



The Montessori OBSERVER

BALANCE

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



Left to right are H. Kent Baker, Ph.D., Jerry Duvall, Ph.D., and Lee Havis at meeting of IMAC Advisory Committee in January, 1998. Dr. Baker and Dr. Duvall are members of the Committee.

Institutions in Africa and Asia Seek IMAC Accreditation

Since December, 1997, the IMAC accrediting agency for Montessori teacher education has received two new applications for its accreditation. **Headstart Montessori Training Center** (*Lindsay Van den Berg, Director*) is located in Walvis Bay, Namibia, Africa and the other is **Montessori Creative World** (*Fan Shih Lan, Director*) in Singapore. IMAC has also received various other preliminary inquiries from several institutions in the United States interested in establishing accredited status with the agency.

On January 28, 1998, the IMAC Advisory Committee met in Silver Spring, MD to discuss these and other related matters. This six-member panel makes final decisions for all IMAC accreditation.

Lee Havis, IMAC director indicated that growing interest in the agency's accreditation is a hopeful development in many respects. He stated that "IMAC accreditation not only assures a process of better instruction and program operation of the institution, but it creates important relationships of mutual support and cooperation among the participating persons involved. This mutual cooperation helps to unify our efforts and create a more dignified and harmonious presentation of Montessori education before the general public."

Havis also noted the particular value of IMAC's broad, inclusive standards that

aim to accommodate any institution which is seriously pursuing effective Montessori teacher preparation. An application and Administrative Manual (including essential standards) will be sent to any interested party upon written request to: IMAC, 912 Thayer Ave. #207, Silver Spring, MD 20910.



Child working with practical life dressing frame at Fredericton Montessori School in New Brunswick, Canada.

Public Assembly Now a Political Action Committee

On January 14, 1998, the Central Committee of the Maryland Public Assembly (MPA) met to formalize itself as a "Political Action Committee" in the state of Maryland. This grassroots citizen organization is now qualified to receive and disburse funds for its planned endorsement and candidate support activities throughout the state.

At the January meeting, **James McLaughlin** of Prince George's County was elected treasurer. Mr. McLaughlin has been active in managing campaign finances for various other political organizations and candidates in Maryland, and has been actively involved in the Assembly as a member for some time. As MPA officer, he will also serve as a member of the Assembly's state central committee.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 3

Montessori School in New Brunswick, Canada

In September, 1997, **Mary Jane Henry** established a new Montessori school in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. Before establishing her *Fredericton Montessori School*, Ms. Henry had operated another Montessori school in Toronto, Ontario for eight years. She sold the prior school when she moved to New Brunswick.

The new Fredericton school is organized as a corporation, and includes a full-day and half-day Montessori program. Before and after school care is provided, as well as music, gymnastics and parent education.

Ms. Henry has stated her interest in working more closely with the Society in the future in the field of teacher education. She has therefore been in consultation with the Society about helping to support a suitable Montessori conference in Canada.

For further information, contact: Mary Jane Henry, Fredericton Montessori School, 749 Charlotte St., Fredericton, New Brunswick, E3B 1M6, Canada, tel. (506) 459-3955.

BALANCE

by Lee Havis

Living creatures create a universal balance...intelligence, a balanced personality, and the unity of all mankind as a single organism are man's wealth".

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace*, p.94-99

Montessori teaching supports the development of a universal balance in the child's personality — a normalized way of being in harmony with its entire environment. However, our efforts for such a normalized balance in children are strongly opposed by many obstacles in society — forces and influences that distract and divert our attention away from the child's true nature of spontaneous self-discipline, attachment to reality and harmony with its entire environment. If we are to effectively create a proper environment for this normalized child to emerge, we must overcome this lack of balance in society which so fundamentally impinges on our Montessori teaching with children.

Lack of Balance

"...there exists a lack of balance between the miraculous progress of our environment and the arrest of development suffered by man."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Formation of Man*, p.14

Our modern age reflects a striking lack of balance between the progress of science and the considerable poverty of our moral, spiritual and character development. While we invest enormous time, money and attention in public education to correct this critical imbalance, it remains deeply rooted and well-established in the human personality. Montessori education seeks to resolve this lack of balance by supporting the development of the whole child — including its deepest levels of spiritual life.

Spiritual Life

"We have been mistaken in thinking that the natural education of children should be purely physical; the soul, too, has its nature, which is intended to perfect in the spiritual life..."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Montessori Method*, p.374

Montessori teaching differs significantly from conventional education in its

commitment to the spiritual, as well as the physical and intellectual development of the child. Whereas conventional education is limited primarily to academic progress, Montessori education recognizes the vital need for nurturing the child's spiritual life as well. Such an holistic approach to the child overcomes the ordinary differences between home and school — creating a unity of conception that is not generally present in conventional education.

