

President's Corner

Dear Montessori friends!

This year we celebrate Dr. Montessori's 150th birthday, born August 31, 1870. Time-traveling back to that year, we would find ourselves in a world that was just barely coming to terms with the immorality of slavery, that had little understanding of the causes of diseases, and no awareness of the harm child labor caused. Yet in that world, Maria Montessori discovered, publicized, and promoted ideas that were so far ahead of her time that they continue to be validated by science today. She provided us with her legacy of groundbreaking revelations, and created a philosophy that has been found sound by current scientific research. This month's newsletter provides two articles on brain-based science that support what Maria Montessori knew from her observations, training, and instinct to be true. One hundred and fifty years since her birth, her genius continues to be confirmed. Brain-based science's comprehensive approach to learning parallels Montessori's concept of the whole child. The child's attraction to a comforting, calming environment that uses the senses for experiential learning; learning within the context of social interaction; challenging hands-on experiences; the importance of art and music; and individualized learning are all concepts that Montessori championed. These are the concepts she left for us as her legacy; this philosophy provides the core of our life's practice. Once again, we can be inspired and affirmed by our choice to become Montessorians as the world continues to discover the truth of her work. Happy Birthday, Dr. Montessori, and thank you.

My hands to yours ...
Heidi Gauger

MMS

Spring

Workshop

March 21, 2020

Troy

Community

Center

Michigan Montessori Board of Directors 2019-20

Heidi Gauger, President
MMTEC
(313) 562-7777
hwgmontessori@gmail.com

Theresa Weber, Secretary
Adrian(ADMTEI) Training Center
(517) 266-3415
tweber@comcast.net

Karen Lumsden, Newsletter
Children's Place Montessori
(248) 476-9660
cpmontessori@gmail.com

Mary Lamos, Workshops
Montessori Center of Downriver
(734) 282-6465
mary.lamos@gmail.com

Erin Compton, Affiliation
Stepping Stones Montessori
(517) 336-0422
erin.m.compton@gmail.com

Sue Fitzpatrick, MMEAN Advocate
Livonia Montessori
(248) 474-4764
sfitzpatrick@dhmontessori.org

Cyndi Iannuzzi, Vice President
Montessori Children's Academy
(586) 286-4566
ciannuzzi@montessori-childrens-academy.org

Kay Neff, Treasurer
Dearborn Heights Montessori
(313) 359-3000
kayneff@dhmontessori.org

Shawn Gasiorowski, Affiliations
MMTEC
(248) 674-3800
shawng@montessoriedu.com

Julie Harrison, Vendors
Maple Tree Montessori
(586) 212-6577
jlharrison@oneworldmind.com

Amy Dressler
MMTEC
(248) 674-3800
amyd@montessoriedu.com

Sue Szczesny
Birmingham Community
Montessori
(248) 646-1535
suemariesez@gmail.com

MMEAN Update

Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network is working for YOU!

By Sue Fitzpatrick

This group of passionate volunteers has been busy working on behalf of all of you in the greater Michigan Montessori community to ensure that Montessori programs are included in and protected by any legislation and regulation that will impact them.

Sue Fitzpatrick

We are excited to have formed a working relationship with the newly formed Michigan Charter School Montessori Consortium. This consists of the majority of Public Montessori school academies in the state. Their first roll-out meeting took place on Dec. 11 at the Michigan Association of Public School Academies. We will be combining efforts to have the State of Michigan look at allowing Montessori certification to be valued in terms of state certification and/or graduate credit recognition toward a Master's degree. After a long process with LARA and licensing to have the primary credential recognized, we will be pursuing a legislative course of action going forward. As other states have done, we want Montessori certification to be an alternative path toward state certification.

MMEAN's Mission Statement:

"We advocate for the validation and advancement of authentic Montessori education in Michigan."

The Great Start to Quality Advisory committee is currently writing protocol questions to meet with focus groups around the State. This process will gather input from many of the stakeholders who may or may not be participating in the state's early childhood QRIS program, including Montessori programs.

