



The Montessori OBSERVER

Scientific
Education

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2009 IMS Workshops Presenting technology for True Natural Montessori Teaching

The unique IMS workshop, entitled "Creating the New Education" presents the IMS technology for true natural Montessori teaching in a lively experiential format, including demonstrations, role-play drama, and interactive discussion. Two such workshops are now scheduled for 2009: *Pasadena, CA* (Feb. 21-22, 2009) and *Edmonton, Alb. Canada* (April 18-19, 2009). **Lee Havis**, IMS executive director, guides the workshop participants through all phases of this two-day weekend event.

Since 1986, Lee has conducted over 150 such workshops to present the basic elements of true natural Montessori teaching. He says, "For those who have attended one or more of these prior workshops, don't think you will be bored with this one. Each one is a developing reality, always offering the timeless possibilities of true normal being in the world. We deal with current issues at the time of the event, which is always a new, creative experience."

The new 2009 workshops will present the technology in a more visual manner
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Montessori Workshops

*Technology of Montessori Teaching
for the Scientific Approach to Normal Being*

Pasadena, California
February 21-22, 2009

Edmonton, Alb. Canada
April 18-19, 2009

The IMS workshop is a two-day weekend learning experience, featuring Lee Havis, IMS executive director, presenting the unique 2003 technology of Montessori teaching. This technology is precise practical knowledge for conducting the scientific approach with children that leads to true normal being as discovered by Dr. Montessori in 1907.

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



Lee Havis showing video of children taken at the New Way Montessori School (Meridian, ID)

Overcoming Abandonment Touch, Talk and Looking Around

From October 12-25, 2008, **Lee Havis** conducted his latest IMS consultation visit to the *New Way Montessori School* in Meridian, ID. During this visit, he continued his research into the practical application of IMS technology, focusing especially on overcoming abandonment through touch, talk and looking around.

Lee noted that "Young children react to abandonment by escaping into fantasy, which can quickly lead to running, screaming, and other types of more harmful, violent behavior. Montessori teaching can best overcome this abandonment by using a combination of touch, talk, and looking around."

Touch

Touching applies the *distraction* technique to refocus the child's attention back to present-moment reality. Applying the protocol *least amount of adult involvement*, this touching must be applied in moderation and balance, using only light polishing techniques, such as *eye contact* and *proximity* first. With extremely violent behavior, however, you may need to apply heavy polishing *distraction*, such as with a full-body embrace, exerting strong body contact with a child for a brief period of time. Lee points out that "Combining this touching with calm and friendly talking at the same time adds strength to the overall impact of your interaction. In addition, keep looking around the room while you are dealing with any one single child."

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Reforming Public Education The IMS Montessori Approach

The IMS approach to reforming public education begins with recognizing a fundamental misunderstanding in the use of the term "public education". **Lee Havis**, IMS executive director, says, "In truth, government schooling is not education at all. Rather, it is essentially political indoctrination masquerading under the guise of public education. True education comes from within the child according to infinite and eternal laws of nature. By contrast, government schooling weakens the human spirit, creating dependency on government and reinforcing conventional prejudices that prevail in the majority popular culture. It implements this type of conventional philosophy by imposing a state curriculum within a coercive context of teacher-controlled group instruction."

The IMS approach to reforming public education is to support this laudable goal and purpose through true natural means, emphasizing parental choice and free competition among all available alternatives. This parent oriented approach to responsible public education is already underway through the growing home school movement, which IMS seeks to further support by offering the following specific proposals:

1. Remove compulsory school attendance laws, freeing parents from the coercive threat of prison for non-attendance at government schools.
2. Reduce the age range of compulsory schooling; for example by changing the beginning age from "6" to "7".
3. Decentralize the delivery of government schooling, allowing each local subdivision to provide public education through a range of options, such as in-home tutoring, parental vouchers for non-government schooling, and parent run charter schools.
4. Support free operation and competition among private schools by removing academic content censorship over their curriculum through such means as government approval and licensing of these schools and their teacher training institutions.
5. Remove and/or reduce teacher training restrictions on non-government Montessori schools, such as are imposed through mandatory day care licensing.

