

Winter Issue Jun 2015

The Northside *Chronicle*



LOVE OF SILENCE

The benefits of solo work and how it is supported by the Montessori environment

TALKING TO YOUNG CHILDREN

Encouraging accurate and mindful use of language in the early years

HOLIDAY READING MATERIAL

Book suggestions for the school holidays for all ages

Northside Montessori School
Pymble, Australia

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Winter Issue Jun 2015

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Welcome

Recently I met with Principals from other Montessori Schools in Sydney to discuss some of the challenges we face in our schools. What started as a bit of a gloomy discussion about school funding, teacher accreditation and professional development, the high costs of resourcing our Montessori classrooms and the long hours we put into our schools, quickly turned into an up-beat discussion about **how lucky we all are to be working in schools with a progressive approach to education!**

It certainly seems to be a contradiction that the Montessori method, which has been around for more than a hundred years, is in fact still progressive by traditional school standards. Not only that, **a Montessori school really does provide the foundation of education for the 21st Century.** Increasingly there is a greater awareness of the need to promote and measure skills like teamwork, creativity, ethics, resilience, curiosity and time management. These are valued traits which are progressively being rated more highly than test scores and results in traditional subject areas.

A new project is underway in a small number of independents schools in NSW. They are involved in the Mission Skills Assessment which is intended to not only foster these other skills but measure their school's effectiveness in their growth. I have had the pleasure of sitting on the panel to choose the schools that will take part in this pilot project and I look forward to getting regular insights over the 3 year pilot program.

I must remark on the fact that what we take for granted as important outcomes of a Montessori education are now ear-marked as new and valued by modern theorists, and by industry professionals.

So, what is it that we do at Northside that leads to the skills of teamwork, creativity, ethics, resilience, curiosity and time management?

Teamwork

Cooperation, a desire to share knowledge, and support for each other in the process and discovery of learning are outcomes of the mixed-age groups of children in our three year cycles. As children move through each cycle, growing older and more capable, they assume a greater role in helping to care for the environment and to help and meet the needs of younger children in their class. One-upmanship, attention-seeking behaviour, prestige and competition do not have a place in our classrooms. Rather we see teamwork, mentoring and acceptance developed through the three year cycle. Many of the projects and learning experiences of our primary classrooms are undertaken in pairs or small groups.

Creativity

Learning at Northside is active and personal – not simply something that is done to please a teacher. **Our students are acknowledged for taking risks and being creative in their work.** In Art for example, we don't hold up an example for the children to copy. Instead we explain about a technique and allow the children to express that in a way that challenges them. The results are creative, brave and beautiful. Through our creative arts programs like Music, Art and Drama, opportunities to apply out-of-the-box thinking is alive and well! We develop children who are independent and creative thinkers – children who are not afraid of taking risks with their ideas and talents. The freedom to explore beyond the confines of the set curriculum is allowed and our children flourish as a result!

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Ethics

In Northside Montessori's inclusive educational environment, students learn that each individual is valued, and deserves dignity. Our students share learning experiences which lead to tolerance and acceptance of each other, regardless of differences like gender, culture, race or ability. There are no 'fences' in our inclusive school; rather there is an open gate which welcomes and embraces diversity and difference. Our Grace & Courtesy lessons build on the expected social courtesies that equip the child with the skills to interact in any setting. **Our focus on world-peace allows our children to grow into peaceful, influential young who people help create a better world.**

Resilience

Our school instils and nurtures confidence and courage in students. **Children are encouraged to work at their own pace and to take risks with their learning.** No question is considered silly or pointless. By asking questions and taking risks, children are taking ownership of their learning. Dr Maria Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. 'Never do for a child what they can for themselves' also underlies our approach.

Curiosity

"What is that?" and "Why?" It is such a pleasure to hear these questions that are a constant in a Montessori School. This is encouraged! Such questioning is characteristic of the young inquiring mind. It is indicative of a child who is seeking truth, information, and knowledge through questioning. **Inquiry, at our school, is student-centred and directed**, with the teacher supporting the child's thirst for knowledge and quest for understanding.

