



The Montessori OBSERVER

Home-School
Relations

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Participants in the IMS "Creating the New Education" workshop in Pasadena, CA (February 21-22, 2009)

IMS Workshop Presents Montessori Technology in Pasadena, CA

On February 21-22, 2009, IMS conducted its latest "Creating the New Education" workshop in Pasadena, California. Attending were parents, teachers, and other educators from California, as well as Nevada and Idaho. Several educators were also present from nearby Mexico. **Suja Saikumar** (IMS student, Arcadia, CA) was the primary local coordinator for this event.

At the workshop, participants showed particular interest in learning how to use the unique IMS technology for resolving social conflict and dependency issues with children. Presenting the technology, **Lee Havis** emphasized the importance of following the protocol *least amount of adult involvement* in these situations. He said, "Approach social conflict situations only to protect the children from physical harm. Otherwise, stay well back, using only brief, light polishing eye contact lessons that conform quite closely with the protocols *basis of interest* and *well-being of the total environment*."

The Pasadena workshop incorporated a new slide show presentation that included video clips of Montessori teaching with children at the New Way Montessori School in Meridian, ID. The workshop also included role-play drama for the participants to act out imaginary solutions for resolving misbehavior, introducing materials, and conducting nomenclature lessons with children.

Lee said "I think the role-play drama is especially useful for discovering hidden errors in the personality that don't so easily emerge by just watching others or listening to discussion on the subject. Nevertheless, I believe the combination of lecture, video

clips, discussion, and role-play drama work together very well to achieve a successful learning experience for all."

The next IMS workshop is planned for Edmonton, AB, Canada on April 18-19, 2009. Lee indicated it will use the same essential format and presentation as in Pasadena. He will also be presenting the IMS technology at an international Montessori convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on the weekend of May 30-31, 2009.

Contact IMS for more information and to register: tel. 301-589-1127 www.imsmontessori.org. havis@imsmontessori.org

New IMS Montessori School in Karachi, Pakistan

In 2008, the *Al-Sani Institute* became affiliated with IMS as a recognized Montessori school in Karachi, Pakistan. **Abdul Rehman Sani** is principal and founder of this school, which also provides English Language instruction as well as Montessori teacher education.

An English teacher by profession, Abdul established the Institute originally to improve professional and educational opportunities for children and youth in his country through better English language skills. However, in 2007, he became aware of the International Montessori Society (IMS) and its new breakthrough technology for Montessori teaching. He then joined the IMS-sponsored "Character Teaching" (CT) project as a consultation board member. In 2008, Abdul began conducting Montessori teacher training as well.

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International Montessori Convention Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

On May 30-31, 2009, IMS will be participating in an International Montessori Convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This event, sponsored by *Success Marks*, an affiliate of *Mayang Institute* in Malaysia, intends to bring together some 400 individuals and organizations around the world to share and learn about the latest technological innovations and developments in Montessori education. The convention theme is "Montessori leading the way for reinventing teaching and learning."

At the convention, **Lee Havis**, IMS executive director, will present the unique technology of Montessori teaching, which he first consolidated in 2003. This presentation will include all the essential content of the technology, although in a somewhat abbreviated version from other IMS workshops. It will also include a slide-show with video clips of actual Montessori teaching with the technology.

Other Montessori educators will also be speaking at the convention on such topics as improving the quality and opportunity for Montessori education in Malaysia.

For further information, call Ms. Kelly Ng at 034270 6677 or 012-323 1079 or e-mail to info@montessoriconventions.com or visit the website: www.montessoriconventions.com.

Montessori Workshops

Technology of Montessori Teaching
for the Scientific Approach to Normal Being

Edmonton, AB, Canada

April 18-19, 2009

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

May 30-31, 2009

The IMS workshop features Lee Havis, IMS executive director, presenting the unique 2003 technology for conducting Montessori teaching with children to control the environment, not the child. This is the scientific approach that brings about the child's true nature as discovered by Dr. Montessori in 1907.

To register and for further information, Contact: IMS, tel. 301-589-1127; havis@imsmontessori.org



Home-School Relations

by Lee Havis

"Much attention...is paid to the almost unattainable ideal of family and school in the education of children...In the Children's Houses we see for the first time the possibility of effectively establishing this ideal."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.336

In a Montessori school situation, parents and teachers must cooperate quite closely in following laws of nature to effectively support true natural development in children. Dr. Montessori sought to assure this close cooperation in her first Children's House in 1907 by establishing strong, supportive home-school relations. Today, this same type of home-school cooperation remains just as important for any Montessori school seeking to bring about true natural being in children to reveal such normal outward qualities as spontaneous self-discipline, love of order, and complete harmony with others.

