

The Montessorian



Birthday Greetings to Dr. Maria Montessori

31st August, 1870 – 6th May, 1952

Dr. Maria Montessori

Born in 1870, Maria Montessori was a headstrong and smart child. She was a math prodigy and at age 12 insisted on attending a boy's technical school to study math and science. Dr. Maria Montessori was the first woman to enroll in the University of Rome's Medical School and became one of the first women doctors in Italy.

In 1898, she began formulating her ideas while working with diagnosed mentally disabled children at the State Orthophrenic School. Her work was widely publicized when all the children passed their Italian public school examinations.

Dr. Montessori earned a second degree in anthropology in 1904 and opened her first school for children in the San Lorenzo district of Rome in 1907. There she continued her work designing materials to meet the developmental needs of children. Dr. Montessori observed that all children learn best through their senses, by doing and at their own pace. She continued to observe children around the world and found that the principles of development she had recognized are common to children of all races and cultures. Soon her "Children's House" became model classrooms, full of joyful and engaged learners.

The Montessori approach to education continues to be respected and practiced internationally.

Dr. Montessori was a visionary and a humanitarian. She was nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize and received many Expressions of recognitions of her work and contribution to education. (Two honorary doctorates).

She was honoured by the Italian Government who put her portrait on a 1000 Lira note before the Euro currency of course, as well as on a stamp to commemorate 100 years of Montessori. Commemorative stamps were also issued by India and Sri Lanka.



Birthday Celebrations, Independence Day Celebrations



Dr. Montessori's birthday, which is on 31st August, was celebrated a little earlier and Independence day which fell on 14th August was celebrated a little later, on 20th August, to accommodate the Hajj season and give members a chance for a joyful get together.

The programme started with PMA president Zohra Gaya's welcome speech and a resume on Dr Montessori's life and work.



While the members waited for the musicians to arrive, some lively ladies decided to sing national songs, joined by the rest of the participants.



One of the members, Rozina, arrived from the County Cambridge School, Hyderabad with a delicious coffee cake, from the famous Bombay Bakery. After a jovial cake cutting ceremony by the president, the musicians arrived and gave everyone a real treat by singing national songs and other songs on request. The celebrations ended with a much needed break of Halwa puri and chai (tea), not forgetting the coffee cake, all the way from Hyderabad.



“Practical Life – Building skills for the future”.

MTTC organised a lecture by **Cheryl Ferreira, Director of Training** at the AMI affiliated Montessori Training Institute, London, on her recent visit to Karachi as an examiner.



“ Every child and young person is entitled to develop skills for learning skills for life and skills for work, with a continuous focus on literacy and numeracy, health and well- being.”

Ms Cheryl Ferreira, gave a talk on the importance of Practical life – Building skills for the future.

Cheryl Ferreira

These exercises are taken for granted by many and it was a welcoming refresher talk to put us all back on track.

She started with the early years foundation with a view to make things better for the child and practical life as we know and to see how it makes the following aspects possible. The participants joined in to give the following aspects:-

Independence, aid to life, concentration, adaptation, normalisation, confidence, logical thinking discipline, judgement/calculation, satisfaction and co-ordination of movement were a few of the subjects suggested by the participants.

The child needs to do real life exercises. It is all very well to do the pouring activities which help co-ordination, concentration and judgement, but giving him ‘real’ pouring exercises such as pouring water in a glass for himself from a water jug gives him immense satisfaction. Washing his plate after break time and rinsing his glass after finishing his milk are exercises which can be given. Snacks from lunch boxes may be emptied into a plate, a little at a time and eaten at his will and leisure. Forcing a child to over eat at this time may lead to health problems such as high cholesterol, glucose levels and other ailments. Parents or schools providing snacks should concentrate on a healthy snack. A good idea would be to share the fruit snack. If children have been shown how to use a real knife, they may share their fruit, tomato, cucumber or carrot included, (botanically named fruits). Of course, cutting with a sharp knife should be supervised.