Unity of Conception

"The human personality, or the care of it, is broken up. One 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

The concept of ordinary education is bound within the confines of its curriculum mandates — a system of teacher-imposed group instruction, grades and separated subject matter which substantially disregards the needs and interests of the individual child. By contract, Montessori supports each child to follow its own "teacher within" — a commitment to help the child balance all aspects of its spiritual, mental and physical life. Such a unifying concept of education follows a process of self-discovery that requires a considerable inner preparation on the part of the teacher.

Inner Preparation

"One who would become a teacher according to our system must examine himself...this inner preparation will give the balance and pose he will need."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.153

Montessori teaching is always seeking out the visionary normalized child that lives in the realm of the spirit — a process of inner preparation which must constantly balance such natural laws as (1) "Observation"; (3) "Individual Liberty" and (3) "Preparation of the Environment". Following these three fundamental Montessori principles, the teacher must determine precisely when and how to "control the environment, not the child". She must remove its various detrimental influences from around each individual child in the group by carefully shaping the environment.

Shaping the Environment

"A child slowly perfects his activities. An adult can assist in shaping the environment, but it is the child that perfects his own being."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.195

The principle "Preparation of the Environment" guides us to create a positive, orderly condition for the child's normal self-directed learning. The Montessori teacher must particularly control her own personality in the environment — to effectively regulate its impact and influence on the child. This new Montessori concept of indirect education must carefully balance the level of stimulation in the environment with the emerging true needs and interests of each individual child.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 2

Look for the
May, 1998 Observer
featuring
ACTION

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.

© 1998

Moment of Peril

by Lee Havis

Sneaky and Destructive

In this moment of peril, the teacher has become frustrated with the sneaky and destructive behavior of three year old Jason (see *Observer*, November, 1997). She cannot understand why he consistently denies or avoids any responsibility for his prior harmful actions.

The teacher seeks to "control the environment, not the child", but she cannot so easily control the objects that have already been damaged or taken by the child. So, it is primarily the teacher's own "personality" which must be controlled in this situation.

In dealing with sneaky, destructive behavior, there is a tendency to blame and accuse the child — so the natural reaction of the child is to lie or otherwise avoid and resist the teacher's inquiries. The teacher must therefore avoid any provocative negative or accusatory comments in her conversation with Jason on these matters.

While the teacher can certainly inquire with Jason about missing objects, as to "where they are" or how to repair some damage that he might have caused in the past, it is important that this be done in a positive, non-threatening manner. Ultimately, however, the solution here is to observe Jason's behavior more closely — to better control the "adult personality" with positive communication to support his more normal behavior in the future.

The teacher must now also recognize that Jason needs more attentive observation — to interrupt his wandering mind and tendency towards fantasy with a warm and friendly glance or invitation to work. Her gentle communication and practical life lessons with Jason will gradually lead him towards a more responsible normal way of being in the environment.

Bored

4 year old Brian claims to be "bored" when the teacher interrupts his distracted fantasy play with some invitation for goal-directed work in the environment. He responds with indifference to these invitations — and the teacher has become quit frustrated with the challenge to interest him in anything. His mother has also told the teacher that he has expressed his boredom at school to her. *What to do?*

Answer in May, 1998, *Observer*

BALANCE

Cont'd. from Page 2, Col. 3

Concept of Education

"Our concept of education of children thus differs not only from those who do everything for a child themselves but also from those who think that they can have the child in a purely passive environment."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Secret of Childhood*, p.198

Montessori education centers itself on a concept of the child as growing in independence, self-directed learning and harmony with others. The teacher must therefore adapt to these changing needs by modifying and regulating her initial active presence in the environment — moving towards a more inactive role as the child assumes more independence in its own self-directed activity. The three Montessori principles are always available to help balance the activity of the teacher.

Activity of the Teacher

"...the more the environment corresponds to the needs of the child, the more limited becomes the activity of the teacher."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *The Child*, p.9

The Montessori teacher applies the principle of "Observation" to decide when and how to adjust and control her activity with children. She must notice the first delicate signs of a child concentrating on some object of interest — to then restrain any of her activity which might distract or interrupt the child in this critical moment of development. At some particular moment of profound concentration, the child develops a critical inner equilibrium in its entire personality — signaling the beginning of a new path of "normalized" development in harmony with cosmic laws of the universe.