In conventional education, home-school relations are also often quite important as well; however, now, the purpose is not to free the child's true nature. Rather, the aim is to unify the power of strong adults to mold children to fit the needs and interests of the dominant adult personality or culture.

Strong against Weak

"Often the accord between the family and the school resolves itself into an alliance of the strong against the weak, whose timid and uncertain voices never seem to find an audience."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Child in the Family*, p.3

Conventional schooling tends to direct all adult activity to build up and reinforce the widely-held concept of children as weak, dependent and unguided from within. Here, home-school relations bring parents and teachers together to force children to follow a predetermined curriculum and obey arbitrary teacher control over all their learning activities. This repressive home-school alliance projects an idea of normal human nature that is sustained and reinforced through a collective subconscious in society.

Collective Subconscious

"...a kind of 'subconscious organization of defence' is achieved by all parents in the world. All lean upon each other. The whole of society forms a collective subconscious wherein all act in complete agreement when they remove and suppress the child."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Formation of Man*, p 68

In a conventional Montessori school, home-school relations aim for well-behaved and obedient children who appear normal in the surrounding culture. In fact, this "normality" reflects the ordinary weakened state

of being dependent on the guidance and control of others. Parents and teachers tend to easily accept this restricted model of normal human nature because it reflects the widespread collective subconscious of conventional truth and reality. By contrast, true natural Montessori schools seek a unity of conception centered on the child as a pure spiritual being having its own perfect inner guidance for self-directed development.

Unity of Conception

"The human personality, or the care of it, is broken up. On the one side is the home...on the other side is the school...There is no unity of conception."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.13

Creating the unique Montessori environment for true natural development is a precise and exacting scientific process of controlling the environment, not the child. In practice, it involves all adults in the environment working together to remove detrimental influences in the adult personality, other children, and physical objects around each child in question. This unity of conception, therefore, logically requires parents to cooperate in this effort at home as well. Otherwise, the normalizing conditions at school will only bring about temporary improvements in the children's outward behavior.

Temporary Improvements

"...when children, after being cured or improved, go back to live in conditions...which were the original causes of their deviations from normality, they lack the power, or the opportunities, needed to remain normalized, and their improvement is purely temporary."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.326

Young children need a stable, continuing Montessori environment to maintain their state of true normal development. If parents don't provide this same normalizing condition at home, then their children will only achieve partial or temporary improvement at best. Dr. Montessori addressed this problem in her first Children's House by setting up home-school relations that require parents to fully cooperate with the school's commitment to following laws of nature with children.

Children's House

"The parents know that the Children's House belongs to them. They can go there at any hour of the day to watch, to admire and to meditate."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Discovery of the Child*, p 336

The first Children's House was located in the same housing unit as where the participating families live, allowing parents to easily visit and observe their children at any time during the day. Beyond that, parents were required to meet with the classroom teacher on a regular basis to obtain advice and consultation to improve their own interaction with children at home. At times, these consultations would necessarily involve analyzing and correcting faults and defects in the parents' behavior towards children.

Faults and Defects

"The hope of altering adults is therefore vain...we can easily hurt or humiliate them; make them conscious of their defects. But the faults remain, for they are engrained and unchangeable."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 5
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**Look for the
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featuring
*Using Technology
with Adults*

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Lee Havis, Executive Director

The Montessori Observer is mailed four times each year, in March, May, September and November, to Society members throughout the world. The purpose is to provide news and information about the Society's work in Montessori education, and to extend awareness of Montessori principles throughout the world.

INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY

The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, USA. The Society's purpose is to support the effective application of Montessori principles throughout the world.

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Subscription to this Observer publication may be obtained by requesting Society membership, which is open to all individuals for a \$30 annual fee. Associate schools, \$35 annual fee. Society members also receive a subscription to the Montessori News and other membership benefits.

IMS ON THE INTERNET

An on-line IMS discussion group, intmonsoc (International Montessori Society) is available for anyone to join at no charge.

To subscribe to this list, send an email to - intmonsoc-subscribe@yahoo.com, and then follow instructions to request placement on the list.

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Moment of Peril

by Lee Havis

Touching

The teacher is trying to employ the technique *distraction* with 3-year-old Tara to get her attention away from wild fantasy activity. However, so far, her efforts at touching Tara to get her attention have only provoked her shouting “no” in a power struggle over an object in Tara’s hand. (See *Observer*, November, 2008). In this *moment of peril*, the teacher’s personality of abandonment-negativity is clearly the primary detrimental influence in the environment.

