad. Have you never wondered why Pi should be equal to 3.14?? Why can't it be 2 or 4 or any of the many numbers?"

"Hmm... It's funny, I've never wondered why Pi is 3.14. We just had to remember what our teachers and textbooks told us."

"That sounds awfully boring. Let me show you!" said Anush, his face lighting up.

Anush pulled out a round plate from the kitchen, borrowed some thread and set to work. He marked the plate and pulled the thread all around the plate till he reached the mark again. Now, the length of the thread was equal to the circumference of the plate. He laid out the thread on the floor and placed the plate along its diameter on the thread. Apart from covering thrice the diameter of the plate, a little of the thread was left. Anush then tried doing the same with different sized plates. The same amount of thread was left for all sizes of circles and the remaining thread always measured the same. This meant that 3.14 was the relationship between diameter and circumference for any circle. So, to



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make it easier to say, they called this constant 'Pi'.

Dad was very impressed with Anush and was pleased at how deeply the little child could understand these concepts at school, owing to these simple and shrewd methods.

The Montessori system translates deep rooted concepts of science and mathematics into simple activities that the child can thoroughly understand. Knowing every concept to its depth fills the child with confidence and a true sense of satisfaction that comes from a thorough learning experience. A child must never be forced to accept a concept without an explanation or forced to remember things he does not understand. To not accept, to raise a million questions, to discuss and then finally grasp on to a new

thread of knowledge is the natural learning curve that the child climbs in a Montessori environment.

In fact, every detail must have surely been held under the lens and scrutinized before the Montessori Method has been crafted. How else can an education method cater to every need of a child so immaculately?

For instance, the idea of having mixed age groups in an environment might be rather strange to a few. But all doubts are sure to melt away when one sees young children discussing and learning from the older ones, picking up their skills and aspiring to be like them. The older ones understand their importance and immediately take up responsibility. Nobody tells the older children to look after the younger ones, or admonishes the younger ones or

force them to listen to the older ones. A nurturing ecosystem naturally falls into place in a Montessori environment. We walk into the environment each day and watch the children as they help the younger ones to tie their shoelaces, to spread out their lunch, help each other with new activities or comfort each other on a rough day.

"You're being watched!" The little ones mirror everything – the way you carry yourself, the way you laugh, the way you eat, the tone of your voice as you speak, whether or not you cover your mouth when you cough.... The list is endless. Children are the keenest observers. Sometimes, I run into funny encounters, like seeing a child standing with her hands on her hips the way I do. I remember this particular boy who would clap his hands and laugh. It always



confused me because it seemed so familiar... until I realized it was an involuntary habit of mine!

DrMontessori says – “ Do not tell them how to do it. Show them how to do it and do not say a word. If you tell them, they will watch your lips move. If you show them, they will want to do it themselves”

Well, the inference is that one does not have to tell a child how to behave or force them to behave in a certain way. All one needs to do is consciously behave right, and children soak it like sponge. This is the reason why a Montessori trained adult goes through

rigorous training programs before taking responsibility of an environment. While presenting an activity to a child, the adult slowly opens the mat, careful to keep the sides even while folding so that the child respects his/her place of work. The adult walks and talks softly, so that the child understands that the class must not be disturbed. The adult pours out water gently stopping before the brim, so that the child replicates these refined movements and adopts these skills in daily life. These skills cannot be preached, but can only be taught and absorbed in a well-designed

environment.

The Montessori spirit echoes in every aspect of its implementation. It absolutely understands and treasures each child. It is crafted tenderly and it holds the child lightly, like a warm hug - no pressure, just love and warmth.

I would like to quote a Japanese Educator, Tsunesuburo Makiguchi, who is in complete concurrence with Dr. Maria Montessori's philosophy.

“The aim of education is not to transfer knowledge; it is to guide the learning process, to equip the learner with the methods of research. It is not the piecemeal merchandising of information; it is to enable the acquisition of the methods for learning on one's own; it is the provision of keys to unlock the vault of knowledge”.



# Bridging Gaps

**P. Anantha Padmanabha**

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This is in a Montessori House of children, on a routine working day. "A child is absent." The Directress receives the phone call from his parent that the child is unwell and so will be absent for two days. The Directress is secretly happy over this news, since the child is a bit of a trouble maker and disturbs the environment often.

On another occasion, an adult in a House of Children calls out loudly to seek attention of a child working on a mat in a far corner of the room, quite a distance away from where she is sitting, in an attempt to correct an erroneous action, he is carrying out.

Why and when I wonder did this complacency set in while practising the basics tenements of training? What happened to all that they learnt at the training courses?