Montessori Philosophy and Current Brain Science

At a recent board meeting, current brain science supporting Montessori philosophy was suggested as a subject that might be of interest to new Montessorians and serve as a reminder to more seasoned ones. The following articles are reprinted with permission.

The first article by Charlotte Snyder was reprinted from the website of Baan Dek Montessori, located in Sioux Falls, SD. The second article's author is unknown.

Crossing the Midline: How Science Supports Montessori

by Charlotte Snyder

A really amazing thing about Montessori, is that, the more we're learning about brain development, the more science and research advance our knowledge, the more this pedagogy is being affirmed. What we've known anecdotally now has affirmation in research. This shouldn't be a surprise, given Maria Montessori's background as a physician, and the fact that this philosophy developed not through hypothetical "this should work!" but rather through observation, noticing what children are demonstrating, and adapting the materials and theory to match the child, not the other way around.

Everything, from basic Practical Life exercises like pouring and opening and closing containers, to working with verbs and long division, includes some kind of movement. Maria Montessori writes, the hand is the instrument of the mind, and she knew then as we do now, a child must be literally in touch with their world to understand, and later to master and to manipulate it. Our hands talk to our brains, and the synapses formed lead to greater control, knowledge, and awareness. It's like any muscle, use develops strength and refinement.



There are these phrases that pop up from time-to-time, they get thrown about and it's important, but do we know what they mean? "Non-gmo" and "mindfulness" come to mind. We could use it in a sentence, but could we define it? Do we have a clear and true understanding? Maybe. In the sphere of child development, "crossing the midline," is one such phrase. We know it's important, we even might be able to identify or deduce when a child is demonstrating it, but do we know what it means? Do we know why it's important, or just that it is important?

Crossing the midline is a descriptive phrase. Imagine a line going down the middle of your body, dividing left and right — that's the midline. We have two eyes, two hands, two legs, one on each side of the midline. Crossing the midline is exactly that, a movement that crosses the body, the left hand reaching across to perform some activity on the right side of the body. We like these movements, and we use them a lot. Sweeping. Hands working cooperatively to fasten a button. Fastening a seatbelt. Pouring. We use these movements in daily life, and we assist their development in the classroom, particularly in the exercises of Practical Life.

So that's the What, but the Why?

These movements are important because they help the two hemispheres, the two sides, of the brain communicate. This helps develop strong neural pathways, and

paves the way for higher levels of learning, assisting in the development of logical and creative problem solving. This can be helpful with cognitive or academic skills, such as reading or writing.

These movements are also helpful in developing coordination and control. We don't always use one side of our body — even something as “simple” as walking coordinates different movements on different sides of our body, much less something more complex like playing sports. Additionally, as far advanced as our technology gets, we still use handwriting, and tend to have one hand (and one eye and one leg!) dominant, and one hand helping. Even if we reach a point where we don't use handwriting, which still seems far away, that dominant hand is used for most tasks during the day, and crossing the midline helps to strengthen the dominant hand, and refine motor control. Crossing the midline is one of those valuable skills we develop naturally, which has cognitive and physical benefits, and is fostered from even the earliest days in the Montessori classroom. One hundred years ago, we might not have been able to identify why it was so important, but we could certainly observe the benefits of these motions! Now, we have the technology and the research available to identify not just the importance of these activities, but which movements benefit brain and physical development, and why they're so important.



5 Discoveries In Neuroscience That Support Montessori Teaching

August 7, 2019

“The first duty of an education is to stir up life, but leave it free to develop,” claimed Maria Montessori more than a century ago. Today, the educational triangle that her education and her fundamental principle are based on are being proven by neuroscience.

What’s more, after years of experimentation, Steven Hughes, neuropsychologist, pediatrician, and Montessori father, is firm in his conviction that the Montessori Method strengthens certain brain functions that help expand cognitive development. He has even given the method the nickname “the original system of learning based on the brain.”

