

# The Montessorian

## PMA AGM and Elections – September 2016

PMA annual general meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2016. In her welcome speech, President Zohra Gayarequested members to come forward and help withPMA activities and take an active part in spreading the Montessori philosophy. Minutes of the last meeting and the Annual Report were read by General Secretary, Kishwar Allawala and confirmed. Banoo Kisat, Treasurer, read the accounts. After the elections, a talk on Speech and Language Development followed. President Zohra Gaya put a garland on General Secretary, Kishwar Allawalla upon her return from Hajj.

Elections were held with the following results:- PMA Committee Members-2016



### Dr. Maria Montessori’s last Christmas wish in 1951 Happy New Year from AMI

“ Freedom of choice produces dignity in man. However, freedom cannot be given; it forms part of human nature and must be cultivated if it is to affirm and establish itself as one of the essential traits of the character of man. (...) The urge to independence is present in every child and should be given a chance to take form in the human spirit by careful cultivation. One should begin at the earliest age...”  
Maria Montessori, Christmas 1951



## A visit to Mehnaz Fatma Montessori, Gilgit by *Banoo Kisat*

I had the experience of understanding the working of a Montessori school in the northern areas of Pakistan (Gilgit) . Enthusiastic teachers and willing workers were happy to observe the result of Montessori work with the children. With limited resources, they were eager to continue the work of Dr.Maria Montessori. Suggestions were provided for improvement in the environment and teacher’s role in the classroom and presentation of apparatus was discussed. It was interesting to note that children with learning difficulties such as hearing and visual impairment were given education in all classes.



Banoo Kisat (left) and Ghazala Principal of the school



Children working in the Montessori

The school building was very presentable and classrooms, maintained well. A clinic is being built in the vicinity near the main building, to give the children occupational therapy.





## Speech and Language Development

In PMA September meeting, **Asiya Faris Sachwani**, a Speech-Language Pathologist, an AMI Elementary Directress and an Educational Consultant, gave a talk on Speech and Language Development of the 3-6 year old child. It focused on warning signs and on classroom strategies for language facilitation.

Asiya started off with an interesting activity, handing out age slips for example by 6 months, by 9 months, by 12 months and so on. These were distributed to participants. More slips of what a child should be able to do at the particular age were handed out and participants were asked to stick the labels under the age groups. A few examples follow:-

### **By 6 months:-** the child should :

Startle in response to loud noises. Turn to where a sound is coming from. Make different cries for different needs (hungry, tired). Watch your face as you talk to him/her. Smile/ laugh in response to your smiles and laughs. Imitate coughs or other sounds such as ah, eh, buh.

### **By 30 months**

Understand the concept of size (big/little) and quantity (a little, a lot more). Use some adult grammar (two cookies, bird flying, I jumped). Use over 350 words. Use action words such as run, spill, fall. Participate in some turn taking activities with peers, using both words and toys. Demonstrate concern when another child is hurt or sad.

### **By 48 months**

Follow directions involving 3 or more steps (First get some paper, then draw a picture and give it to mummy. Use adult type grammar. Tell stories with a beginning, middle and end. Talk to try and solve problems with adults and other children.

Talk in a way that he/ she is understood by strangers almost all the time. Generate simple rhymes like cat, bat, hat. Match letters with their sounds.

She went on to discuss communication warning signs. Communicating with the parents in a positive manner and guiding them to take the child for an assessment to a speech therapy centre and encouraging the parents to follow up their visit and progress of the child.

She ended with strategies to support language development. A few suggestions were to respond to the child and take turns. To talk often with the child, using a rich and varied vocabulary and follow the child's lead.

Courtesy: Handout given at the talk

Participants enjoyed a very enlightening morning, especially, those on their way to becoming mums or grandmothers!

## Glossary of Montessori Terms

The Glossary of Montessori terms presented here relates to the theory and practice for the primary (3-6) level. It was prepared by Annette Haines at the request of Molly O'Shaughnessy to accompany her lecture at the Joint Annual Refresher Course, held in Tampa, Florida in February 2001.

**Adaptation:** Related to the idea of an absorbent mind (Haines, 1933) is a special power of the young child that can be called the power of adaptation. This power is a process where the young child uses the environment to develop and, in so doing, becomes a part of that environment. The young child absorbs the culture of her time and place, taking in all the spirit, the customs, the ambitions/aspirations and attitudes of a society simply by living in that society.