Making lassi and drinking it would be an interesting exercise. When someone suggested a blender to make the lassi, Ms Ferreira suggested the good old lassi making stick with a head which some of the participants hadn’t used. She firmly suggested to have the relevant sticks made and use them.

Making lime juice with a lemon squeezer with a little rock salt .Making chapatis with real dough is another activity that may be included .**Avoid** sugar was her advice (including jelly which is high in sugar content) as it causes too many problems later on in life.

Shoe polishing. Again depending if they wear sandals, joggers or leather shoes, polishing, cleaning or washing may be shown according to the child’s needs. The child may polish or wash her own shoes, if she wishes to.

Washing or scrubbing a table. After the child has been shown the activity, encourage him to wash any table or chair or polish any table so that he understands that he can clean any piece at school or home.

Ironing is a possibility with the plugs fixed to give just enough heat and likewise many more culturally friendly activities may be done.

Grace and Courtesy should be given in a group. If the children have a turn in doing an activity such as carrying a chair, it becomes a game and the children don’t feel as if they are specially being told how to this activity.

Activities suggested by participants **to be avoided** include nail cutting, washing clean utensils, washing feeding bottles .

Nail cutting is intricate and needs a lot of concentration and can be dangerous.

By washing clean utensils, the purpose of the activity is lost. Give the child used, dirty plates to wash.

Feeding bottles must be avoided. The child must be using a glass by the time he comes to the Montessori environment. Feeding bottles need to be sterilised in the true sense and cleaned properly.

If the child is seen polishing the base of the shoe, guide him to the correct area.

She ended with the advice to give the children cultural friendly activities in a logical way, remaining consistent all the way. A new task lightens up the whole brain.

Practical Life in the 21st Century

Children need to work more at home with practical life exercises and parents should be educated in this respect. At home if maids are doing all the work, what is the child supposed to do? The option to educate the maid to let the child help with dusting, sweeping like Dr. Montessori trained the porter's daughter in San Lorenzo. Literacy and numeracy need mind and hand and only works if both are ready.

Practical life should be an experience for the child and the adult should stop being rigid.

Skills for Numeracy

Creativity:

An example of a child in an ordinary school drew a house without a roof as he had never seen a roof, was chided by the teacher and shown how to draw a house with a roof. Another day the child drew a flower in a different way and was again shown by the teacher how to draw it. The next time he asked the teacher, 'how do you want me to draw it'? The poor child had lost his will to express. Remember to 'follow the child'. Allow the child to think how to create.

Order:

There is an order with guidance. One should not interfere with the order.

Responsibility:

If we all took responsibility of saving electricity, by switching off unnecessary lights, perhaps our power shortage problems would be solved. One should learn responsibility by cause and effect. For example, if a child breaks a jug, quietly put the activity away for a day or two, saying I shall have to get another jug when I go shopping. This way, he will be careful next time when he takes the activity next time. Also the fact that he must complete an activity helps him to become responsible.

Flexibility:

The limitation in the material allows him to choose and the way in which he can do an activity. The Pink Tower may be done outdoors on a plastic mat outdoors, weather permitting.

Social Skills:

A mixed age group allows the child to be with children from different kinds of families, different cultures and develop an understanding of the other children's needs.

Productivity:

To complete an activity with a satisfying end result.

Reference: The Advanced Montessori Method Volume 1 Chapter 3.

Leadership:

Dr. Montessori's vision was very much ahead of her time. We still haven't caught up with her motive for practical life activities. We have to create an environment that allows the child to work freely and choose his activity, remembering not to interfere with his exploration.

Reference: The Absorbent Mind – Deviations and Normality.