The immediate problem is to resolve the tug of war power struggle over the object in Tara’s hand. This happens due to the teacher’s holding the object *after* getting Tara’s attention. The solution is for the teacher to release her hold of the object as soon as the child shouts “no”. If the mishandling continues, the teacher can always approach and touch the object again as often as necessary, applying the techniques *repetition* and *patient waiting*.

If releasing the object to Tara is not wise for some reason, the teacher can give her a full-body embrace (fbc). This involves the teacher firmly embracing Tara around the torso, drawing her close in a calm, friendly manner to talk about the particular object in question, and holding it by using the technique, *cooperative touching*.

The teacher makes another mistake by allowing Tara to slip too far into fantasy. This happens because she gets over-involved with other children, violating the key protocols, *well-being of the total environment*, and *least amount of adult involvement*. Resolving this issue, she must approach and engage with Tara at the first sign of any loud talking or quick movements. Then, she can easily resolve the misbehavior through light polishing, using such techniques as *eye contact*, *proximity*, *clear direction*, and *repetition*. In this way, Tara will soon return to present-moment reality, and eventually remain in this state in a more regular and consistent manner.

Working with Adults

Rebecca is well-versed in the academics of Montessori teaching. However, her controlling, perfectionist personality brings about many errors of control and abandonment with children. Her controlling personality also comes out as conflict, arguments, and harsh disagreements with parents and other staff members. The co-teacher, Sarah, has an instinctive ease with children; however, she makes frequent technical mistakes due to her lack of experience with Montessori teaching. In the classroom, Rebecca and Sarah

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Home-School Relations

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Controlling the adult personality is the most difficult part of Montessori teaching, sometimes requiring rather harsh and persistent accusations and criticism from others. Fortunately, the parents’ instinctive love for their children leads them to honestly address their various faults and defects with considerable courage and positive energy. In fact, all parents have a strong natural tendency to progress beyond their current level of knowledge and understanding to improve the care and education of their children.

Tendency to Progress

“Adults like children, seem to differ from one another mainly in their defects, but hidden in their hearts, there is something deep, common to all...a continuous tendency to progress.”

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 209

Montessori teaching to control the adult personality involves a deep inner preparation of the spirit, a process of self-examination that may involve your facing and resolving deep emotional scars and hidden psychological wounds from early childhood conditioning. Unaddressed, these inner obstacles project unconsciously on children as various types of harmful abandonment and negativity, bringing about serious patterns of misbehavior in children. If parents don’t resolve these issues through suitable consultation with others, they will emerge as undermining attitudes the school will need to remedy through less cooperative means than discussion and consultation.

Undermining Attitudes

“If the child shows through its conversation that the educational work of the school is being undermined by the attitude taken in his home, he will be sent back to his parents...”

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Montessori Method*, p.61

Parents who refuse to confront or address their detrimental personality tendencies with children present a serious threat to the school’s integrity of operation for the well-being of all the children involved. Schools must, therefore, deal with these undermining attitudes by removing the uncooperative families, if necessary, until the issue is finally resolved at home. Once a respectful type of home-school relationship is established, parents can then become prepared to cooperate with Montessori teaching even beyond their immediate home and school situation.

Prepared to Cooperate

“After three years...the mothers...will be excellently prepared to cooperate in the work of educating their children.”

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.336

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Reflections

By Valerie James

Valerie reports her experience in the role of substitute for Wendy Lieberman at New Way Montessori School (Meridian, ID)

Spinning

The 4 children there were calm and mostly engaged in work when Wendy left. So, I observed from the side of the classroom, concentrating on being available to receive any eye contact that came my way. Within 5 minutes of Wendy departing, Greg, who had been walking on the line, stepped into the middle of the oval and started spinning around with his arms out...jumping in front of other children. I used *proximity*, he looked at me and I told him to pick a spot to turn around in.

...Every time I approached was this same screaming of “go away” “get out of my way”....I backed away, maintaining eye contact, and Greg started spinning wildly again. I approached, got peripheral eye contact from him, so I paused and said “let’s look at what’s on your daily log”. ...Greg...came over and shouted that he wasn’t going to do it, I asked what work he would like to do. He shouted “I’m not”, and went back over to spin, all of this time had been about 15-20 minutes.

I continued in the previous manner — trying to trust the technology would reach him. What I found helpful was to think about remaining calm, ordering the environment, and just stayed focused on the IMS technology of *eye contact*, *proximity*, *clear direction*, and ensuring I was moving slowly...When I used *proximity*, it was usually only one or two steps in his direction, but his responses got more and more extreme to

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Messages to IMS

March, 2009
Arcadia, CA

IMS List,

The Pasadena workshop has cleared so many of my confusions and Lee showed the proper use of proximity and eye contact and other techniques for various scenarios. I’ve been able to apply them on my day to day dealings with my 4 year old.

