



The Montessori OBSERVER

Control

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

IMAC Expands its Accreditation of Montessori Teacher Education — progress update

Since its founding in 1994, the **International Montessori Accreditation Council (IMAC)** has expanded considerably its activity in the accreditation of Montessori teacher education programs. In May, 1996, the IMAC Advisory Board met and approved the Society's teacher education program for continuing accreditation to the year 2000. The *Woodlands Training Center* (Sri Lanka) also maintains its provisional accreditation in good standing, and is completing its self-study report as part of its requirements for continuing IMAC accreditation.

In July, 1996, the *Northwest Learning Centers, Inc.* (Kirkland, WA) submitted its application for IMAC accreditation, and they are now proceeding with their initial procedures before the IMAC Generic Review Committee. Designed for all unaffiliated Montessori teacher education institutions, the Generic Review Committee has published its new *"Orientation Guide"* which contains all pertinent standards and requirements for accreditation. Procedures and policies established with the *Woodlands Training Centre* will be applied with *Northwest Learning Centers, Inc.* and all other institutions which seek such IMAC accreditation through this committee's review.

IMAC also continues to seek federal government *"recognition"* — and to oppose the exclusionary and prejudicial recognition of the MACTE agency in the same field. IMAC believes that its own broad, inclusive standards are those best suited to measure quality and assure progress for all Montessori teacher education — to provide an effective *"umbrella"* agency to bring harmony and cooperation throughout the entire Montessori community.

IMAC welcomes the application and participation of any institution interested in operating its Montessori teacher education according to the high standards of excellence required for its accreditation.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3



From left to right, Diann Jones, Elizabeth Rabjohns and Suzanne Sevensler in discussion during the Society's "Creating the New Education" conference in Rochester, NY — September 28-29, 1996

Montessori Educators meet in Rochester, New York "Creating the New Education" conference — September 28-29, 1996

On September 28-29, 1996, the Society held its latest *"Creating the New Education"* conference in Rochester, New York. Attending this two-day *"inner preparation"* for developing Montessori teaching skills were teachers, parents and school owners from the states of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. **Nava Balachandran**, owner and director of the *Fairport Montessori School* was the primary local coordinator, and many from her school were in attendance.

The conference offered many specific examples of how to resolve misbehavior by the approach of *"control the environment, not the child"*. As usual the issue of controlling the *"adult personality"* was given considerable attention; particularly in resolving various unknown errors relating to *"negativity"* and *"abandonment"*.

A practical experiment in *"observation"* was conducted during the conference, to help the participants discover their various detrimental habits and tendencies with children. The distinction of *"comfortable"* and *"uncomfortable"* as related to habits was demonstrated and analyzed. In this way, the participants learned how new habits of effective Montessori teaching could be initiated and

established as a regular daily practice with children.

Further such *"creating the new education"* conferences will be scheduled according to interest. Please contact the Society to help in the planning of specific dates and locations.

Society on the Worldwide Web

The Society has now established its site on the world-wide web at: <http://www.wdn.com/trust/ims>. Interested persons can locate news and information about the Society at this location. Direct contact with the Society is provided through its e-mail address at: havis@erols.com.

The new Society web site includes the following subject matter areas:

History and Organization

Background of the Society since its establishment in 1979, including list of members of the Advisory Board.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 3

Control

by Lee Havis

"...the teacher must learn to control herself so that the child's spirit shall be free to expand and show its powers; the essence of her duty is not to interrupt the child in his efforts."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.272

Montessori teaching aims to "control the environment, not the child" — to allow the child's true "normalized" nature to fully emerge in the world. To create such a "normalizing" environment, the teacher must particularly control her "personality" in the child's environment — to restrain those various negative patterns of repression or abandonment which otherwise tend to repress the child's true "normalized" being in harmony with the infinite and eternal laws of nature. Without a careful control of our detrimental tendencies, the child becomes dependent on various forms of repressive traditional teaching.