Time management

Whilst we do provide children with time to spend on tasks and to repeat them as they need to, we also encourage skills of time-management as the child progresses in the primary years. Children book their times for snacks or time at the computer and they must keep track of the time to take part in these daily or weekly rituals. Managing major class-projects in the 9–12 class develops skills in meeting deadlines for various stages of their project's completion. **We guide the children to help keep them on track but we also let them learn the consequences of poor time-management too.**

Ah, Montessori! - It is a century-old model that certainly still works for our 21st-century children! Perhaps the more recent graduates of Montessori schools like the founders of Google, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, would also have something to say about the benefits of their Montessori foundation and just how important teamwork, creativity, ethics, resilience, curiosity and time management has been for them.

by Barbara Maxfield, Principal

"The child is capable of developing and giving us tangible proof of the possibility of a better humanity. The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind."

Maria Montessori

Upcoming Events

Wed 24 Jun

9-12 "Extraordinary Ordinaries"
6.00pm

Thur 25 Jun

Parent/Teacher Interviews
Last day of term 2 for students

Fri 26 Jun

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Tues 14 Jul

First day of term 3 for students

Thur 16 Jul

0-3 Parent Education Evening
6.45pm

Thur 23 Jul

Open Morning for Prospective Parents

Sat 25 Jul

Pink Tower Trivia Night

Fri 31 Jul

Musical Soiree 6.00pm

Wed 5 Aug

Parent Education Evening - Fractions
6.45pm

Thur 6 Aug

Open Morning for Prospective Parents

Wed 12 Aug

Graduate Panel 6.45pm

Thur 20 Aug

Open Morning for Prospective Parents

Fri 21 Aug

Tuckshop Day

Sun 30 Aug

Working Bee
9.00am to 12.00pm

Mon 31 Aug

Dr Maria Montessori's Birthday

Wed 2 Sep

Parent Education Evening - Resilience
6.45pm

Fri 4 Sep

Father;s Day Breakfast
8.00am

Tues 8 Sep

Family Education Evening - Puberty
6.45pm

Fri 11 Sep

Musical Soiree 6.00pm

Tues 15 Sep

Parent Education Evening - Grammar Box
6.45pm

Fri 18 Sep

Last day of term 3 for students

Love of silence and working alone

As Principal I am challenged to find time to read widely. One author that appeals to me for quick, sensible, no-nonsense articles and tips for parents is that of Maren Schmidt's work. The recent Parent Education Event that our Directesses, Natasha and Marina, led on 2nd June, included the Silence Game which prompted my further reading of Maren's works. *By Barbara Maxfield, Principal*

The nature of the young child following natural and normal development is one that loves silence and working alone. Until children enter into a different stage of development, around the time that they lose their first tooth, this love of silence and working alone remains.

The young child is working on self-mastery of skills and "sharing" or doing an activity with other children may frustrate and hamper the child's personal development. Young children appreciate quiet and are thrilled to hear the smallest sounds in silence—the drip of a tap, a bird's chirp through a closed window, the rustle of paper in a breeze.

Love of silence. The young child is in a period of development of refining the senses, along with language, movement, social relations and understanding order. The child's sense of hearing is learning to differentiate among a multitude of sounds, and the child delights in learning to name each sound. Allow this to happen for your child and see the joy for yourself.

Love of working alone. Working alone suggests that there are others nearby, but the child is working on an activity alone, without interruption or interference of others. Working alone allows the child to think and analyse the activity in a way that suits his or her specific learning needs. The child loves being able to work through an activity without being told what to do by others.

We need to be alert and protect a child's love and appreciation of silence and working alone. They are signs of a healthy and natural development.

And, parents, a child does not need constant interaction, noise, stimulation and big activity.

Extract from Maren Schmidt



A child's love of order

As parents and teachers we are concerned about doing the right things with our children. When our children go through difficult periods, we can spend nights tossing and turning about what might be the matter. It can be helpful if we understand the innate development characteristics of children under the age of seven. *By Barbara Maxfield, Principal*

Children are born with special affinities that aid their development. Children who are on-track with their development display all or most of the following:

- love of order,
- love of work,
- deep spontaneous concentration,
- attachment to reality,
- love of silence and working alone,
- sublimation of the possessive instinct,
- power to act from real choice not just curiosity or impulsivity,
- trust and obedience,
- independence and initiative, as well as,
- spontaneous self-discipline.