Child polishing her own shoes



Child scrubs a chair

Maria Montessori Culture as a Means of Development in the Formative Periods Fourth Lecture at The Montessori Congress, Edinburgh, 1938

Introduction In the year just preceding our 28th International Montessori Congress to take place in Prague, Czech Republic, we return to a past edition, almost eighty years ago: in 1938 the Montessori Congress was hosted in Edinburgh by the Scottish Montessori Society, from July 26 - August 2. One of the four lectures that Maria Montessori delivered on that occasion is entitled "Culture as a Means of Development in the Formative Periods"; a lecture with a subject matter as fresh as ever was never published in English before, although the lecture did find its way to Dutch and German readers in the past.¹ Where Maria Montessori discusses culture in this lecture, she understands it to refer to ideas, customs, and knowledge of the world and, as usual argues passionately that the human being can never be too young to be offered culture in a structured and organised fashion. Montessori points to a new challenge in society and education which she terms "scientific illiteracy", which has almost replaced that previous major challenge of "simple and straightforward" illiteracy. In Montessori's eyes, in 1938 people had to deal with a lack of knowledge of new ideas, how the modern world functioned and how society was structured. Perhaps in our times this plea is equally urgent: in spite of the fact that today's children, generally speaking, enjoy a higher level of education than ever before, we as 21st century citizens have to continuously adapt to new developments, new insights and knowledge, and the pace at which they reach and impact our lives is formidable. Culture new and in flux is acquired through all external means. Montessori argued that offering culture is essential and that the child absorbs it spontaneously from the environment in a disorganised fashion with the greatest ease, and wondered how offering culture in a structured fashion could possibly be tiring. Traditional schools apparently viewed offering culture to children such a strenuous exercise for them that it seemed to be a threat to their mental health; the audience laughed with Montessori when she joked that the remedy chosen by the schools was to rather remove certain subjects altogether from the school curriculum. Montessori also emphasised her ideas on the role of the hand in building intelligence in this lecture when she says that nothing can ever become material solely by exercising the power of the mind: the hand is a partner of equal significance in the realization

of concepts. "Environmental" background on the Congress The local newspaper The Scotsman of 2 August reported that all congress lectures were delivered in Craigmillar Park Church Hall, adjoining the Carlyle Hostel, East Suffolk. On the day that this lecture was given the sun was shining brightly, and at the wish of Maria Montessori the chairs were transferred to the lawn of the hostel where the delegates formed an open air "class". The day's meeting was presided over by Lady Leslie Mackenzie (Helen Spence, 1859-1945).

Together with her husband, Sir Leslie Mackenzie, she was a Scottish public health campaigner. Her husband was knighted for his work in improving the physical condition of Scottish schoolchildren, and the couple influenced many important educational reforms in the early 1900s. Lady Mackenzie was known for her inspiring speeches, so we assume that her introduction to Maria Montessori gave evidence of her passion to defend the rights of children. Maria Montessori's lectured in Italian; Mario M. Montessori translated verbatim. (The photograph shows Maria Montessori and Mario Montessori awaiting their turn to start the lecture, while Lady Leslie Mackenzie gives her introductory talk.) ¹ This lecture was first published in the Dutch book "Door het kind naar een nieuwe wereld", ed. by A. M. Joosten, Heiloo 1941 (tweede druk 1953), p. 86-96. The title of the text was modified by the editor of the Dutch book: "Kennis als middel tot ontwikkeling der persoonlijkheid". The second publication was in German by Helene Helming in the magazine Montessori-Werkbrief 23/1970, S. 3-7. A German translation of the complete Dutch version was published in the book: Ludwig, H./ Fischer Ch./ Fischer R. (Ed.): Verstehendes Lernen in der Montessori-Paedagogik, IdR vol. 8, Muenster 2003, p. 73-79. The complete text on the basis of the English typescript of 1938 was published in volume 15 of the academic edition of Montessori's Collected works: "Durch das Kind zu einer neuen Welt", Freiburg 2013, p. 69-79

From the answer by Maria Montessori in response to the addresses of welcome at the inaugural meeting of the congress.

We shall understand one another, in spite of differences of language
because we have at least two common principles that unite us:
the love of the child and the love of freedom.

The child awakens us. In him, small and helpless we feel a great potentiality. [...]

It is our hope to make Humanity better.

This becomes a faith that unites children and adults,
and raises childhood to a very high level of power.

In order to understand, we must see the child from a fresh angle

. He is to be our teacher, not we his. What is important is for all of us to serve the child.

From the archival treasure article, part of the AMI Journal. courtesy and copyright Association Montessori Internationale. 2016.