Traditional Teaching

"...teachers do not believe that children are active learners. They drive and encourage, or give punishments and rewards, to stimulate work..."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.240

Traditional teaching controls children according to a pre-determined curriculum which is imposed on all. The child here is viewed essentially as a passive, receptive being to be manipulated and controlled by the external adult authority. With such traditional education, the teacher controls the learning process and all the movement of children.

Control of Movement

"...it is assumed...that the child cannot control his movements and is incapable of taking care of himself..."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Formation of Man*, p.63

Since traditional teaching views children as incapable of controlling their own movement, the teacher assumes this authority and role as her right and duty. However, such external control disturbs the child's own normal personality development which becomes weak and dependent for life. By contrast, Montessori teaching aims to give space for the child's own self-directed learning — to control its own education under the direction and guidance of the "teacher within" the child itself.

Giving Space

"The usual conception of direct correction and suppression of defects is wrong ... Correction is possible only by expansion, by giving 'space' by opening up the means for the expansion of the personality."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Formation of Man*, p.49

Montessori teaching gives children the space and time to control their own educational activity through direct experience in the environment. The children can then freely explore their own interests and correct their own mistakes with a minimum of interference from the supervising adult. To create such a "normalizing" environment, the teacher must follow fundamental laws of nature as a vital and necessary inner control of error.

Control of Error

"...we come to a scientific principle which is also a path to perfection. We call it 'control of error'...If this principle is realized...then it does not matter whether teachers and mothers are perfect or not."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.250

Such fundamental principles as (1) "Observation"; (2) "Individual Liberty"; and (3) "Preparation of the Environment" guide the teacher to control her errors with children — to either intervene or withdraw her "personality" on the basis of what is most suitable in each situation. The Montessori teacher must "observe" the child beyond its ordinary external appearance as a physical body and superficial personality — to see its "normalized" nature which lives in the world of the spirit. Such an expansive "observation" helps the teacher balance her various instincts and urges for action — to alter and adjust her behavior to conform with a way of being committed to the three fundamental Montessori principles.

Balance

"The want of balance as between impulse and inhibition is not only a familiar and interesting fact in pathology; it is further...met with in the external social sphere."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Spontaneous Act. in Ed.*, p.176

Montessori teachers must balance their various urges and instincts with children — to reconcile such principles as "Individual Liberty" and "Preparation of the Environment" as attention is directed from one "hub" child to the next. The adult must constantly judge how best to control her "personality" — whether to intervene or withdraw to meet the right precise

needs of each situation. At times, the adult must patiently restrain her urge to interrupt and interfere at all — to thoughtfully "observe" a problem unfold and resolve itself through the child's own free intercourse with others.

Free Intercourse

"It is by means of free intercourse, of real practice which obliges each one to adapt his own limits to the limits of others...the powers of will are established by exercise."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Spontaneous Act. in Ed.*, p.174

Montessori teaching allows children to control their own actions with a considerable freedom of social interaction. Each child is given the "individual liberty" to find its own path of self-directed learning in harmony with the demands and needs of others. However, such "individual liberty" must not be confused with the "abandonment" of children to a world of fantasy.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 2

Look for the
March, 1997 Observer
featuring
Politics

The Montessori Observer
ISSN 0889-5643
published by
INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI SOCIETY
912 Thayer Ave., Suite 207
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
Tel. (301) 589-1127 • e-mail: havis@erols.com
Worldwide Web:
<http://www.wdn.com/trust/ims>
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.

IMS ADVISORY BOARD
Elizabeth Hainstock, Educator, Author
Dr. R. Orin Cornett, Professor Emeritus
John Bradshaw, Author, Public Speaker
Dr. Clifford F. Thies, Economics Professor

SUBSCRIPTION
Subscription to this *Observer* publication may be obtained by requesting Society membership which is open to all individuals for a \$20 annual fee. Society members also receive a subscription to the *Montessori News* and other membership benefits.