Neurological development is strengthened by learning through Montessori methodology. This claim can not only be supported by hundreds of successful cases of development since its establishment, but also through the various discoveries that today’s neuroscience has made. Let’s look at 5 of those:

1. The hands are the instruments of man’s intelligence

“The human being conceives of his surroundings through his hands. They are the tools of his intelligence. His hands are creative, they can produce things. The sensory organs and coordination develop through manual activities,” claimed Maria Montessori.

Today we know that the resources that the brain uses to process the sensory stimuli it perceives through the hands is significantly superior to other parts of the body, so we would say that experiencing the world through your hands is the equivalent of going through the large door of our brain and, as such, they must play a central role in learning.

In the image, we can observe what is called “homunculus motor and homunculus sensorial.” This term is used to describe a distorted human figure that is drawn to reflect the relative sensorial space that our body parts represent in the cerebral cortex. In both homunculi, we can see how the hands are significantly larger than other areas.



2. Natural experimentation strengthens the child’s skills and abilities



“Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words, but by experiences in the environment,” maintained Maria Montessori.

Encouraging free and natural experimentation means urging children and babies to move around and communicate with their environment. Children who learn through Montessori education spend more time moving around than in traditional schools; that is to say, an active relationship is demanded with the medium, which promotes a better mastery of motor, sensory, emotional, and cognitive skills.

So the benefit of promoting an active attitude in relation to the environment makes babies and

children more competent when it comes to recognizing the intentions of others. This discovery is supported by various studies on the benefits of playing with Velcro mittens to bring on an intended action. In short, encouraging children to do something helps them to learn more quickly than mere observation, as was stated in the text published in 1981 by Kandel et al.

3. Executive functions and Montessori

Executive functions are those cognitive abilities that allow us to mentally manipulate ideas.

These mental skills promote the conscientious, active, voluntary, and efficient resolution of the problems that show up in daily life.

Learning to be flexible and to accept changes in our environment, concentrating on a task, continuing it with an objective, resisting our impulses, and retaining information to operate with it are indispensable skills for proper development.

The term “executive functions” classifies those abilities into three categories: inhibition, working memory, and cognitive flexibility. If these functions are not well developed, there may even be a false diagnosis of disorders like ADHD and other difficulties with learning.

With Montessori learning, developed at a moment when this was not yet known, help is given to the development of these functions through different activities, e.g. waiting, looking for material by going through a labyrinth created by partners doing other activities, etc. Research shows that children who have attended Montessori preschools demonstrate better execution in this family of cerebrospinal mental processes.



4. The sensitive periods or advantages of opportunity in childhood



Maria Montessori observed that in childhood, there were sensitive periods for learning. In these evolutionary moments lies great neuro-emotional potential, and as such, education is essential. Concretely, it is essential for children to explore their world in the most autonomous way possible in the period between the ages of 0 and 11 years old.

Thus, in a comprehensive way, we can talk about the creation of Montessori microcosms or microworlds. This is the creation of a purely child-like environment: children-sized furniture, little toys that encourage exploration and cognitive flexibility, etc. Neuroscience has identified these stages in which the brain needs a certain stimulation in order to develop.

5. Mirror neurons as the basis for learning

For children to see and experience the world is the basis for the concern that Montessori learning inculcates in the youngest of children. Mirror neurons, the ones that can be found in the frontal lobe, help absorb information about the environment through the senses. This was discovered by Maria Montessori through observation and later corroborated by the discovery of these neurons that specialize in imitating.



As we can see, the Montessori method is one that is gaining a great deal of scientific support and that must keep being studied in an exhaustive way, as it guarantees the creation of a universe based on affection and respect for the individual rhythms of each child and environment.



Michigan Montessori Society
Spring Workshop with...
Donohue Shortridge

This spring workshop will be offered at the Troy Community Center, conveniently located off the I-75 expressway, just north of Big Beaver (16 Mile Rd), in the heart of Troy. Plan to attend this opportunity to hear Donohue Shortridge, shop vendors, and enjoy sharing a meal and connecting with other Montessori professionals.