**Analysis of Movement:** A technique used by Montessori teachers. The adult, when showing a complex action to a child, breaks it down into its parts and shows one step at a time, executing each movement slowly and exactly. The action thus becomes a sequence of simple movements and the child has a greater chance of success when 'given the liberty to make use of them.' (Montessori, 1966,p.108)

**Classification:** Sorting. Allocating or distributing according to common characteristics. The young child engages in classification activities because the process is essential for the construction of the intellect. The Montessori classroom offers many opportunities for classification.

**Coordination of Movement:** One of the major accomplishments of early childhood. Through the child's own effort, she wills herself to refine her muscular coordination and consequently acquires increasingly higher levels of independent functioning. Because of this developmental need, children are drawn to activities that involve movement and especially to those which demand a certain level of exactitude and precision.

**Deviations:** Behaviour commonly seen in children that is the result of some obstacle to normal development. Such behaviour may be commonly understood as negative (a timid child, a destructive child, etc.) or positive (a passive, quiet child). Both positive and negative deviations disappear once the child begins to concentrate on a piece of work freely chosen.

**Exercises of Practical Life:-**One of the four areas of activities of the Montessori prepared environment. The exercises of Practical Life resemble the simple work of life in the home: sweeping, dusting, washing dishes, etc. These purposeful activities help the child adapt to his new community, learn self-control and begin to see himself as a contributing party of the social unit. His intellect grows as he works with his hands; his personality becomes integrated as body and mind function as a unit.

**False Fatigue:** A phenomenon observed in Children's houses around the world – often at approximately 10 a.m. The children seem to lose interest in work, their behaviour becomes disorderly and the noise level rises. It may appear as if the children are tired. However, if the directress understands this is simply false fatigue, they will return to work on their own and their work will be at an even higher level than before.

**Grace and Courtesy:** An aspect of Practical Life. Little lessons which demonstrate positive social behaviour help the young child adapt to a life in a group and arm her with knowledge of socially acceptable behaviour practical information both in and out of school.

**Help from Periphery:** The periphery is that part of the child that comes into contact with external reality. The child takes in impressions through the senses and through movement. Help from the periphery means presenting objects and activities in such a way so as to evoke purposeful movement on the part of the child. “We never give to the eye more than we give to the hand.” (Standing, 1957, p. 237)

**Human Tendencies:** A central tenet of Montessori philosophy is that human beings exhibit certain predispositions that are universal, spanning age, cultural and racial barriers; they have existed since the dawn of the species and are probably evolutionary in origin. Montessori stresses the need to serve those special traits that have proved to be tendencies of Man throughout his history.’(Mario Montessori, 1966,p.21).

**Independence:** Not depending on another- ‘with various shades of meaning.’(OED, p. 836) Normal developmental milestones such as weaning, walking, talking, etc. can be seen as a series of events which enable the child to achieve increased individuation, autonomy and self–regulation. Throughout the four planes of development, the child and young adult continuously seek to become more independent. It is as if the child says, ‘ help me to help myself’.

**Indirect Preparation:** The way nature has of preparing the intelligence. In every action, there is a conscious interest. Through this interest, the mind is being prepared for something in the future. For example, a young child will enjoy the putting together of various triangular shapes, totally unaware that because of this work his mind will later be accepting of geometry. Also called remote preparation, the deeper educational purpose of many Montessori activities is remote in time.

**Indirect Presentation:** Because of the absorbent mind, every action or event can be seen as a lesson. It is understood that children learn by watching other children work or by overseeing a lesson given to another. In the same way, they quickly absorb the behaviour patterns and the language used by the family, the neighbourhood children and even television.

**Learning Explosions:** Human development is often not slow and steady; acquisitions seem to arrive suddenly, almost overnight, and with explosive impact. Such learning explosions are the sudden outward manifestation of a long process of internal growth. For example, the explosion of spoken language around two years of age is the result of many months of inner preparation and mental development.

**Three-Hour Work Cycle:** Through years of observation around the world, Montessori came to understand that children, when left in freedom, displayed a distinct work cycle which was so predictable it could even be graphed. This cycle, with two peaks and one valley, lasted approximately three hours. In Montessori schools children have three hours of open, uninterrupted time to choose independent work, become deeply engaged, and repeat to their own satisfaction.

**Work:** From an evolutionary perspective, the long period of childhood exists so children can learn and experiment in a relatively pressure-free environment. Most social scientists refer to this pressure-free experimentation as play (e.g., see Groos, 1901), although Montessori preferred to call this activity the work of childhood. Children certainly are serious when engaged in the kind of play that meets developmental needs and given freedom and time, will choose purposeful activities over frivolous make-believe ones.