ADVERTISING
Advertising space is available for services and products relating to Montessori education. Marketplace ads are \$7/line. Position and placement ads are \$20 each and will be set and edited by the Society to conform to space requirements. Write for the Society's advertising outline for details about design advertising rates.

Moment of Peril

by Lee Havis

The Over-eager Achiever

The teacher here cannot keep over-eager Marcy from getting into materials and activities that are way beyond her current skill level and abilities (*see Observer, October, 1996*). The teacher has already tried very hard to get Marcy involved elsewhere in the environment with more suitable pursuits.

If Marcy is the "hub" child in this "moment of peril", we must consider the teacher's "personality" as a primary detrimental influence here in her environment. The teacher must therefore carefully examine her language and way of being with Marcy. Does the teacher use "negative" language to discourage Marcy from her various inappropriate activities? If so, she must inhibit these negative patterns, and use only positive, friendly language in her further communication.

Rather than brusquely urging Marcy to try something else in the environment, the teacher might offer a brief lesson in the use and handling of the current materials of interest. At Marcy's level, the teacher could satisfy the child's immediate interests, and then move on to help her find more suitable choices elsewhere.

Perhaps the teacher has failed to persist in her efforts to offer Marcy a choice of alternative activity; i.e., "abandoned" Marcy to circumstances with materials because of her impatience to give a lesson with some other children in the group. If so, she must practice a more attentive "observation" of Marcy — to intervene at the first moment of some possible misuse of materials.

To control the "physical objects", it may be necessary for the teacher to place a hand on the misused materials — to get Marcy's attention on how the materials are used, or what other alternative work may be more suitable under the circumstances.

Through this more positive and observant interaction with Marcy, the teacher will be able to gently guide her to back to reality — to focus Marcy's attention on those particular materials and activities that best meet her real needs and interests for normal development.

Conflict and Dispute

Although 5 year old Andrea and four year old Terry seem to choose to do many activities together, they are almost always in constant conflict and dispute.

Cont'd. on Page 4, col. 3

Control

Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

World of Fantasy

"In the world of fantasy...there is no control of error, nothing to coordinate thought."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.266

In a world of fantasy, the child does not really control its faculties at all — but is rather enslaved by the needs of the unfolding drama. Montessori teaching must therefore intervene at such times with considerable energy — to engage the child in some point of contact with reality. Sometimes, the adult must provide a very strong support indeed — to guide the child back to the solid ground of reality in the present moment.

Strong Support

"The child who having lost control of himself momentarily, needs a strong support to which he can cling. The work of assistance at such a time means extending a strong and friendly hand towards one who is weak."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Discovery of the Child*, p.153-54

Montessori teaching must strongly support children who are misguided in their fantasy escape from reality — to interrupt such abnormal diversion with some opportunity for real work in the present moment. A brief friendly word of interest or attention to some physical object may be all that is needed. Even the most simple exercise of practical life can lead the child towards reality — to gradually develop a pattern of its own control of action that becomes an integral aspect of its whole way of being.

Control of Action

"The more the child is conscious of its actions, the more it is able to control them, the more calm he becomes. It is also therefore an education of the will."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Voice of Dr. Montessori*, p.41

The child who becomes "normalized" through work develops a habit of self-control that allows for true independence in all areas of learning. Such "normalization" returns the child to its true state of natural calmness and harmony with others. Montessori teaching therefore seeks out every opportunity with young children to fix their attention on some point of contact with reality.

Attention

"...in the child's formation, the fixing of his attention is basic to all that comes afterwards...once his attention has been focused, he becomes his own master and can exert control over his world."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.217

The child's attention is usually the first step to return the child to its state of true "normalized" being. Montessori teachers must therefore constantly control their actions to direct the young child to suitable opportunities for some profound concentration on work. In later childhood, this individual "normalized" nature tends to work with others to help govern the community for the interests and needs of all.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

Society on Worldwide Web

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3

What is Montessori?