Donohue Shortridge has been a Montessorian since 1980, serving in various capacities from classroom assistant to lead guide to teacher educator and mentor. She holds AMS credentials at both the infant/toddler and early childhood levels from the Montessori Education Center of the Rockies in Boulder Colorado, where she now guest lectures.

For the past 30 years, Donohue has been presenting staff development workshops and parent night talks at Montessori schools in Colorado and around the US and Canada. She also works with Montessori school administrators and education coordinators to enhance their school's Montessori philosophy and practices. She is published in Montessori journals. Donohue is a frequent presenter at local, regional, and national conferences.

To learn more, visit Donohue's website at www.pdonohueshortridge.com. There you will find a useful library of child- and Montessori-related articles, essays, and commentary.

The topic of the workshop will be Inspiring Parents to the Montessori Way. See the article below for additional information on the upcoming workshop.

Donohue has also given permission to reprint two of her articles that offer some suggestions for engaging your children in nature and an article that you are able to reprint for your parents.

Inspiring Parents to the Montessori Way

What do you hope parents who have chosen Montessori understand? Likely it's for the parents to embrace the Montessori approach and to partner with the school for the ultimate benefit of the child. When such a partnership is working well, parents are happy with their choice, value the school's goals and philosophy, and are apt to express support through participation in school activities and re-enrollment.

How can we foster parent-school collaboration? How can we build connections before, during, and long after enrollment? While many Montessorians are skilled at working with children, they find themselves at a disadvantage when working with parents. All members of a school's staff—lead teachers, assistants, after-school caregivers, administrators, maintenance workers--play a part in fostering positive parent interactions.

So then, what are some of the essential elements of a successful relationship with parents? And why is it important to you? Our discussion will include:

- the importance of appreciating the perspective of parents
- how to listen to parents so we can understand them
- how to get the cooperation of parents right from the start
- specific ways you can make a difference that inspires parents to embrace the Montessori perspective.
- daily interactions and how they influence parents' view of the school and its staff
- conducting meaningful parent conferences
- some ideas for dealing with challenging situations
- the influence of the school's internal staff relationships on children and parents
- dealing with the impact of social media, cell phones, and other electronic devices on child-parent and parent-teacher relationships

There will be time for your specific questions. Join us on the journey to great parent relationships!

Spring is Here! How Will the Children Know?

by P. Donohue Shortridge

The child who has felt a strong love for his surroundings and for all living creatures, who has discovered joy and enthusiasm in work, gives us reason to hope that humanity can develop in a new direction.

M.M. Education and Peace, p. 58

Montessorians understand that children cannot feel a strong love for their surroundings without a concrete exposure to it. Daily visceral experiences beget knowledge, which begets joy, which begets love. Here are some suggestions, some enticements to awaken their discovery and focus their attention:

Provide infants a blanket under a tree upon which to lie so they can feel the air moving through the natural environment.

Observe everything, even the smallest changes. At line time, tell a simple quick story, "This morning when I went outside at my house, I noticed that there are green shoots on the branches of my ash tree." As always, be sure to use specific words and correct names.

Look out the window of your classroom. Make a statement about what you see and then pose a question without giving an answer: "Oh look, there is the robin making her nest. I wonder what materials she is using?"

Know and name all the trees, bushes, flowers, plants and animals on your campus as well as on your walks in the neighborhood. As Montessorian Nimal Vaz says, "The adult is to be the intelligent guide." We don't preach or teach, but rather notice, name and ponder. "I wonder if there are any new buds on the Hawthornes?" Older children could make name cards for the trees, do leaf rubbings and match to the botany cabinet. They could measure and chart the growth of the leaf. You could do a same-and-different game with trees, bushes and plantings. "How many trees just like this one do you see?" or "Find all the bushes that have leaves just like these."

Put
snack
outside
on a
warm
day.

Tell parents
that their
children will
be going
outside in the
rain, then go.

If it's been awhile, refresh your windowwashing work, even a new towel will draw the children to it.

Extend the distance of the toddler walk. Stop and smell the air and the awakening flora. Look up for nests and down for tracks.