The young child possesses a love of order that adults sometimes trample all over, because as we become older this sensitivity is less central to our lives and learning. **Learning success for the young child, though, depends on this connection and understanding of order.**

Brain research is showing that during the first six years of life the neural matter of the brain is growing at a tremendous rate. The brain creates neural pathways with the sensory information it is acquiring.

We might liken this process to a footpath being created at a new school by students walking across campus. The most direct paths are created over time becoming, wider, deeper and at some point are paved to make clear connections between buildings. **As certain sensory pathways are trod in the brain, future access is being almost guaranteed by the children's repetition of experiences, driven by a love of order.**



Classification of objects and experiences in the child's environment are also forming. Making connections of similar qualities among objects is an important skill for adult thinking. It is the child's innate sense for finding and creating order that helps build later logical thinking. **As adults, we disrupt a child's sense of order mainly by being unaware of this order, by changing the child's environment, which includes people, nature and ideas, as well as objects, and by not giving the child enough time to explore and orient to the surrounding world.**

For the child with a strong sense of order changing a seemingly insignificant object in the child's environment may create great anxiety. Re-arranging the dining room furniture might provoke a crying jag in a two-year-old. When we are aware of the child's sense of order we can be on the lookout for behavioural changes and try to connect them to changes in the child's surroundings. Mum or dad wearing a new outfit or new cologne may be enough to put a three-year old out of sorts. Not having enough time to explore prevents our children from tapping into their inborn sense of order that promotes positive brain development. Being taken from event to event or being distracted from exploration through television or some sort of engaging task are but a few of the many ways we disrupt our children's sense of order. **Help your child's natural development by being aware of the importance of a child's innate love of order.**

You will note how ordered a Montessori classroom is. The positioning of materials, their left to right order of use, the return of materials to the correct shelf, the steps for completing tasks – are but some examples of how we reinforce and support the child's love of order.

An extract from Maren Schmidt (Teacher and Author)

“Learning success for the young child, though, depends on this connection and understanding of order.”

Maria Montessori

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

PLAY

Hip Hopping from Bollywood to Brazil at Hornsby Libraries

6-14 yrs \$10 Various dates and locations

Super Heroes Lego Challenge at Kuringai Libraries

6-8 yrs \$5 Various dates and locations

Stop Motion Animation Workshop at Kuringai Libraries

9-12 yrs \$10 Various dates and locations

Kids' Ghost Tour at State Library NSW

8-12 yrs \$5 Tues 30 Jun 2.00pm

Handprinted Paper and Cards at State Library NSW

8-12 yrs \$20 Thur 2 Jul 10.00am

SEE

Earth Platinum: The world's largest atlas

A mammoth atlas standing at almost two metres tall and weighing 150kg; the only one of its kind in Australia
State Library of NSW

Now until 19 Jul 2015 Free admission

Colourwheel

Celebrates the playful ways in which modern artists have used colour; combines a lively colour trail and kids activities

Art Gallery NSW

Now until 29 May 2016 Free admission

X-Ray Vision: Fish Inside Out

Featuring 40 black-and-white digital prints from the Smithsonian Travelling Exhibition, these pictures will take you on a tour through the long stream of fish evolution.

Australian National Maritime Museum

Now until 28 Feb 2016 Entry costs apply

Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition

Experience the power, mystique and beauty of nature through the wildlife photographer's lens

Australian Museum

Now until 5 Oct 2015 Entry costs apply

Sydney Observatory Day Tours

Look through the safe solar telescope to see the Sun, the Moon, bright stars or Venus during the day!

Sydney Observatory

27 Jun to 12 Jul 2015 Entry costs apply

Toddler Program

It has been a productive term. Parents have had the opportunity to attend the talks on the 'Purpose of the Montessori Environment'. We got very positive feedback from the parents, particularly the ones starting this term, as they start with a better understanding of the Montessori Philosophy and the use of equipment.

There were a few interesting questions that emerged as a result of these talks, such as:

How do I encourage my child to put things away, especially after he has moved on to another activity?

Do eighteen-month-old toddlers put things back on the shelf? No, not yet. They may not put anything away at first. Then they may put things away sometimes. They may need your help sometimes. Eventually they do put things away always.