Describes Dr. Montessori's discovery of the "normalized" child, and the three fundamental Montessori principles

Teacher Education

Featuring the Society's 22-lesson correspondence course of "inner preparation" for Montessori teaching

Conferences and Consultation

Featuring the Society's two-day conference entitled "Creating the New Education"

Montessori Publications

Features the Society's newsletter "Montessori Observer", and the 8-page newspaper of Society services and products "Montessori News"

Membership

Describes the benefits and services provided for each of the three categories of membership; i.e., individuals, associate schools and Montessori schools

Montessori Schools

Lists all Montessori schools recognized by the Society

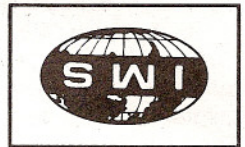
Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 2



Child working on linear counting math materials at Sandcastles Montessori School (Ajax, Ont., Canada)

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

CONTROL

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 3

Govern the Community

"Soon after the age of 6 (the child) wants to know the customs and laws which men have adopted to guide their behavior. They seek to have someone in control who can govern the community."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.234-35

The elementary child normally expresses itself with others to assure a proper government of the entire community. This normal group control is built on rules and customs that have their basis in the infinite and eternal laws of nature — so the child's obedience is consistent with its own inner conviction for the truth. Such a "normalized" control of obedience is far removed from the ordinary social obedience built on the prejudice and illusion of popular opinion.

Control of Obedience

"There is no lack of obedience in the world: quite the contrary...What unhappily is absent is the control of obedience."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.257

Children normally control their obedience without any fear or dependency on others. Montessori teaching helps children attain this true social control during the critical period of early childhood — when the child's "absorbent mind" is actively building up the child's whole way of being as "personality". By following the three fundamental Montessori principles with children, the adult exerts a corresponding control of the environment that allows the child's true "normalized" nature to freely emerge in the world.

*Voice of Dr. Maria Montessori (Hardinge, J)

Society on the Worldwide Web

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3

Montessori Accreditation (IMAC)

Describes the history, purpose and organization of the International Montessori Accreditation Council (IMAC)

The "Montessori Community"

Describes the evolution of personalities, programs and organizations involved with Dr. Montessori's work from the time of the first Children's House in 1907. Reference to other resources on the world wide web are included

Application and Response Form

How to join the Society, enroll in teacher education and respond to any item to obtain more information

Lee Havis developed this web site to use this new computer technology to expand the Society's communication more widely throughout the world. He stated "this new technology expands considerably the Society's capability for communication and association with others. I am particularly eager to provide links with other Montessori groups and individuals to stimulate greater investigation on the underlying philosophical issues around the question "What is 'Montessori'?"

The society's new web site will specifically link to TRUST TUTORING (*International Montessori Trust*) and other closely related Montessori sites on the web — to help expand productive communication and association with others as much as possible.

Look up the Society's web site as indicated above, or contact the Society at its e-mail address — havis@erols.com.



Child working on Touch Tablets sensorial material at the Sandcastles Montessori School (Ajax, Ont. Canada)

IMAC — progress update

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 1

Interested persons may find out more details about IMAC and its accreditation by reference to the IMS web site at: <http://www.wdn.com/trust/ims>.

An "Accreditation Handbook" and application for IMAC accreditation are also available to any interested person upon request. Contact: IMAC, c/o Lee Havis, 912 Thayer Ave. #207, Silver Spring, MD 20910

Moment of Peril

Cont'd. from Page 3, Col. 1

Andrea is often "bossy," and Terry complains to the teacher for help to stand up to Andrea. The teacher wishes to let the children settle these conflicts and disputes on their own, but she also wishes to help Terry stand up for herself more in relation to Andrea. *What to do?*
Answer in Observer, March, 1997