

# A NEW CONCEPT

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION, THE MONTESSORI WAY



### THE CONTEXT

- Aim: prepare children for life
- Nowadays: sedentary lifestyle
- Key: promote physical activity

## Tackling childhood obesity is about more than diet and exercise



We are on the brink of more children being overweight than underweight due to a lack of movement.  
Image: REUTERS/Claro Cortes IV

This article is published in collaboration with  
The Conversation

26 Oct 2017

**David Morley**  
Professor of Youth Sport and physical activity, Sheffield Hallam University

David Morley, *"Tackling childhood obesity is about more than diet and exercise"* (World Economic Forum)



## MARIA MONTESSORI ON PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Physical activity essential for intellectual growth
- Exercises should help the normal development of movements



## THE NEED

- Montessori schools: traditional P.E.
- New concept: Physical education the Montessori way

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## THE ANSWER

Montessori  
Gym





## MONTESSORI PRINCIPLES

- Whole child approach
- Independence
- Prepared environment
- Sensitive periods and observation
- Nature and the real world
- Teacher as facilitator
- Cooperation and peer learning
- Purposeful action

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## MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE: WHOLE CHILD APPROACH

### MONTESSORI GYM:

- Brings Montessori approach to P.E.
- Focus on basic athletic development

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## MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE: INDEPENDENCE

### MONTESSORI GYM:

- Freedom of movement and choice
- Individual and small groups activities
- Control of error

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## MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE: PREPARED ENVIRONMENT

### MONTESSORI GYM:

- Functional stations
- Skills development

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**MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE:**  
**SENSITIVE PERIODS AND  
OBSERVATION**

- Montessori Gym:
  - Sensitive periods of physical development
  - Observation
  - Flexibility

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**MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE:**  
**NATURE AND THE REAL WORLD**

- Montessori Gym:
  - Natural materials
  - Practical/real life elements

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## MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE: TEACHER AS FACILITATOR

- Montessori Gym:
  - Intro to Montessori for coaches
  - Montessori teaching style for coaching

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## MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE: COOPERATION AND PEER LEARNING

- Montessori Gym:
  - Focus on non-competitive physical activities
  - Exercises in pairs/small groups that promote cooperation and peer learning

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## MONTESSORI PRINCIPLE: PURPOSEFUL ACTION

- Montessori Gym:
  - Physical development through mastering basic skills
  - Natural movement for life

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## EXAMPLES IN VISUALS

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AVANTI, LET'S TRY IT!

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### "BALL WALK"

- While riding on the Pedal Board, the child tries holding or juggling a ball in one or two hands so that the need for movement control is increased.

### "NORDIC WALK"

- Using the Pedal Board, the child moves freely to experience pedaling and the fluent load change between the left and right leg. After mastering the movement forward, try pedaling backwards or with the eyes closed!



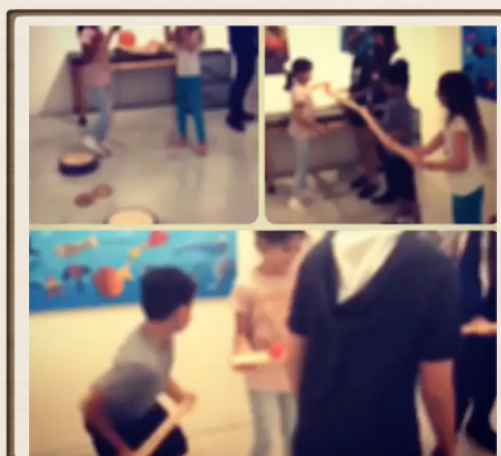
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## "CROSSING THE RIVER"

- Using the Balance Box elements, set like a trail course with a random pattern on the floor (simulating stones and tree branches emerging from the water), the child has to go from one side of the "river" to the other without "falling" or stepping into the water (i.e. without touching the floor). This activity can be performed individually or in groups.
- Progression/variation: Set up the elements in a different configuration and/or further apart from each other.

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## "ROLLING BALL"

- A team activity to promote cooperation. The goal: move the ball from one point to another, using only the wooden tracks, without touching it or letting it fall. For this, the children need to form a continuous chain with inclination to move the ball forward.

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