I have observed that adults can sometimes put a lot of pressure on themselves trying to get the toddler to put things away. The toddler may already be working on the third material down the road from where he started. As far as he is concerned he may not have seen that thing for years and think, "I never did it." So it is counterproductive to force him back to the material. If the child does not come back then put the activity away yourself.

The worst thing that can be done, however, is to interrupt the child's concentration on a piece of material in order to get him to come back and pack away.

If you can catch the child in the process of walking away then you might say, "This goes back on the shelf". However in saying that do not give them a choice by saying, "Can you put this back on the shelf?". They then have a choice to say, "No". Do not give them a choice unless you can take no for an answer.

I have observed that some parents can be creative and re-interest the child in the activity and eventually help him finish so that the child can return it to its place. Sometimes toddlers just need help to finish an activity.

If the child knows colours, you can say, "I'll pick up the red ones and you can pick up the blue ones." Children who put things away at home are also more likely to put things away in the toddler room.

In summary, **be observant, creatively engage the child and joyfully help if necessary, rather than insist that the child do it all by himself.** Help the child experience that you can be trusted to help and nurture his developing independence.

What books are recommended for this age group?

In the toddler library we are very careful to include books that are reality based. The world is a new place for them. It is difficult to understand the difference between fantasy and reality. For them everything is real. The development of imagination is an important aspect of the Montessori environment. For example, the ability to visualise objects or events which are not present but are reality based. They exist in reality (lions in the jungle), once existed (dinosaurs) or could possibly exist in the future (robots). Fantasy on the other hand, like fairy godmothers and witches are unrealistic and will really confuse the child.

I have observed that books with simple sentences hold the toddlers interest for a longer period of time.

The best books for them of course are ones that relate to their lives or something they show an interest in such as transport, animals, family and everyday routines. **The simplest subjects will help them process and make sense of the world around them.**

Finally, **reading books with your child is one of the most important things you can do to enhance the development of verbal communication and intellectual growth.** Through the eyes of a child, it is one of the most special things you can do together and something they will cherish throughout their lives.

Our toddler environment is geared towards the developmental stage of the toddler. Keeping in mind that they are developing their language; movement and also sense of order. They are trying to understand the order of the universe, the world, how it works and how it is put together. They are trying to find their place in it. Theirs is a very small world, so we create order in environment by keeping consistency in our activities. **Dr Montessori tells us that the home, the life spirit inside them drives them to learn. There is not an instant that toddlers are awake when they are not learning.** This is so evident in our environment. They are all busy, spontaneous, curious, active, yes. But all of these bumped up 3 degrees. In one word, 'driven'.

As I reflect back on my early days in the Montessori environment, I think the most challenging aspect of working with this age group was to resist the natural urge to want to "help". It requires a lot of patience to watch a toddler trying to problem solve all by himself.

Montessori said that every time we help a child do anything

they can do themselves, we keep the natural developmental process from happening. This is important for the brain development as a child's own experience builds the neural pathways in the brain.

One way we can assist is by helping them become more able. For example, when you notice that they have dropped water on the floor while washing dishes, encourage them to use a mop or cloth to clean up the water.

The next step up is observed when the toddler spills it on purpose. They know that they have to go and get the mop and that is what they really want to do. However, these activities can continue to move to the next step up of scrubbing the table or chair outside.

Next term we encourage you to join us for more talks on parenting.

Have a great holiday and we look forward to seeing you next term.

by Naila Hassan, Directress 0-3



"We must help the child to act for himself, will for himself, think for himself; this is the art of those who aspire to serve the spirit."

Maria Montessori

Your Child Is How You Talk

By Kaoru Takusagawa

In a Montessori environment we encourage parents and carers to use correct and accurate words to describe things to children. Instead of saying, "It's a bird", we say, "It's a magpie" or "It's a rainbow lorikeet" when we see a bird resting on a branch. A dog is not a "woof woof", but it is a "Labrador" or a "Poodle" or a "German Shepard". Same applies to everything you talk about with your child.

