



The Montessori OBSERVER

Feelings

Published by the International Montessori Society • 912 Thayer Ave. • Silver Spring, Md. 20910 • Phone (301) 589-1127

Nebraska Approves IMS Training Course

The State of Nebraska has now formally recognized the Society's independent study course, primary level (2-6), as meeting that state's qualifications for the position of director, teacher and assistant teacher. See "Letters to IMS" on page 3. **Deb Dawson**, Licensing Consultant for the Department of Social Services, also confirmed that such recognition would extend likewise to the Department's new proposed qualifications for preschool staff in that state should they be promulgated.

Nebraska now joins other states, such as California, Nevada, Kansas, Indiana and Georgia, which have given their formal approval to the Society's basic 22 lesson course for Montessori teacher certification. Similar recognition is also pending in many other states revealing a considerable growing acceptance of the Society's unique spiritual preparation for Montessori teaching. Such a spiritual preparation, viewing Montessori as a commitment within oneself, is in sharp contrast with the popular viewpoint of Montessori training which is generally defined by various standardized presentations of certain materials, various vague conceptions about the child and specified academic routine and content

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 1

The Real Materials

"Virtues are the necessary means . . . by which we attain the truth."

Maria Montessori
from *Spontaneous Activity*
in *Education*, p. 136

Popular opinion in society generally views "Montessori" as a compilation of concepts and a physical environment associated with certain specialized materials and apparatus. Such materials therefore assume almost magical powers which somehow appear to engender the phenomena of deep concentration and "normalization" in children. Accordingly, conventional Montessori teacher training tends to place a foremost emphasis on the mechanical techniques of handling and presenting various physical objects. Such a conventional training program would be considered inferior, inadequate or substandard unless it contained a certain prescribed number of hours of exposure to the

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3



Creative movement at the Calumet Region Montessori School (Hobart, Indiana), directed by Laura Elmore.

Creative Arts in Hobart, Indiana

The Calumet Region Montessori School in Hobart, Indiana is presently offering a special one-year creative arts program under the direction of "artist in residence" **Laura Elmore**. This program, funded by a \$5,000 grant from the Indiana Arts Commission, enables children at the school to participate creatively in a wide range of organized art activities such as dance, movement, weaving and photography.

Ms. Elmore, an accomplished dancer and former director of a dance troupe in Indianapolis, prepares her creative arts sessions with the intention to stimulate originality and let the children develop their natural abilities at their own pace. She states that "they gain a self-awareness, a confidence that they can move . . . I do not correct mistakes . . . Rather than praise individuals, I encourage independent thinking."

The Calumet Region school has an enrollment of 174 children aged 14 months to 12 years and is in its 20th year of operation. In addition to Ms. Elmore's creative arts

sessions with the children, Latin and cooking are featured aspects of the elementary program with Physical Education and swimming for children at all age levels.

This IMS member school has experienced a considerable expansion of its program in recent years, growing from 70 children in 1981 to its current enrollment of 174. Plans for the fall of 1985 include a new parent-infant program for children ages 6 months to 14 months in which parents will meet together for 1½ hours one day per week.

Patricia A. Meyer, director of the school since 1981, wrote the proposal for funding of the present creative arts program and supervises the overall school operation which functions with a budget of \$125,000. Ms. Meyer holds a master's degree in school administration and is an active community leader in the areas of mental health and special education.

For further information, contact: Patricia A. Meyer, Calumet Region Montessori School, 2109 East 57th Ave., Hobart, Indiana 46342, Tel. (219) 942-9410.

Feelings

by Lee Havis

"children . . . feel in themselves a true delight in activity, a real joy in hard work, in finding the beauty of work, in comforting the unhappy, and helping the weak."

Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 241

The naturally joyfull feelings of children reach their full expression in the "normalizing" environment of complete commitment to the three fundamental Montessori principles: (1) "Observation"; (2) "Individual Liberty"; (3) "Preparation of the Environment". The "normalized" child thus reveals a complete integration and harmony with its environment whereby love, joy and sympathy with others spontaneously emerges as a unity of spirit with all being.

Expressions of anger, fear and sadness, so commonly evident with children in ordinary everyday life, reveal the depth of emotional challenge, struggle and opposition which is necessarily entailed in the emergence of the "normalized" child in the world. The child's struggle against a tyrannical adult society generally implicates the formation of feelings of revulsion, resignation and fear which customarily arise within the child from its earliest infancy.

Revulsion

"if—from early infancy—the child feels a revulsion for the surroundings on which he depends for his development, this must necessarily prevent him from growing up normally."

Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 77

The fragile, dependent newborn infant generally emerges into an unnatural environment considerably less peaceful than that which was experienced prior to birth. Hospitals and medical procedures, responding primarily to the comfort and convenience of the mother, tend to subject the helpless infant to painful, shocking treatment; e.g., induced labor, scheduled feeding, forced separation from mother, bright lights, etc. The infant's first painful cries of confusion, fear, despair and shock are routinely considered as "normal" and given little, if any, attention or genuine regard as to their later effects on behavior and mental development. The pattern of such callous insensitivity and repression of a child's feelings are typically perpetuated by parents who simply follow the popular social customs and practices in this regard. The child's dominant "reality" thus becomes an artificial, impatient adult environment with which its personality must invariably become formed, integrated and stabilized.

Personality

"A child is forced to come to terms with his surroundings and his efforts entailed lead to an integration of his personality."

Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 35

The child's "personality"—i.e., its external appearance of form, behavior patterns and mental attitude—necessarily emerges as an intimate adaptation to its environment. Such "personality" therefore comes to reflect that particular "reality" which is unconsciously communicated by one's parents through such means as judgmental impositions, habituated behavior and the daily pattern of response and reaction to a child's expression of needs and feelings.

Secret Sorrow

"An adult who loves children but unconsciously condemns them inflicts upon them a secret sorrow which is a mirror of his own mistakes."

Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 5

The uniquely creative mind of the little child intimately "absorbs" environmental experiences that extend far beyond the mere acquisition of language, to include whatever mental order may be acquired through exposure to a wide range of parental prejudices, values and social custom. Proudful adults, unconsciously dominated by their own need for approval and acceptance from others, tend to repress and discourage a child's truthful expression of feelings—particularly those painful and unpleasant feelings which challenge one's cherished self-image of being a "good parent" or a "good teacher". The child is therefore deceitfully guided to repress its feelings of pain, fear, anger and sadness under a camouflage of superficial politeness and a pretence of presumed contentment to conform to the demands of dominant adult influences.

Camouflage

"Camouflage, the concealing of one's true feelings, is the lie that man builds up within himself, so that he can live, or rather survive, in a world at odds with his own natural sentiments."

Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p. 175

The child's need to recognize and express painful feelings is ordinarily repressed by the overriding need to accommodate to the deceitful demands, illusions and prejudices of parents and teachers; e.g., to hide one's true feelings behind a mask of conformity with others; to resign and submit to the "reality" which is defined and given by those adults who assume the role of "teacher" in the child's environment. Repressed feelings of pain, fear and anger

are thus hidden under layers of resignation, guilt, blame, confusion and other judgmental thought patterns which in time come to form a deeply ingrained mental order within the child's personality. Such mental order thereby serves to defend against the full realization of pain emanating generally from early deprivation of biological needs during infancy.

Montessori teaching, as notably distinct from conventional education, recognizes the free expression of all feelings, both painful and joyful, as an essential exercise and expansion of the child's spiritual development. The adult oneself is the primary object of such emotional learning by the child.

Exercise of Feelings

"We are their 'stimuli', by which their feelings . . . should be exercised . . . For the intellect, we have the various objects, colors, forms, etc., but for the spirit, the objects are ourselves."

Maria Montessori
from *Spontaneous Activity in Education*, p. 331

The child's spiritual development emerges as a lively expression of feelings
Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 2

Look for the
May Observer
featuring
Physical Objects

The Montessori Observer
published by
INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY
912 Thayer Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 589-1127
Lee Havis, Executive Director

The Montessori Observer is mailed eight times each year to IMS members throughout the world. *The Observer* is sent during the following months: Jan., Feb., March, April, May, Sept., Oct., and Nov. The purpose of this publication is to provide news and information about the development of Montessori education to extend awareness of Montessori principles and promote harmony within the Montessori community.

INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY
The International Montessori Society is sponsored by Educational Services, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized in Maryland, U.S.A. The purpose of IMS is to support the effective application of Montessori principles throughout the world.

IMS ADVISORY BOARD
Elizabeth Hainstock, Educator, Author
Romalda Spalding, Reading Specialist
Dr. R. Orin Cornett, Research Professor

SUBSCRIPTION
Subscription to this publication may be obtained by requesting IMS membership which is open to all individuals for a \$15 yearly fee. IMS school members also receive a subscription to the *Montessori News*. Complete the membership application form to obtain an individual subscription and other benefits of IMS membership.

ADVERTISING
Advertising space is available for services and products relating to Montessori education. Marketplace ads are \$7/line. Position and Placements ads are \$10 each and will be set and edited by us to conform to space requirements. Write for our advertising outline for rates and other information about design advertising.
© 1985 International Montessori Society

LETTERS TO IMS

March 18, 1985

Hello Lee,
 ...I feel that I am now really learning something about the normalized child and the work that I have done I have used in the classroom and I see results. ...
 I find it wonderful to stand back and observe more. ...