**By Annette Haines**

## Montessori Memories

**PMA Committee members' lunch at Zohra Gaya's to welcome KishwarAllawala back from Hajj. October 2016.**



Front row: Left to Right: Banoo Kijat, Zohra Gaya, Kishwar Allawala, Nilufer Ahmed.  
Back Row: Nargis Sheerazi, Farah Sarfraz, Maheen Pasha, Shireen Gaya, Zeeba Rizvi, MasoomaAlibhai

### Breaking News – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2016

Khekashan Basu, is the winner of the International Children's Peace Prize 2016!

Khekashan Basu (16) from the United Arab Emirates received the prize from Nobel Peace Laureate Muhammad Yunus for her extraordinary fight to safeguard the environment.

In the latest KidsRights [news message](#) you can read more about the winner and her cause.

**Maria Montessori wrote in 1937:"As a citizen, the Child must be recognized in its human dignity and it must be respected as the Builder of Man. The importance of the child's personality must be consecrated among the moral principles of humanity, because upon the child depends not only the physical constitution of man, but also his moral character. The future of Society is therefore connected with the Child as unconditionally as effects are connected with their causes."**



## Zia Awan on Child Abuse

PMA November meeting was honoured by Zia Awan, a prominent lawyer and founder of **Madadgar National Helpline** for giving a talk on Child Abuse. The talk started by questions answered by Zia Awan where many issues were discussed, mainly children of Montessori Primary school age (3-6) years.. His main aim was to bring awareness of abuse to parents and teachers and to be vigilant. Many cases of abuse at home, domestic staff such as drivers, maids, houseboys and van drivers were discussed. His advice was look after boys too. It is not only girls who get abused. He invited Pakistan Montessori Association to work with Madadgar helpline, initially just to bring awareness of abuse by introducing Madadgar to schools, parents and teachers.



Madadgaar, Pakistan's first helpline for women and children is working since last decade. It initially started with the support of UNICEF in Karachi. Madadgaar is an offshoot of Lawyers for Human Rights and Legal Aid (LHRLA). Madadgaaris Pakistan's first Helpline for children & women suffering from violence, abuse and exploitation.

Madadgaar National Helpline provides telephonic counselling, face to face counselling to walk-in survivors, crisis intervention, guidance, legal advises and legal aid and referral services to children and women. LHRLA is working since last 20 years and is playing an effective role in providing services to the victims of violence, abuse and exploitation particularly the children and women who are most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society. In year 2013, Madadgaar National helpline was up scaled with the support of Plan International, Pakistan and the network of Madadgaar is providing services to children and women at national level with existence at provincial headquarters in Lahore, Quetta Peshawar and Karachi.

### Objectives

Prevention and protection of children, women and marginalized communities.

To highlight, arrest and eliminate human trafficking.

Collection of information about children and women's right situation.

Capacity building of Stakeholders.

To work for the protection rights of transgenders.

To work for the rights and protection of street children.

To work for the promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR).

To lobby and advocate against the discriminatory laws and social practices.

### MADAGAAR NATIONAL HELPLINE

SMS 0311 6641098 CONTACT Madadgaar (1098) if you or know of someone going through an ordeal.

## Announcements

**Complete advance material for sale**  
Contact: Amna Masood 0307 2912868

**AMI Annual General Meeting and Montessori Forum 2017**  
Save the date! 7th - 9th April [info@montessori-ami.org](mailto:info@montessori-ami.org)

**28th International Montessori Congress**  
You are invited to Prague, July 27 – 30, 2017  
July 27 – 30, 2017  
<http://www.montessoricongress2017.org>

### **Managing Committee**

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

### **GMMC -Incharge**

Shireen Gaya

### **Pedagogical Committee**

Zohra Gaya  
Farida Fazal  
Nilufer Ahmed

### **Entertainment Committee**

Zeeba Rizvi  
Zubeda Asghar  
Nargis Sheerazi

### **Other Members**

Nilufer Ahmed  
Shireen Gaya  
Maheen Pasha  
Zeeba Rizvi  
Nargis Sheerazi  
Masooma Alibhai  
Zubeda Asghar – co opted

### **Finance Committee**

HabibaThobani  
Zohra Gaya  
Banoo Kisat  
Kishwar Allawala

### **Website/facebook**

Maheen Pasha

### **Newsletter**

Masooma Alibhai

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*43-3G/6, PECHS, Karachi – 75400 Tel: 3454 3952, 3454 9103*  
*Website: [www.pakistanmontessoriassociation.org](http://www.pakistanmontessoriassociation.org); AMI Head Office: [www.montessori-ami.org](http://www.montessori-ami.org)*