Children, especially in the 0-3 age group will absorb everything and anything from the environment. Therefore, **it is crucial to use the correct language we want them to acquire.** Children are able to learn language at ease during the window of opportunity, or as Maria Montessori called, during their Sensitive Period. Elliot explains that, "language like vision and most other brain functions, is bounded by a critical period, an early phase in which a child must experience language, or else its hardware won't wire up right". Therefore, **the quality and the quantity of language a child is exposed to during this period will directly affect the skill of language and brain organisation.**

It is not just what you say, but how you say it as well. Children are sensitive with the tone and facial expression that you are using. It may be difficult to explain everything to a curious child asking, "What's that?" and "Why?" all the time. However, they will sense the emotion attached to the words coming out of your mouth.

Some of the common expression we use with a toddler is, "Ooops, you had an accident". Whether it is spilling water or wetting their pants, this sentence will not explain the situation to the child completely, especially if used with a tone of despair or irritation. It may make your child feel shameful of their act.

Instead, try to explain what had happened, such as "You spilled some water," or, "You urinated" in a non-stressed way, and suggest positive actions to follow. By repeating this experience, children will learn how to behave in similar situations, and not be ashamed to ask for help.

Although we want to encourage rich vocabulary in children, it is important to listen rather than over talk to your child. Constantly questioning, "What is this?" "How many?" or, "Where is xyz?" will overwhelm the child, making it less likely for them to answer. Let your child lead the conversation, and be sure to listen to them wholeheartedly.

There will be a Parent Information Evening in Term 3 about "Parenting" that will cover what kind of language we should use with toddlers. Please enquire at the office for details.

Further reference available from parent library:

Elliot, Lise, PhD. (1999) *What's Going on in There?: How the Brain and Mind Develop in the First Five Years of Life.* New York: NY. Bantam Books

Lillard, Angeline S. (2005) *Montessori the Science Behind the Genius.* New York: NY. Oxford University Press, Inc.

Lillard, Paula and Lynn Jessen. (2003) *Montessori From the Start: The Child at Home, from Birth to Age Three.* New York: NY. Schocken Book

Facilitating the Development of the Montessori Child

Last term I had the pleasure of accompanying a group of our older students to a Young Leaders Day, and you would have read some of their thoughts in the last Northside Chronicle. It was an inspiring day and I feel relates strongly to the topic above.

In a Montessori classroom the children learn how to take leadership and responsibility for their own learning. They are empowered to follow their particular strengths and interests, as well as the curriculum of course, and their interactions with older and younger students enable them to develop invaluable social skills. None of this could happen without the home environment being in harmony with the Montessori philosophy. This does not mean having the Montessori materials in the home, but is in the attitude of the family, encouraging and allowing the children to become themselves.

There were 6000 primary students attending the Young Leaders Day, and as you can imagine there was a certain amount of noise and activity, especially in the breaks when they were all released from their seats. I was so impressed with the behaviour of our children - they sat quietly eating their snack/ lunch, an oasis of calm amidst the chaos. **This ability to be in charge of themselves, to take responsibility for their own behaviour, is a direct result of what happens in both the classroom and the home.**

All the speakers at the Young Leaders Day emphasised that leadership is not just on a grand scale, but on the individual level. We see this every day in the classroom, when for instance, an older child might help a younger child with a piece of work, or a child who is less confident might take the plunge and present a project to the rest of the class.

Every child develops at his/her own pace, and this can sometimes be frustrating for parents. An understanding of Montessori and faith in the process is essential for the partnership between parents and school.

Parenting a Montessori child can be challenging, as the child grows, learns and thinks for him/her self from a very young age, often questioning and searching for meaning in their daily life. The rewards however are immeasurable, for the child and the parent, as personalities emerge and learning takes place in a natural and powerful way.