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SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION

by Lee Havis

"A scientific educational program must therefore be a school that will permit a child to develop his own personal life."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.19

In the 1800's, two French medical doctors conducted experiments in observing defective children, referring to it as an approach of "scientific education". Later, Dr. Montessori began her own study of children following this same approach, which ultimately came to be known as Montessori teaching. Efforts for this scientific education continue today as part of a long and thoughtful endeavor by many others as well.

Long and Thoughtful Endeavor

"The origins of the educational system in use in the Children's House...sprang from preceding pedagogical experiences with abnormal children, and...represents a long and thoughtful endeavor."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Montessori Method*, p.31

Dr. Montessori's first Children's House experiment began on the basis of scientific education developed before through long and thoughtful research conducted by Itard, Seguin and others. Despite her positive expectations, Dr. Montessori was still completely unprepared for the results she realized from this approach, revealing the child's true nature with such normal qualities as spontaneous self-discipline, love of order and complete harmony with the environment. Unfortunately, this hopeful initial experiment has proven hard to exactly duplicate in practice due to lack of suitable technology and the presence of deeply held beliefs and prejudices about the true nature of man.

Prejudices

"...there is a great obstacle to the scientific study of man. This obstacle is formed by prejudices accumulated during thousands of years."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Formation of Man*, p.9

Basic prejudices about human nature are firmly fixed in the adult personality during early childhood, presenting a significant obstacle to practicing the scientific approach that leads to true normal being. They ordinarily hold an hypnotic influence over our thoughts and actions at a deep, unconscious level, directing us to follow the dictates of conventional reality, rather than infinite and eternal laws of nature. Dr. Montessori nonetheless sought to identify and overcome these inner prejudices, aided by important research conducted in the field of modern psychology.

Modern Psychology

"Modern psychology seeks to observe the unconscious mind, and probe its secrets in order to discover the mind's relation to the facts of life."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *To Ed. the Human Potential*, p.12

Modern psychology, pioneered by William James (1842-1910) and others, set forth ideas about unconscious motivation that helped Dr. Montessori's research with children in the field of education. In fact, she recognized a very close relationship between psychology and the new field of scientific education committed to true normal development in children.

Education

"Education should no longer be mostly imparting of knowledge, but must take a new path, seeking the release of human potentialities..."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Reconstruction in Ed.*, p.10

Dr. Montessori envisioned a fundamental shift in education from its conventional rigid system of grades, tests and academic curriculum to a new way of following laws of nature in a rational, consistent manner. For this new scientific education, she proposed using the basic techniques of experimentation to *control the environment, not the child*.

Techniques of Experimentation

"...nature, through the techniques of experimentation, reveal her own countless secrets."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.5

Before Montessori, Itard and Seguin offered only the rough outline of scientific education, consisting mainly of observing children and collecting relevant data about their activity and progress. In 1907, however, Dr. Montessori began using more precise techniques of experimentation, such as the idea of indirect intervention to maintain focus on controlling the environment around each individual child.

Indirect Intervention

"The pupil can show his surprising achievements only if the teacher applies the scientific techniques of 'indirect intervention' while helping the natural development of the child."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Formation of Man*, p. 38

Montessori teaching employs indirect intervention with children to experimentally remove detrimental influences in their environment. For example, instead of telling a child to stop mishandling a piece of work, place your hand on the object, and redirect the child with a word such as "Watch". In this positive, scientific approach, the prin-

ciple of observation guides you to act on the external facts of what children are actually doing in the present moment.

External Facts

"External facts, which can be fully observed, offer practical guidance which it is worthwhile to pursue."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Absorbent Mind*, p. 52

In 2003, IMS introduced a specific technology to help guide Montessori teaching in a more objective, rational manner than ever before possible. Observing external facts of what the children actually do and say, you then have such specific techniques as *proximity* and *distraction* to craft into suitable forms of interaction with children. The technology also includes a set of 20 protocols,

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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@yahooogroups.com,
and then follow instructions to request placement on the list.

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Moment of Peril

by Wendy Lieberman

Talking to Parents

The teacher's problem with Clancy's misbehavior in the classroom is primarily due to his parent's harmful treatment of him at home. (See *Observer*, September, 2008). The teacher can only resolve this adult personality problem, therefore, by getting the parent (Kim) to change the home environment.