These are the people who have passed out from IMTC, writing papers on psychology. This was not the state of the mind when they passed out of training.

I wonder what happened to all the love they wanted to shower on the children? This is where I get perplexed, I wonder what happened to the realization of thought that they had.



When students join IMTCs, they have very little knowledge of Montessori and it is the Training courses which transform individuals through rigorous training at technical, intellectual and emotional levels. They also get to experience a new method of education and learn a different method of dealing with children.

#### Realization :

Students realize that it is not necessary to shout at children to get things done. It is also not necessary to pounce on a child to correct the mistakes. There are better techniques to help the child to correct his/her mistakes on their own. At this stage we need to

help the child to build a personality. So, a good combination of spiritual and intellectual training helps us to realize our errors, thus committing for betterment of children. Students work very hard to reach this point.

#### Interpretation :

However, when I look at the same people who completed the course, I find in their own House of Children, their practice is different. The commitment they made at the end of training courses, towards making a difference in a child's life....where is the ideology now? It makes me wonder - was that the truth or is this the truth?

Is there a gap between Training Courses and Houses of Children....?

There are many reasons for such gaps. I cannot point out to a single reason.

Many Montessorians believe that these difficulties are due to the ideal conditions at training courses and reality of working with children.

In this world, every training course happens under ideal conditions. In Medical field, a student cuts open a 'dead' body to study the various parts of the body and not a 'live' one. Even in Engineering courses, students are given 'dummy' materials and asked to make



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models. Likewise, we do not use children for our training. Instead, adults enact as children to create situations for the students to deal with and learn from. Such 'ideal' conditions facilitate learning, so that challenges during concept creation is reduced. Once the concept or philosophy is mastered, they are put to application, which demands adaptation of concept in 'real' life.

Even in life isn't it true? Relationships are taught at times. Coping and managing is mastered on the way. That's exactly what we have to do.

Personally, having seen both sides, I am aware that there exists a gap between the training courses and House of Children and also that it has to exist. I also understand 'where and why' the gaps are bound to be.

So, lets not blame it on the on the gap between training courses and the reality. Is it so challenging to follow the Montessori principles in Practice ? So How do we bridge this gap in the best interests of Children ?

Firstly, let us understand what are the probable reasons for this gap to exist.

To begin with, I would like to bring to notice the lack of Physical fitness. People as young as in their 30's, are unable sit down on the floor and get up effortlessly. In case they sit down, they struggle to lift their own body to get up with ease, let alone with grace! I am not talking about people being obese or thin. The point is fitness. In an environment of freedom for children, it is mandatory for an adult to sit down and stand up many times, swiftly, effortlessly,

without even noticing / feeling it.

State of mind is another major factor when it comes to a person's fitness. When mind is agitated/lacks clarity, one cannot operate in a balanced state or with efficiency. Only when the mind is calm and in balance can the intellect function normally.

Finally, it is not necessary to constantly acquire theoretical knowledge. The amount of learning which a student acquires during the training courses is good enough to help children. Couple it with all the experiences of implementing concepts in a House of Children, it will be more than adequate.

It is time that we pause and think which of these reasons or combination of reasons discussed above is deterring us from

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implementing what we once firmly believed as the ultimate truth? Only when we identify the cause, can we work towards achieving the right balance and alignment of knowledge, intellect, body and mind to work in unison to create wonders at House of Children.

All our learning/ knowledge has to finally get transacted through instruments called body and mind. Any amount of inspiring talks/discourses can only ignite the thought process or inspire one's mind. But implementation of ideas/concepts demands a 'harmony' between body and mind,



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called being in a state of 'YOGA', which according to ancient texts, means 'Union'. Here I am referring to yoga, as a unity of mind and body, as a basic and simple understanding. These aspects become critical when one is working with Children.

What has this unity of mind and body got to do with the gap we are referring to between understanding and implementation? Yes, there is a

link. In life, when one has understood and accepted any idea, implementation can happen only if the body and mind of the person are in unison. This unity is possible only if each of them are maintained at their best. So, to implement any concept in all its spirit and intensity, all that one requires to do is to regularly maintain a fit/healthy body and mind combination, so that much of what is implemented is in the best interests of the child.