Dirt digging and dirt transfer on the playground. Wheelbarrows, shovels, trowels, sifters and buckets, yes. Add water if you dare! Mud matters.

Germinate lima beans, taking pictures or drawings at every stage, then put the pictures in a basket for the children to seriate.

Flower arranging using real flowers. This is important all year, but especially right now. The children will associate the flowers they see, touch and arrange with what they notice in gardens. Find a free or discounted source for daffodils, tulips and other spring flowers. (Ask your local grocery store floral manager to save her about-to-be-thrown-away flowers for you; also funeral homes and florists. (Perhaps ask a parent to take this on.)

Take the botany leaf cabinet outside once the leaves fill out on the bushes and trees on your campus and do a matching work.

Plant food.

Bird watching, bird identifying and bird feeding.
Can you name the birds in your locale?

Plant something.
Plant it outside as soon as you can or start it inside and then transplant it when it's warm enough.

Enthuse your parents with your love of nature, (e.g. in your newsletters, on your white board, in e-mail blasts etc.) and include a sentence about something on nature. For those parents who need reasons why their child needs nature, feel free to print my article, "Children in Nature, Why it Matters" (below) Provide books in your parent library on the importance of nature, like Richard Louv's Last Child in the Woods.

Here's a fine book on the subject of nature projects for young children –not Montessori, but can be adapted: Small Wonders, Nature Education for Young Children, by Linda Garrett and Hannah Thomas

If you haven't already done so, move some of your individual tables up against the windows


Refresh your nature shelf and also put items from nature in various spots around your classroom, e.g. an interesting piece of bark set out on a one-person table.

Break some regulations and get pets into your environment. Have visiting pets at the least. Don't forget the invertebrates, e.g. snails, worms and spiders.

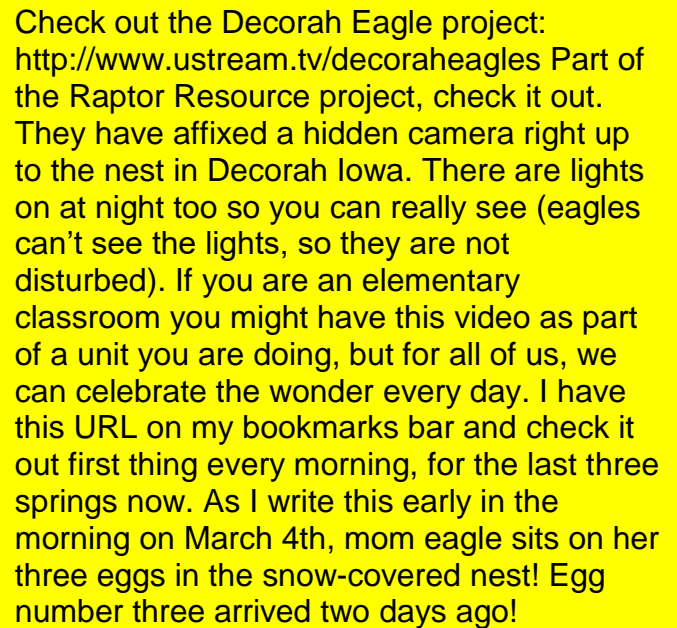
Put together a weather station on a table by a window in your classroom. This you want to have all year round. The seasonal change quickens at this time of year, so provide binoculars, a clip-board, maybe some nature items, a related book or two and perhaps art supplies for the children to draw what they see. For EC, be sure to make it a one-person work with a clear lesson on how to use this space. Take it outside too! Elementary students can be expected to write observation reports, chart temperature fluctuations, measure the humidity, etc.