Usually, during the night before bed, I tell him to put his toys away which he doesn’t. He used to bring books and tell me to read instead of putting stuff away. I used to try to avoid chaos at night time so I never followed through with the cleaning. Now, the first night of the workshop, I went and tried out the proximity and light polishing technique by touching the book that he intended to pick and told him, “Come let me me show you something.”. He went with me and I pointed to his toys and asked him if he was done playing. He said yes so I told him to put it away and moved away to give him a chance. He started to put them away and everything went smoothly.

The weeks after the workshop till today thanks to Lee, I’m more confident in the techniques and I’m getting results out of it. He puts away everything just once after I point out which never happened before. I only hope that the time will come soon when he does that himself without my pointing out!!

Suja Saikumar
(participant, IMS Pasadena workshop)

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Home-School Relations

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Parents participating in a well-established home-school relationship learn valuable Montessori teaching skills they can apply at home and even more widely with others in society. For example, after leaving the school, they can continue supporting their children's true natural development until adulthood. Then, they will participate in adult society as responsible, self-directed individuals who contribute significantly to the overall well-being and improvement of society.

Improvement of Society

"Parents...are the only ones who can save their children by uniting and working together for the improvement of society."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Child in the Family*, p.215

Effective home-school relations help prepare parents to contribute skill and knowledge for the long-lasting positive improvement of society. In time, parents can serve as excellent ambassadors for the whole new idea of what is the truly normal human personality. In this way, providing effective home-school relations is a major step to bringing about the new reality of true normal being in the world.

Moment of Peril

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try to observe each other and point out mistakes to improve their performance as much as possible. However, Rebecca's rigid, domineering tone triggers Sarah to react in a nervous, confused manner. For her part, Sarah lacks confidence and experience to point out Rebecca's mistakes in a clear and understandable manner. In this situation, the adult personality remains essentially an unresolved obstacle in the environment. What to do? Answer in *Observer*, May, 2009

Montessori in Pakistan

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As CT board member, Abdul met with **Mustafa Kamal**, assistant to the Mayor of Karachi, to discuss providing support and cooperation with the project's operation. Later, he hopes to meet directly with the mayor to obtain official cooperation as well. The CT project is designed to help overcome widespread cultural poverty by creating new conditions for normal character development in children. Using the IMS technology is critical in training teachers for this creative activity.

For further information, contact: Abdul Rehman Sani, Al-Sani Institute, M-3 Data Center Plot #125-U, P.E.C.H.S. Block-2, Main Khalid Bin Waleed, Karachi, Pakistan, Tel. 021-4550602, alsani_ins@hotmail.com

Reflections

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what I thought was fairly light polishing – running, screaming, shouting....

...He threw himself on the floor and was still for awhile. After a few minutes, he got up and started spinning in one spot inside the oval, very slowly with his arms at his side for a while. A few minutes later, he came over to where I was sitting and told me the date on the calendar was wrong, so I gave him the correct number and the tape. He fixed it and then went over to read a book. It was as if the previous ½ hour had never taken place...

In the past, I might have gotten nervous – that things weren't moving swiftly enough, that there wasn't enough response to the techniques, and then started controlling the child...I'm overall satisfied with the results, and have gone over the scenario and don't see anything I would change.

January Consultation at New Way Montessori

From January 12-23, 2009, **Lee Havis** conducted his most recent consultation at *New Way Montessori School* (Meridian, ID). This time, his field-testing of the IMS technology emphasized various aspects of controlling the adult personality by following such key protocols, *well-being of total environment* and *least amount of adult involvement*.

At the January consultation, Lee showed how to avoid power struggles by light polishing in social conflict situations. For example, rather than quickly intervening with children in these circumstances, Lee demonstrated how to quietly observe it to assure no physical harm will occur. He said, "It's usually better to allow children to resolve these types of vigorous social interactions on their own so they can learn independence and self-control with others. If you intervene too much, you risk projecting the adult personality as a negative, destructive influence in the situation."

Lee also demonstrated the importance of patient, non-reactive behavior, especially in circumstances of social disorder. He said, "Acting calm and relaxed at these times supports a similar attitude and behavior in children as well."

Marketplace Positions and Placements

Montessori teachers: Palm Harbor Montessori Academy (Palm Harbor, FL). 250 students, ages 1-year to 8th grade. Competitive salary with benefits. Fax or e-mail resume and letter of interest: Christine Varkas, Palm Harbor Montessori Academy, 2355 Nebraska Ave., Palm Harbor, FL 34683, (727) 786-1854; Fax: (727) 786-5160; www.floridamontessori.com, cvarkas@gate.net