Equilibrium

"...the completion of an entire cycle (of work) will exercise an influence more and more far-reaching on the personality of the child...it is from the completed cycles of activity...that the child develops equilibrium..."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Spontaneous Act. in Ed.*, p.105

The child acquires a normal state of internal equilibrium by completing cycles of concentrated work — goal-directed activity which may involve many repetitions of the same simple movement and exercise. The child then becomes "normalized" to bring its whole life and being into complete balance with the order of nature. Then we can see the wonderful harmony of the normalized child as it expresses itself through many forms of constructive activity in the environment.

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 1

Book Review

Practical Life Catalogs

Ed. Note: The Society often receives inquiries about materials for the Montessori environment. The most basic of these relate to the simple exercises of "practical life". One well-known practical life catalog is featured here.

Montessori Services

A Resource for Preparing the Child's Environment

The 1997-98 catalog of this company includes some 67 pages of materials and equipment which have particular application to the practical life area of the Montessori environment. Included are products for such ordinary exercises as pouring, washing, sorting and cleaning — as well as other related areas of the curriculum relating to language, geography, music and art.

Jane Campbell, head of *Montessori Services*, has worked for more than 20 years to compile a comprehensive inventory of the most useful, hard-to-find practical life materials — to help teachers and parents equip their environment in a suitable manner for a young child's normal growth and development. Her annual catalog always seems to expand in its scope and improve in its quality of presentation. Along with a picture and description of each specific material, this publication provides a brief description of its particular use and value in Montessori teaching.

The *Montessori Services* catalog is provided free to students in the Society's Montessori teacher education program, and can also be obtained free from the company itself. An order form is included in the catalog to facilitate purchase of listed products by mail order, phone or fax. For more information, contact: *Montessori Services*, 836 Cleveland Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95401, tel. 707-579-3003, FAX 1-800-483-9822
e-mail: monserv@sonic.net

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

Cont'd. from Page 1, Col. 3

Lee Havis, MPA chairperson, believes that the Assembly can help improve the conditions for Montessori education in the state — by helping those public interest candidates who are more likely to be receptive to responsive government and basic individual freedoms in society. He states that "our platform emphasizes greater freedom for the operation of non-public education, and we will certainly raise these issues in our endorsement procedures with candidates, and in our public information to voters as well."

Cont'd. on Page 4, Col. 3

BALANCE

by Lee Havis

Living creatures create a universal balance...Intelligence, a balanced personality, and the unity of all mankind as a single organism are man's wealth".

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace*, p.94-99

Montessori teaching supports the development of a universal balance in the child's personality — a normalized way of being in harmony with its entire environment. However, our efforts for such a normalized balance in children are strongly opposed by many obstacles in society — forces and influences that distract and divert our attention away from the child's true nature of spontaneous self-discipline, attachment to reality and harmony with its entire environment. If we are to effectively create a proper environment for this normalized child to emerge, we must overcome this lack of balance in society which so fundamentally impinges on our Montessori teaching with children.

Lack of Balance

"...there exists a lack of balance between the miraculous progress of our environment and the arrest of development suffered by man."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Formation of Man*, p.14

Our modern age reflects a striking lack of balance between the progress of science and the considerable poverty of our moral, spiritual and character development. While we invest enormous time, money and attention in public education to correct this critical imbalance, it remains deeply rooted and well-established in the human personality. Montessori education seeks to resolve this lack of balance by supporting the development of the whole child — including its deepest levels of spiritual life.

Spiritual Life

"We have been mistaken in thinking that the natural education of children should be purely physical; the soul, too, has its nature, which is intended to perfect in the spiritual life..."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Montessori Method*, p.374

Montessori teaching differs significantly from conventional education in its

commitment to the spiritual, as well as the physical and intellectual development of the child. Whereas conventional education is limited primarily to academic progress, Montessori education recognizes the vital need for nurturing the child's spiritual life as well. Such a holistic approach to the child overcomes the ordinary differences between home and school — creating a unity of conception that is not generally present in conventional education.

Unity of Conception

"The human personality, or the care of it, is broken up. One 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

The concept of ordinary education is bound within the confines of its curriculum mandates — a system of teacher-imposed group instruction, grades and separated subject matter which substantially disregards the needs and interests of the individual child. By contract, Montessori supports each child to follow its own "teacher within" — a commitment to help the child balance all aspects of its spiritual, mental and physical life. Such a unifying concept of education follows a process of self-discovery that requires a considerable inner preparation on the part of the teacher.

Inner Preparation

"One who would become a teacher according to our system must examine himself...this inner preparation will give the balance and pose he will need."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.153

Montessori teaching is always seeking out the visionary normalized child that lives in the realm of the spirit — a process of inner preparation which must constantly balance such natural laws as (1) "Observation"; (3) "Individual Liberty" and (3) "Preparation of the Environment". Following these three fundamental Montessori principles, the teacher must determine precisely when and how to "control the environment, not the child". She must remove its various detrimental influences from around each individual child in the group by carefully shaping the environment.