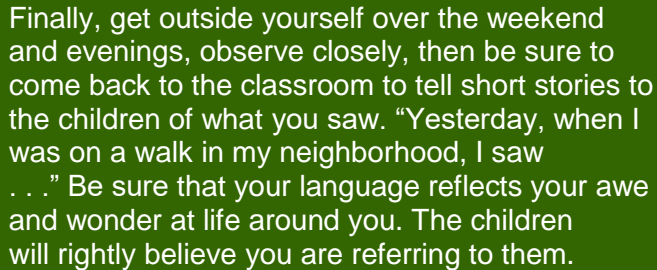
Refresh your
book corner
to include
books about
spring. See
book list below



Plant
something
fragrant
like lavender
or rosemary.



Check out the Decorah Eagle project:
<http://www.ustream.tv/decoraheagles> Part of
the Raptor Resource project, check it out.
They have affixed a hidden camera right up
to the nest in Decorah Iowa. There are lights
on at night too so you can really see (eagles
can't see the lights, so they are not
disturbed). If you are an elementary
classroom you might have this video as part
of a unit you are doing, but for all of us, we
can celebrate the wonder every day. I have
this URL on my bookmarks bar and check it
out first thing every morning, for the last three
springs now. As I write this early in the
morning on March 4th, mom eagle sits on her
three eggs in the snow-covered nest! Egg
number three arrived two days ago!



Finally, get outside yourself over the weekend
and evenings, observe closely, then be sure to
come back to the classroom to tell short stories to
the children of what you saw. "Yesterday, when I
was on a walk in my neighborhood, I saw
..." Be sure that your language reflects your awe
and wonder at life around you. The children
will rightly believe you are referring to them.

Books for Spring

Floppers and Loppers, Stan Tekiela

Who Pooped in the Park?, Gary D. Robson

My First Day, What Animals Do on Day One. Steve Jenkins and Robin Page

Wolves., James MacLaine, Illustrated by John Francis and Kimberly Scott

Paws and Claws. Stan Tekiela

Animalogy: Animal Analogies. Marianne Berkes, Illustrated by Cathy Morrison

Owls. Valerie Bodden

Big Tracks, Little Tracks, Following Animal Prints. Millicent E. Selsam, Illustrated by Marlene Hill Donnelly

Bumblebee. J.V Wilson, Illustrated by Adrienne Kennaway

Hi, Koo! A Year of Seasons. Jon J. Muth

Weeds Find a Way. Cindy Jenson-Alliott, Illustrated by Carolyn Fisher

Nest. Jorey Hurley

The Reason for a Flower. Ruth Helle

Children in Nature: Why it Matters

by P. Donohue Shortridge

Children of all ages have less contact with the natural world than ever before. Does it matter? Won't they grow up just fine anyway? Do they even need nature anymore?

Emerging research into the relationship between children and nature would suggest that they do.

Research has shown that even the youngest children are drawn to the natural world both emotionally and cognitively. Young children can readily differentiate natural from man-made objects. This discriminatory ability is part of our adaptive response – our ancient survival instinct, if you will. We come equipped to know what is edible, dangerous, useful and beautiful.

Young children can readily differentiate natural from man-made objects.

Research also confirms that movement is essential for the growth of your child's intelligence, but movement just to move narrows the scope of development. Movement in nature not only strengthens the muscles but also aids in the development of auditory discrimination, visual cues for depth perception, balance, coordination, agility, and offers a variety of sensory stimuli in tune with the child's capacity to absorb. But most importantly, the child, free to explore in nature, absorbs this world in context. He absorbs how where the fish swim is related to where the trees grow and the animals find shelter and ultimately to how Man fits in.

Nature offers your child powerful impressions of reality. How living things move for example, is absorbed just by being in proximity to living moving things; the flow of the creek, the grace of the swimming ducks, how the stick your child just threw into the creek is carried on the current, how the wind bends the tall grasses or how the birds move through the air.

Current research into what children believe based on the sources of their information confirms this direct knowledge assertion. The research concludes that when children are presented with information from two different sources, one being direct experience and the other a contradictory verbal explanation, the child is more likely to identify reality if he has seen it or touched it rather than being told what it is.

the child is more likely to identify reality if he has seen it or touched it rather than being told what it is.