# List of IMC Recognised Montessori Houses of Children

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2. Aim Montessori, Uttarahalli, Bangalore.
3. Akshara Montessori House of Children, Ulsoor, Bangalore.
4. Ankita Montessori House of Children, Tumkur.
5. Anurag Montessori House of Children, Jayanagar, Bangalore.
6. Anveshana - Montessori House of Children, Banaswadi, Bangalore.
7. Arunodoy Montessori House of Children, Koramangala, Bangalore.
8. Atreya Vidyaniketan, Kurubarahalli, Bangalore.
9. Blues and Pinks Montessori House of Children, V.V. Puram, Bangalore.
10. Bright Beginnings, Nellurhalli Main Road, Bangalore.
11. Chimes Montessori, Basavanagudi, Bangalore.
12. Child-Care Montessori, Koramangala, Bangalore.
13. Dew Drops Montessori, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Bangalore.
14. Discover Montessori, J.P. Nagar 8th Phase, Bangalore.
15. Dishaa Montessori House of Children, HSR Layout, Bangalore.
16. Divine Education Society, Yeshwanthpur, Bangalore.
17. Floretz Academy Pvt Ltd, HSR Layout, Bangalore.
18. Floretz Academy Pvt Ltd, Off Sarjapur Road, Bangalore
19. Fleurдалиs Montessori House of Children, Sahakarnagar, Bangalore.
20. Growing Wonders, Jayanagar, Bangalore.
21. Golden Arch Montessori House of Children, HSR Layout, Bangalore.
22. Growing Wonders Montessori House of Children, Kempegowda Nagar, Bangalore.
23. Gyan Montessori House of Children, HSR Layout, Bangalore.
24. Head Start Montessori House of Children, Koramangala, Bangalore.
25. Hymamshu Jyothi Kala Peetha, Malleswaram, Bangalore.
26. Incarnations Montessori, Jayanagar, Bangalore.
27. Jackfruit House - Montessori House of Children, Malleswaram, Bangalore.
28. Junior Genius Montessori House of Children, Shimoga.
29. Mystique Montessori House of Children, Yelahanka New Town, Bangalore.
30. Prayag Montessori, Padmanabhanagar, Bangalore.
31. Prayag Montessori, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore.
32. Prerana Montessori House of Children, Indira Nagar, Bangalore.
33. Prerana Montessori House of Children, BEML Layout, Bangalore.
34. Parijatha Montessori House of Children, J.P. Nagar, Bangalore.
35. Romasha Vidyaniketan, Okalipuram, Bangalore.
36. Seven Senses Montessori House of Children, Indira Nagar, Bangalore.
37. Shishu Griha Montessori and High School, New Thippasandra, Bangalore.
38. Shraddha Montessori House of Children, Giri Nagar, Bangalore.
39. Siksha Montessori House of Children, BTM II stage, Bangalore.
40. Soundarya Central School, Sidedahalli, Bangalore.
41. Touch Internationale Montessori House of Children, Kalyan Nagar, Bangalore.
42. Vistas Montessori, Bannerghatta Road, Bangalore.

## Tamilnadu

1. Bodhana Montessori House of Children, Velachery, Chennai.
2. Vruksha Montessori House of Children, Alwarpet, Chennai.
3. Learning Tree Montessori School, Shastri nagar, Adyar, Chennai.
4. Sharanalaya Montessori School, Nungambakkam, Chennai.
5. Al- Qamar Academy, Kottivakkam, Chennai.
6. Learning Tree Montessori School, Venkateshwara Nagar, Adyar, Chennai.
7. Sprouts Montessori House of Children, Mylapore, Chennai.
8. Aalam Montessori House of Children, Sowripalayam, Coimbatore.

# Dr. Montessori's Thoughts on Independence

We believe that children are like puppets. We wash them and feed them as if they were dolls. We never stop to think that a child who does not act does not know how to act, but he should act, and nature has given him all the means for learning how to act. Our primary duty toward him is to assist him to perform useful acts. A mother who feeds her child without taking the least effort to teach him how to hold a spoon or to find his mouth, or who, when she is herself eating, does not at least invite him to watch how it is done, is not a good mother. She offends her son's human dignity by treating him as a puppet, whereas he is by nature a man that has been entrusted to her care.

Not only do children learn to do things for themselves through independence, but they also learn that they are capable. If toddlers aren't given the opportunity to try, do and sometimes fail at their own tasks they risk losing the desire to do things for themselves. Parents and teachers who help and do things for their children all the time often claim to do so out of love. These children quickly pick up on this message, and soon believe "If you love me you will serve me!"

We wait upon our children; and to serve them in this way is not less fatal than to do something that would tend to suffocate their own useful, spontaneous activities.

One of the most well known phrases in the Montessori world is "Help me do it myself". It is well known because it really summarizes the Montessori philosophy in its very essence. While Montessori schools are known for their academics, many people quickly discover the push for independence. Children in Montessori classrooms are given the space to be independent and the tools that allow them to do so successfully. With child sized materials and furniture, the Prepared Environment in the classroom encourages independence.