The teacher certainly has the right idea to talk to Kim about her negative punishing treatment of Clancy, which clearly violates such protocols as *no negative attention to misbehavior*. However, she must do this without provoking Kim's negative reaction and possible refusal to cooperate in a positive, supportive manner.

Talking to parents about sensitive misbehavior and home-life activity can be considerably improved by following a simple four-step plan: (1) engage friendly conversation (2) complement the parent, (3) raise the general problem and (4) agree to a suitable solution. For example, start talking with Kim by greeting her with "how are you doing?" (1) Then, complement her for showing patience with Clancy during drop-off procedures (2). Next, describe the school's approach of indirectly dealing with Clancy's misbehavior by controlling the environment, not the child. (3) Point out the *distraction* technique, using the phrase "Come over here. Let me show you something" and ask Kim to try it out the next time Clancy misbehaves (4).

The best time for briefly talking to parents is at drop-off and pick-up times. However, when more time is required, the teacher can plan a specific parent teacher conference. Prepare for this meeting by writing up a progress report about Clancy to give to the parent at its conclusion. In the report, clearly state Clancy's progress and areas for improvement in a positive way. For example, instead of stating "Clancy needs to learn to stop hitting other children", say "Clancy is working to improve his physical self-control in social conflict situations".

At the conference, use the same 4-step process mentioned before, involving Kim in thinking through the issues with you as much as possible. For example, ask Kim if what you say makes sense and if she can imagine how the techniques would work in practice. Finally, ask Kim to implement a specific corrective action, considering Kim's own suggestions on the matter and answering any questions she may have as well.

After the conference, the teacher must reinforce her advice by talking to Kim each day about progress in working through her specific corrective action plan. She must also encourage Kim to notice positive changes in Clancy as she puts this plan into operation.

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Scientific Education

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such as *well being of the total environment*, to help guide your effective use of these techniques.

Prudent Observations

"The teacher...must be able to make prudent observations, to assist a child by going up to, or withdrawing from him, and by speaking or keeping silent in accordance with his needs."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.150

The *well being* protocol directs you to constantly look around the whole environment, even while you are interacting with a misbehaving child. This visual scanning allows you to make the most prudent observations to quickly shift and adjust your attention according to the needs of the total situation. The protocols help control your errors in different ways, allowing you to meet the changing needs of each new situation. Practicing the technology through actual experience helps you learn and improve your skills in Montessori teaching even more.

Actual Experience

"We have derived many useful insights from actual experience, which have helped us to construct new guidelines for a scientific pedagogy of crystal clarity."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Child in the Family*, p.72-73

Montessori teaching is not an exact science like mathematics, but rather somewhat more like the experimental nature of chemistry. It is, however, precise and mathematic in many respects, involving various self-correcting features to assure an ultimately successful result as you engage each problem through actual experience. The Montessori classroom is then like a laboratory for experimentation, testing the premise that each child has its own perfect inner guidance for self-directed normal development.

Laboratory for Experimentation

"Anyone who will adopt this method will make of every school and every class where it is used a laboratory for experimentation."

Dr. Maria Montessori

from *Discovery of the Child*, p.319

Montessori teaching is always experimenting with various techniques to control the environment. The classroom is therefore a laboratory for this experimentation, now greatly enhanced by the practical IMS technology available. The protocols of this technology provide the functional equivalent of laws of nature, which always guide you towards knowing the ultimate truth of normal being.

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Messages to IMS

September, 2008
Cairo, Egypt

Dear Lee,

Concerning offering a workshop in Egypt, it's our honor to have you in Egypt to lead the workshop. I have already many contacts in my local area and I'll do my contacts as soon as possible to see how much they are interested and committed to the offer... There are many schools, societies, organizations and preschools who are interested in Montessori. I'll be contacting them for the workshop offer.

Nabila Refaat

Director, Baity Society Montessori

October, 2008
Coahuila, Mexico

Dear Lee:

I just got your information letter today! Thank you very much for your kindness... I do have the same Montessori spirit you do and I really support your (Character Teaching) project... right now I'm trying to have an audience with the governor of my state to see if he can help us with this... Montessori changed my life forever and nothing would ever give me more satisfaction than see my country take the risk of having Montessori as a system, not only with poor children but in every sector, ... being a Montessori school here in Mexico is not easy...but we truly believe is the best method to educate children... I'm really interested in becoming an IMS member, and I also want my school to be a member and a recognized school....