Shaping the Environment

"A child slowly perfects his activities. An adult can assist in shaping the environment, but it is the child that perfects his own being."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Secret of Childhood*, p.195

The principle "Preparation of the Environment" guides us to create a positive, orderly condition for the child's normal self-directed learning. The Montessori teacher must particularly control her own personality in the environment — to effectively regulate its impact and influence on the child. This new Montessori concept of indirect education must carefully balance the level of stimulation in the environment with the emerging true needs and interests of each individual child.

Cont'd. on Page 3, Col. 2

Look for the
May, 1998 Observer
featuring
ACTION

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.

Address correction requested

912 Thayer Ave. • Silver Spring, Md. 20910

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

OBSERVER

The Montessori



BALANCE

Cont'd from Page 3, Col. 3

A Wonderful Harmony

"If one pulls in a given direction, there will always be another which pulls the opposite way...a wonderful harmony between opposing forces."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Absorbent Mind*, p.143

The wonderful harmony of normalized children will certainly not conform with the ordinary disorder and deceit of ordinary society — but may at times strikingly conflict with others in a manner that seems quite dissonant. However, this dissonance is an important outward expression of a fundamental inner creative change in the human personality, which is bringing into the world a much higher level of order and peace for all humanity. Montessori teachers serve this higher purpose through their common effort with the child's own true nature and instincts.

A Common Effort

"In order to re-establish that proper balance, mankind makes a common effort."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Education and Peace*, p.100

Montessori teaching ultimately works in harmony with others for the emergence of a new and better humanity in the world — a common effort for the normalized child which expresses itself beyond the classroom in many diverse and intricate ways. We each play a unique and distinctive role in this evolving work of creating the *new education* — an interrelated functioning in society which is more than just meeting our physical needs for food, shelter and clothing. Beyond the physical plane of existence, our purpose in Montessori teaching serves a higher purpose for the benefit of all — to realize the universal cosmic balance of the new normalized child in the world

Marketplace

Montessori Teachers

Teaching opportunities exist in private American and international schools around the world. The Educational Staffing program of International Schools Services has placed K-12 teachers and administrators in overseas schools since 1955. Most candidates obtain their overseas teaching positions by attending our U.S.-based International Recruitment Centers (IRCs) where ISS candidates have the potential to interview with overseas school heads seeking new staff. You must be an active ISS candidate to attend an IRC. Applicants must have a bachelor's degree and two years of current relevant experience. IRC registration materials are provided upon approval of your completed ISS application. For more information, please view our web site at www.iss.edu, or contact us at: International Schools Services, PO Box 5910, Princeton, NJ 08543, Tel. 609-452-0990, Fax: 609-452-0990, E-mail: edustaffing@iss.edu

PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

Cont'd from Page 3, Col. 3

Current plans for the Assembly include a voter registration drive — to help qualify voters to participate in the election process. Havis states that this effort will bring greater public exposure to the work of the Assembly. It will also inform and encourage voters as to their important role in electing public interest candidates in the state.

In November, 1998, the next general election will be held in Maryland, and the entire state legislature will be up for election. Havis states that he hopes the Assembly will be prepared to make endorsements and support suitable candidates at that time.

Positions & Placements

Montessori Administrators: required qualifications include Montessori diploma and master's degree. Hold or be eligible for Missouri Certification in elementary school administration and teaching. Five (5) years Montessori classroom experience. Also, **elementary Montessori teachers.** Fax a cover letter, resume (with Social Security Number) and copies of certification to 816-418-7712 or mail Attn.: Human Resources, 1211 McGee, Kansas City, MO 64106 or call 816-418-7706 for application. Job Hotline 816-419-7703.

Montessori Administrator: Milwaukee Montessori School seeks HEAD OF SCHOOL for year-round comprehensive program for ages 2 to 14 to begin June, 1998. Seeking a strong candidate with Montessori training and administrative experience. M.A. preferred. Reply to: Elizabeth A. Montavon, Ph.D., MMS Search Committee, 4610 West State Street, Milwaukee, WI 53226 FAX 414-259-0427 E-Mail: montavon@execpc.com

**PERCEPTUAL-MOTOR DEVELOPMENT
MOVEMENT EDUCATION**

Guidebooks & Materials

Take your pick!
Preschool to the 6th Grade, With & Without Equipment
Preassigned Activities, You Assign, or Mix and Match
We've Got the Right Program for You!

Call Toll-Free 1-800-524-9091 for Free Catalog!

or see our catalog at:
www.front-row-ex.com
or write:
Front Row Experience
540 Discovery Bay Blvd.
Discovery Bay, CA 94514-9454