Everyone knows that it requires much more time and patience to teach a child how to eat, wash, and clothe himself than it does to feed, bathe and clothes him by oneself. The one who does the former is an educator; the latter performs the lower office of a servant.



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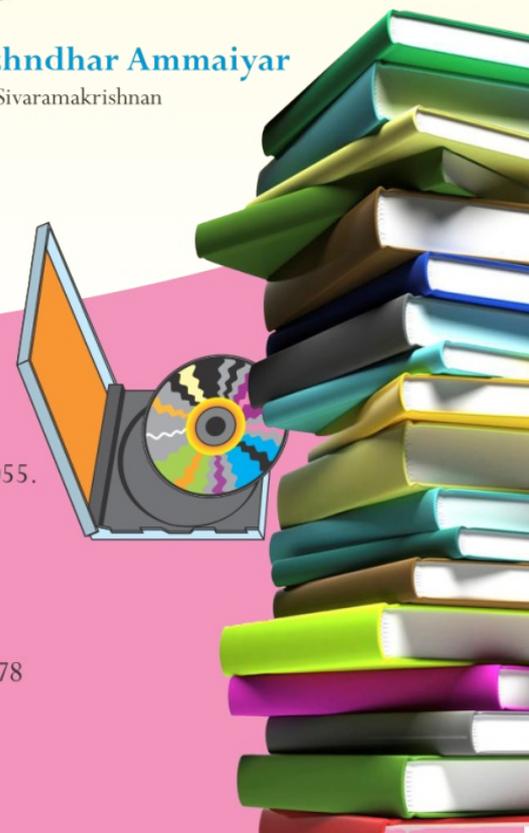
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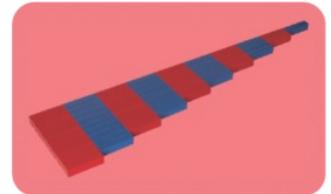
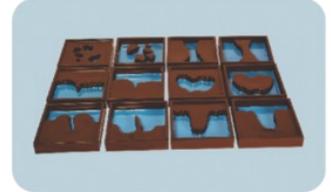
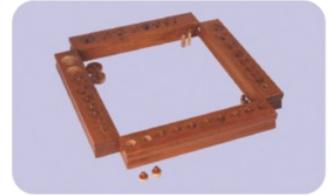
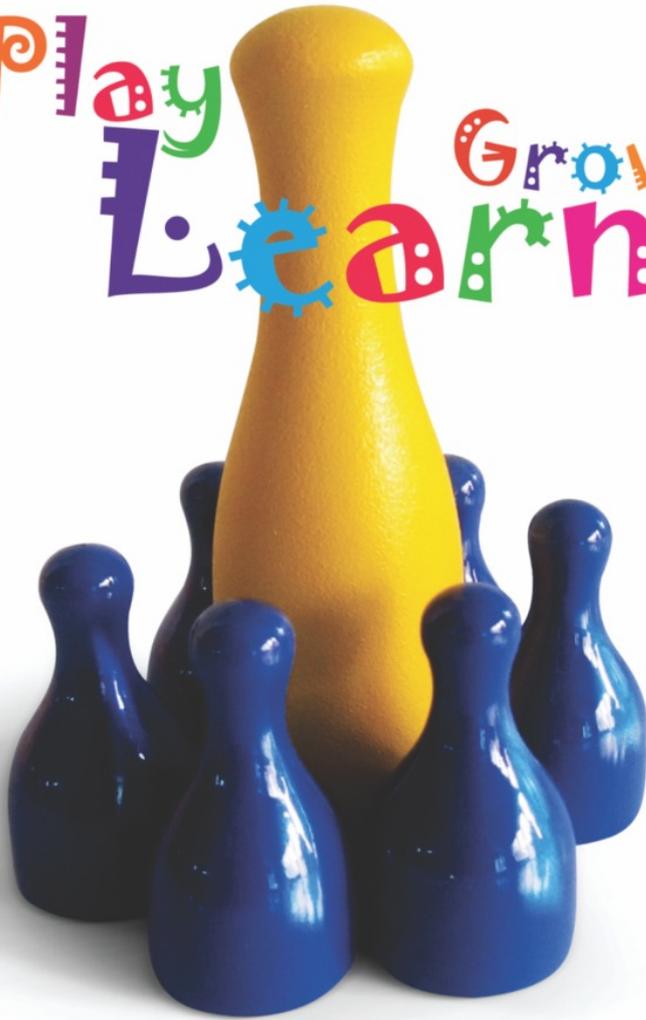
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