Direct experience in nature frames the child's references for all future understanding about what is real and what is not. A few years ago, a child was mauled at the zoo by an animal the child was scolding. The child was waiting for the animal to talk back to him. This child's frame of reference heavily favored talking animals on television, on videos and in children's books.

The wild places aid in the child's comprehension of physical planes of reality; what is high and low, steep and level, cold and hot, wet and dry, stiff and malleable, smooth and rough, not to mention living and non-living.

His understanding of the physical phenomena can be easily and readily affected just by being there. No need for lessons, lectures or demonstrations. Free and relaxed exploration is all you need to provide, your child will do the rest. Hands-on muddy, wet and free exploration will aid in her cognition, will develop motor control and will map the mathematical mind of your child onto the fundamental plane of his life. It will evoke his natural sense of wonder at the world and his place in it, especially if you, whom he loves, loves nature too.

What else can you do?

Whenever possible, choose the local open space rather than the playground.

Do not carry your child; let her walk.

Share books with your child that show the reality of nature in its appropriate context, devoid of talking animals and lurid illustrations of scary fantasy creatures.

Pictures of real plants and animals serve to clarify for your child a representation of what is real.

Consider the kind of clothing that is optimal for your child's explorations in nature. Sturdy shoes that can easily be wiped off and clothes that can be washed and are not so precious

that mud stains are a problem work best. Further, the more your child moves about in the out-of-doors, the less he needs the bulky, movement inhibiting outerwear.

Give as gifts tools for the out of doors such as small trowels, buckets, seeds for planting and rubber boots as well as other items useful to the natural environments of your particular locale. Older children would enjoy a compass, a thermometer and barometer, and books for identifying local flora and fauna.

And finally, you can renew a personal affinity for nature as more time is spent there with your children. Slow down and savor the wonder and contentment of spending time with the source of life. As you do, so will your child.

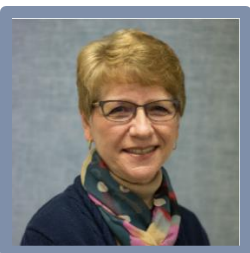
Three Day vs. Five Day Montessori Program – What Do You Think?

In the previous newsletter, we asked for your thoughts on MMS affiliation of schools offering 3 or 4 day programs. To date, we have only received one response. If this issue affects you, we would like to hear from you. We have created an ad hoc committee to discuss the issue and bring a recommendation to the board. We would like to again invite you to reach out to a board member, write a letter, or send an email. We would like to make a decision that reflects the needs and beliefs of our membership.

MMS Spotlight on YOUR SCHOOL

We would like to invite all MMS affiliated schools to open your doors to our readers. If you are interested in being spotlighted in our newsletter, please contact Karen Lumsden.

Your MMS Board – Who We Are and What We Do



Theresa Weber - Secretary

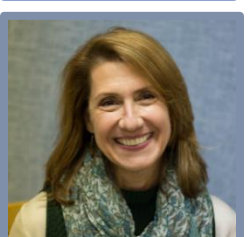
I record the minutes of the MMS Board meetings and distribute them to the members. I assist in any other way that I can.



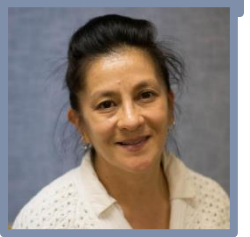
Karen Lumsden – I edit the MMS Newsletter that you receive 3 times a year. I research and write articles on topics the board suggests and try to keep you up to date on events or changes that might interest you. Suggestions are welcome.



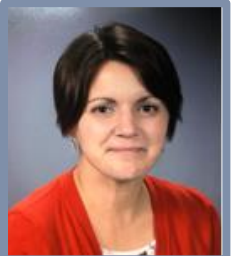
Kay Neff – Treasurer- I oversee financial issues (bills, checkbook, taxes, reports) manage seminar finances, and assist with editing MMS publications. I also focus on advocacy and have participated in those efforts since they began.