Thanks again,

Terri Nelson
 Gold Hill, Oregon

Ed. Note: Terri Nelson is a student enrolled in the Society's independent study course and is commenting as to her experience with children in this regard.

April 3, 1985

Dear Mr. Havis,

Please accept this letter as formal notice that the International Montessori Society's independent study course titled Primary Teacher Program is approved as meeting Nebraska's licensing regulations for the following day care center positions—director, teacher, and assistant teacher.

Should the Department of Social Services' proposed qualifications for preschool staff be promulgated, this approval would extend to the director and teacher positions for this licensing category as well. ...

Sincerely,

Deb Dawson
 Department of Social Services
 Lincoln, Nebraska

Dear Mr. Havis,

It is very encouraging to read in the Montessori News (Jan. '85) that the State of California has recognized the IMS independent study course as fully qualifying individuals for teaching in Montessori schools upon verification of completed coursework. ...

In California, however, there are four other matters of utmost importance that have to be settled: (1) teacher pupil ratio, which currently is 1:12, (2) minimum space requirement per child in the classroom, which is 35 square feet per child, (3) capacity curtailed by the number of toilets, i.e., 15 children per toilet, and (4) outdoor activity space to be at least 75 square feet per child, based on the total licensed capacity. ...

I am sure other Montessori schools are experiencing similar restrictions, and it will help to get their reactions. I would also like to know your personal feelings about this matter. ...

Sincerely,

Francis Dos Remedios
 Fremont, California

Ed. Note: The State of California has a procedure to permit waiver from certain restrictions upon written justification. The Society has prepared a statement of standards appropriate for Montessori schools and will provide this information upon request.

Nebraska Approves

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 1

rather more characteristic of the conventional approach to education.

Current enrollment in the Society's independent study course includes student located widely throughout the United States and elsewhere participating in this profound communication entirely through mail correspondence. Notably, the course's first graduate, **Marlene Bonk**, is presently a Montessori teacher in the State of Nebraska where the course has just now become recognized. For application and further details about the Society's Montessori teacher training program, contact: IMS, 912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

Feelings

Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

and emotions. Such expression necessarily requires the adult's open acceptance of all such feelings by a patient restraint of one's own reactive emotionality. In addition, the adult must be friendly and responsively disposed towards a child's affectionate impulses and spontaneous expressions of joy and pain.

Affection

"We must never force our caresses on him . . . nor must we repel his outbursts of affection, even when we are not disposed to receive them, but must respond with sincere and delicate devotion."

Maria Montessori
 from *Spontaneous Activity in Education*, p. 332

Warm affection and friendly, responsive sympathy are naturally entailed in one's effective Montessori teaching with children. A child's spontaneous expression of feelings is generally directed towards the adult as its primary object of love, joy and affection in the environment. The adult must therefore be generously disposed to receive a child's spontaneous expression of feelings and sentiments. Similarly, the adult finds in one's relationship with the child a singular opportunity for a feeling of true peace and harmony within oneself. The child itself represents a vital means by which one's own feelings of love, joy and sympathy are deeply touched and expressed.

Touching Love

"The child is the only point in which there converges from everyone a feeling of gentleness and love . . . Whenever we touch the child, we touch love."

Maria Montessori
 from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 288-289

Feelings of love, joy and sympathy spontaneously arise in one's association with the "normalized" child as a continual opportunity to resolve one's own incomplete experiences of pain from early childhood and discover a true spiritual harmony and relationship with all being. One's expression of complete commitment to Montessori principles with children therefore enables and assures a transformation of the common life experience of resignation, resentment and discouragement to feelings of true love and joy in harmony with the spirit of the "normalized" child.

Reading and Writing

"Not all children of the same age are at the same point in this matter of reading and writing. We not only do not force a child, but we do not even invite him, or in any way attempt to coax him to do that which he does not wish to do."

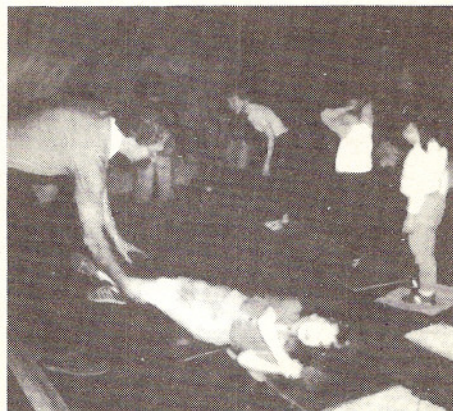
Maria Montessori
 from *Montessori Method*, p. 302

Positions & Placements

Montessori Teachers: toddler (15-30 mo.), (3-6) for Fall, 1985. Well-established (13 years) growing school located 35 miles south of Boston in scenic Duxbury. Five well-equipped classrooms containing Montessori apparatus, incorporating a whole language approach. A working greenhouse, small farm-like atmosphere with well-equipped outdoor area. Send resume, references and letter of intent to: Munch-Kin Montessori, 145 Loring Rd., Duxbury, MA 02332, Tel. (617) 934-5020 or (617) 934-6826.