Tanya Maldonado

August, 2008
Edmonton, Alb, Canada

Dear Mr. Havis

No one from our school has attended an IMS workshop, however, we all recently listened to your workshop CD's that I purchased from the IMS website. It is difficult for many of us to attend workshops as most of the noteworthy ones are usually held in the U.S. I'm hoping to generate enough interest that we can have one close to home.

Dawn Burgess

Overcoming Abandonment

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Talk

Talking to children in fantasy is very effective for overcoming abandonment in many situations. It is especially important to use with children who are engaged in their own fantasy dialogue at the time. Following the protocol *basis of interest*, your talking must closely relate to the content of the children's verbal expression. For example, if children are talking about going to see a doctor, say "What are you doing?" and "Why are you seeing the doctor?" Again, touching while talking gives added strength to just talking or touching alone.

Looking Around

Looking up and around the room while dealing with individual children is important to follow the protocol *well-being of the total environment*. It especially allows you to give brief eye contact lessons with other children even while you are closely involved with one specific child.

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Scientific Education

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Knowing the Truth

"...the method of Positive Science...puts man in the way of knowing the truth."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Spontaneous Act. In Ed.*, p.242

Montessori teaching follows laws of nature to lead you towards knowing the truth that transcends all boundaries and divisions of culture or personality. Applied with others, it offers a new reality for perfect normal being in society. Despite its essential simplicity, Montessori teaching is still a delicate science of the human spirit that requires great faith, imagination and courage to fully translate into your real life everyday activity with children.

Science of the Human Spirit

"...reconstruction requires the elaboration of a 'science of the human spirit'. It is a patient work, an endeavor based on research to which thousands of people dedicated to this aim, must contribute."

Dr. Maria Montessori
from *Formation of Man*, p. 19

In 1907, the possibility for true normal being soon led the way for a new science of the human spirit. Viewing the child as a pure, spiritual being, this science is particularly difficult to practice since it so totally deviates from the conditions and truth of conventional reality. Using the IMS technology, however, you can effectively follow this scientific education with children to help them bring about a new and better future for all mankind.

Moment of Peril

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Touching

The teacher has a problem with 3-year-old Tara who tends to get into misbehavior, knocking things on the floor and running around the room without control of her movements. When the teacher approaches to question her about what she is doing, Tara just continues her misbehavior, ignoring the teacher. When she touches the mishandled object to get her attention, Tara screams "no" and pulls on the object.

What to do?

Answer in *Observer*, March, 2009

Reforming Public Education

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6. Phase out taxpayer funding of government schools by gradually shifting to a "school tax" for parents who actually use these schools.

The above proposals all have the benefit of improving the quality of public education through free competition and parental choice. If the aim of public education is to achieve the hopeful, positive results of economic and social progress, rather than political indoctrination to majority opinion, then implementing these proposals for true public education is a sensible and wise path to follow.

Overcoming Abandonment

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Using touch, talk, and looking around, helps you overcome even the most serious group disorder situations with considerable poise and skill. In this way, children feel your presence in a positive way that overcomes abandonment and allows them to return to a state of normal peace, order, and harmony with the environment.

IMS 2009 Workshops

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than before, including video clips of actual Montessori teaching with children at the New Way Montessori School (Meridian, ID). Lee says, "This visual presentation will help highlight certain key features of the technology, which in the past have been difficult to communicate through role play drama and imagination alone."

Workshop participants will also receive a study guide to follow along and take notes about what they are learning. This written record then becomes a valuable reference guide for applying the technology later in their own classroom situation.

For the Pasadena workshop, **Suja Saikumar**, IMS student in the Los Angeles, CA area, was instrumental in scheduling this event by her contacting local schools to confirm their interest in attending. In Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, **Dawn Burgess**, a local Montessori educator, initiated this event after listening to the IMS Danbury audio cd and trying out the technology with children at her school.

Early registration for each workshop is eight weeks in advance. By that date, the rate is US\$150/person for IMS members. For the Pasadena workshop, register by December 21, 2008 to receive this special rate. To register and to obtain further information, contact IMS, tel. 301-589-1127 www.imsmontessori.org. havis@imsmontessori.org.

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