Sue Fitzpatrick - I advocate for recognition of Montessori credential in MI, work with other state Montessori organizations, sit on an advisory committee in Lansing (Great Start) follow up on recommend revisions, maintain a relationship with the national Montessori Public Policy Initiative, and consult with the Center for Early Education Evaluation.



Cyndi Iannuzzi – Vice President - I am on the workshop committee, responsible for securing knowledgeable workshops presenters and securing appropriate venues.



Erin Compton - Having just joined the board, I am still learning the responsibilities of each committee, but have offered to assist the workshop and website committees. I attend every meeting and lend my voice to the discussions aimed at serving the Montessori community.

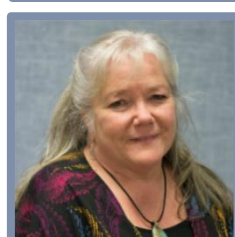


Kathy Smoko – MMS Administrative Assistant – Assists with workshops Maintains communication with members. Work closely with board members to support and implement board activities.

Heidi Gauger – President - Create agenda and guide monthly board meetings. I am on the website committee and respond to questions received on the board's behalf. I am also on the Membership Committee and assist at workshop registration.



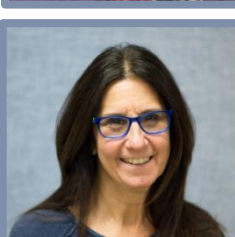
Julie Harrison – I coordinate the vendors at our workshops. I also assist in workshop registration.



Shawn Gasiorowski - I review affiliation submissions, maintain credentials and records, schedule affiliation visits and update postings of affiliated schools.



Mary Lamos – I secure and communicate with the workshop venues, make sure the speakers have what they need to present (technology, handouts, etc) follow up on refreshment menus and generally assure that the workshops run flawlessly.



Sue Szczesny - I am on the workshop committee and school affiliation committee. I assist in planning and visit schools wishing to affiliate with MMS.



Amy Dressler - I feel privileged to be a part of the organization and witness so many amazing women within MMS. I help out where I can during conferences and workshops and support the workshop coordinators whenever possible.



Valentine Songs

As I included winter songs in the previous newsletter, I thought your children might enjoy some Valentine songs.

Somebody Loves Me [Click here for video](#)

Somebody loves me, I wonder who?

Somebody loves me, I wonder who?

Sent me this valentine, all red and white

Sent me this valentine, such a pretty sight!

Somebody loves me, I wonder who?

Somebody loves me, maybe you!

My Secret [Click her for video](#)

I've a secret, I've a secret and I'm hiding it away,

I'm just waiting for the morning of St Valentine's Day.

Oh, I hope you like my secret for I think it's very fine,

And it says I'm choosing someone for my own valentine.

Love Somebody [Click here for video](#)

Love somebody, yes I do!

Love somebody, yes I do!

Love somebody, yes I do!

Love somebody, but I won't tell who!



MMS - What's In It For Me?

Individual membership and school affiliation in the Michigan Montessori Society help you keep in touch with other active Montessorians! Networking with others committed to promoting authentic Montessori programs is vital to your professional growth. Don't miss the opportunity to join our vibrant organization.

- MMS presents two professional development seminars every year. Members enjoy a significant reduction in seminar fees.*
- A newly designed website has launched! We continue to work on ways to make your experience as an MMS member more timely and exciting!*
- You can register for seminars and become a member online using your credit card.*
- MMS publishes a newsletter online, posts job openings, promotes educational opportunities and disseminates other helpful information.*
- Because most MMS communication will be sent electronically, it is imperative that you provide us with your email address. Please be assured that we do not sell or share our electronic list with anyone.*
- We have also assumed the important task of advocating for Montessori education at the State level. There is power in numbers; your membership supports our efforts (see MMEAN article above).*
- You will be notified when affiliated schools offer mini workshops that may interest your staff.*

The Michigan Montessori Society's objectives are to:

- Broaden understanding of the Montessori method*
- Encourage the growth of Montessori education*
- Act as an information center*
- Support existing schools*
- Provide professional development*

In order to continue to receive these benefits and more, join MMS today!