Montessori Teacher: (3-6) for Fall, 1985. One year Montessori training and eligible for transfer to state teaching certificate. Lovely mountain location in East Tennessee bordering Virginia and North Carolina. Montessori preschool class has 26 children with extended day (5-6 yrs.). Elementary school (not Montessori) has 100 students, small classes and individualized programs. The school won Chamber of Commerce "Small Business of Year—1983". Administration operated: J. Wilson, Ashley Academy, 916 Lacy St., Johnson City, Tennessee 37601 Tel. (615) 929-7888. Send resume/references.

Montessori Teacher: (2-6), good salary, good benefits. Located in and near cultural resources. School has 83 years of service to community. Contact: Nazareth Nursery, 214 West 15 St., New York, NY 10011, Tel. (212) 243-1881.



Development gymnastics at the Montessori Children's House in McGregor, Texas.

Montessori in McGregor Texas

The Montessori Children's House in McGregor, Texas was founded by **Jerry M. O'Donnell** in December, 1983. Since then, the school has grown rapidly to accommodate its present enrollment of 75 children ages 2 to 9 years.

This IMS member school is under the administration of Mr. O'Donnell whose background includes a master's degree in home and family counselling. Mr. O'Donnell supervises a program which provides a full day Montessori session with day care from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm daily. Special features include music, developmental gymnastics and parent education.

For further information, contact: Jerry O'Donnell, Montessori Children's House, 529 W. Highway 84, McGregor, Texas 76657, Tel. (817) 840-4100.

Address correction requested

912 Thayer Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910

OBSERVER
The Montessori



Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 3875
Silver Spring, MD



Children working on language exercise at Montessori Manor South School in Des Moines, Iowa.

Manor School in Des Moines, Iowa

The Montessori Manor South School of Des Moines, Iowa, directed by **Karen McCarthy**, offers full and half day Montessori sessions for children from 2 to 6 years of age. This IMS member school serves an enrollment of about 40 children and includes instruction in French, tumbling and field trips which are integrally included in the regular school program.

Plans for summer, 1985 include a special enrichment course conducted by the school's French teacher, **Sheri Lane-Williamson**. This course will be taking a "trip around the world" with each stop to include a cultural experience and a sampling of its cuisine.

Mary Stroh, president of the school, notes with pride the considerable experience and accomplishments of the school staff. She states that "our parents are totally supportive and our children are wonderful."

For further information, contact: Mary Stroh, Montessori Manor South School, 1801 McKinley Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50321, Tel. (515) 287-6206.

The Psychologist

"... the teacher . . . must be more a psychologist than a teacher."

Maria Montessori
from *Montessori Method*, p. 173

REMINDER

To make sure that you keep receiving your Montessori Observer newsletter, please renew your membership subscription promptly. The expiration date of your membership should be clearly visible on the mailing label.

Real Materials

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 1

presentation of a specific quantity and content of materials. So conceived, Montessori education amounts to a rather superficial, mechanical pattern of adult behavior concentrated essentially on the presentation of physical objects.

By contrast, the Society represents "Montessori" as an intangible inner commitment within oneself wherein the real materials to master in one's association with children are not physical objects *per se*, but rather various inner qualities of character; i.e., virtues of the spirit such as courage, patience, humility, integrity and faith. It is mastery in the application of these inner means of the spirit—not the superficial manipulation and presentation of certain specified physical objects—which requires one's foremost attention and preparation for the type of Montessori teaching which enables and assures the emergence of the "normalized" child.

The Society's preparation for Montessori teaching—communicated essentially through its 22 lesson independent study course—therefore entails a profound examination of one's self to face unconscious prejudices and reactive tendencies which fundamentally deter the emergence of the "normalized" child. Such an inner spiritual preparation necessarily includes the manipulation and presentation of physical objects to children as an appropriate expression of one's complete commitment to Montessori principles—not as a set of pre-determined presentations to follow according to a prescribed ritual and sequence of rigidly defined adult behavior. Mastery of the effective presentation of physical objects to children emerges therefore as a spontaneous reflection of one's mastery in the handling and application of one's own courage, humility, integrity, patience and faith. Such inner qualities of the spirit are the real materials of Montessori education.