Montessori Memories



Left to Right Masooma Hayat, Masooma Alibhai, Zubeda Asghar, Kishwar Allawala, Cheryl Ferreira, Zohra Gaya Maheen Pasha, Farah Sarfraz, Banoo Kisat

PMA members enjoying breakfast by Zohra Gaya with Cheryl Ferreira, Director, MTI London. June 2nd 2016



L to R Salma Imtiaz, Nilufer Ahmed, Anisa Moin, Zohra Gaya and Masooma Hayat at a farewell lunch for Anisa Moin by PMA



Death Anniversary –7th August

Former PMA Chief Patron- Professor Anita Ghulam Ali



Remembering late Professor Anita Ghulamali, Chief Patron of Pakistan Montessori Association from 2006 till 2014. Professor Ghulamali was chief guest at the ground breaking ceremony at the Gool Minwalla Montessori Campus, Clifton, in the year 2003.

Boat Schools

"Then we also run a school for the children of fisher folks in Mancher Lake, Karachi. Children come by boat, and have their lessons in 'Boat School, Mancher Lake'. This is a ten year programme, which has paid off.

Anita Ghulamali

Boat School, Manchar Lake



Arnavaz Dinshaw, Zohra Gaya and Anita Ghulamali at the ground breaking ceremony of GMMC, Clifton



ESF Hyderabad, India

The Educateurs sans Frontières Assembly in Hyderabad is "wrapping up". In his closing address AMI Global Ambassador André Roberfroid said that "humanity has potential for enlightened evolution called justice, with education being the best instrument"

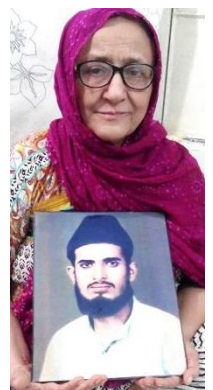
August 12, 2016.

PMA Promotes Montessori Education

Pakistan Montessori Association has offered to introduce Montessori education to the Sind Education Foundation in their pre- schools. To date they are awaiting their response.

PMA has offered introduction of the Montessori method to the nursery schools run by the Edhi Foundation and are awaiting their reply. One of the PMA committee members visited Bilquis Edhi and took this memorable photograph with her late husband's portrait. May Allah rest his soul in peace. Ameen.

The aim for the above propositions is to reach out and progress towards Montessori without borders in Karachi.



Announcements

28th International Montessori Congress Prague 27 - 30 July 2017
Pathway to Peace: Montessori Education for Social Change to Peace
For more information visit www.montessori-ami.org

Upcoming Events

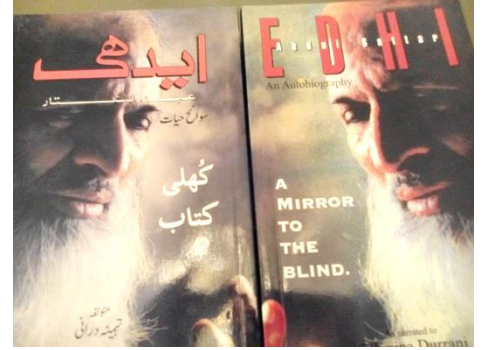
25th September - **PMA Annual General Body Meeting** Time **10.30 am** (Members Only)

Talk on **Speech and Language Development** of the 3-6 year old child by **Asiya Sachwani**
Time: **11.30am- 1.30pm.**

Venue PMA PECHS premises
Library

Two books have been added to the PMA library. These books were presented to the PMA, to our representative while on a visit to Bilquis Edhi.

PMA members may borrow these books during school timings or monthly meetings. The books are on Edhi, in Urdu and English.



Committee Members

Zohra Gaya – President
Farida Fazal – Vice President
Kishwar Allawala – General Secretary
Banoo Kisat – Treasurer
Shireen Gaya – Joint Secretary

Nilufer Ahmed
Farah Sarfraz
Parveen Islam
Maheen Pasha
Nargis Sheerazi
Zubeda Asghar
Masooma Alibhai

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