By Sally Faerber

Holiday Reading Material

The Children's Book Council of Australia:
Book of the Year Awards Shortlist 2015

Young Readers

"Two Wolves" by Tristan Bancks

"The Simple Things" by Bill Condon

"The Cleo Stories: The Necklace and the Present" by Libby Gleeson

"Bleakboy and Hunter Stand out in the Rain" by Steven Herrick

"Figgy in the World" by Tamsin Janu

"Withering-by-Sea: a Stella Montgomery Intrigue" by Judith Rossell

Early Childhood

"Pig the Pug" by Aaron Blabey

"Scary Night" by Lesley Gibbes

"Go to Sleep, Jessie!" by Libby Gleeson

"Snail and Turtle are Friends" by Stephen Michael King

"Noni the Pony goes to the Beach" by Alison Lester

Picture Books

"Rivertime" by Trace Balla

"My Two Blankets" by Freya Blackwood

"One Minute's Silence" by Michael Camilleri

"The Duck and the Darklings" by Stephen Michael King

"The Stone Lion" by Ritva Voutila

"Fire" by Bruce Whatley

Eve Pownall Award for Information Books

"A-Z of Convicts in Van Diemen's Land" by Simon Barnard

"Coming of Age: Growing up Muslim in Australia" by Demet Divaroren & Amra Pajalic

"Mary's Australia: How Mary Mackillop Changed Australia" by Pamela Freeman

"Tea and Sugar Christmas" by Jane Jolly

"Emu" by Claire Saxby

"Audacity: Stories of Heroic Australians in Wartime" by Carlie Walker

Normalisation

Normalisation is a Montessori term that causes a great deal of concern among many Montessori parents. It suggests that the Directresses will help children who are not normal become normal. In Montessori education, the term “normalisation” has a different connotation. “Normal” does not mean to be “typical” or “average” or even “usual”. Dr Maria Montessori used the terms “normal” and “normalisation” to describe a unique process she observed in child development.

So what does it really mean when you hear the Montessori Directress say, “Your child is now normalised”. Normalisation is something that spontaneously happens when children are given meaningful work to do in the classroom – especially individualised work that’s freely chosen and uses child-size tools and activities that engage the child’s attention.

Dr Montessori observed that when children are allowed freedom in an environment suited to their needs, they blossom. After a period of intense concentration, working with materials that fully engage their interest, children appear to be refreshed and contented. Through continued concentrated work of their own choice, children grow in inner discipline. Who is the normalised child?

In his book, *Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work*, E.M. Standing described a normalised child between the age of 3 to 6 as having the following:

- A love of order
- A love of work
- Profound spontaneous concentration
- Attachment to reality
- Love of silence and working alone
- Sublimation of the possessive instinct
- Obedience
- Independence and initiative
- Spontaneous self-discipline
- Joy
- The power to act from real choice and not just idle curiosity

Montessori teachers might describe normalisation as: every teacher’s wish for every child! We set the tone for the new school year by emphasising Grace and Courtesy right away. We prepare the environment with what the children need to achieve Dr Montessori’s ideal. And, we help parents understand normalisation and their role in helping children develop it. Parents know they can directly support normalisation, for example by:

- Driving the same route to school every day
- Arriving on time in the morning: This will make for an easy transition into the classroom, leaving the child feeling safe and secure which will help with the normalisation process. Starting the day together, as a group, helps build a sense of community and helps the children feel secure. Arriving on time also reinforces being respectful, polite, and considerate of others. If a child arrives to the classroom late, it disrupts the other children and the teachers in the classroom, and it can also make it difficult for the late-arriving child to enter the classroom alone. Again, not disturbing a child’s sense of order will help with normalisation.
- Picking the child up at the same time and telling him beforehand if there will be a change in the routine.

Normalisation goes through different stages but usually by Term 3 the children are showing signs of being normalised. What a joy to see the transformation in the children and the teacher finds herself saying, “It’s as if they don’t need me!”

By Edna Salvador, Directress 3-6

Primary update

All the news from the 6-9 class

What a wonderful term we have had. We have welcomed two new students to our class, Amber and Jack. They have been made to feel very welcome by the rest of the class and we are sure that they will enjoy their time with us.

This term a focus of our studies has been in the field of botany. The children have worked with the parts and function of plants, how environments influence plants and their forms, the plant cell, shape and name of leaves, just to mention a few concepts that we have explored this term. Our excursion to the Royal Botanical Gardens scheduled for this Thursday will allow the children to see first hand some of the more exotic plants that we have been discussing in class.

The children undertook some great work in the lead up to the excursion, some of this work included working with the Kingdom Vegetalia material. This material allows for classification of all the plants on earth. The photo on the right shows Ella and Isabella working with the material, as you can see it is a very large piece of work.

Along with learning the names and scientific terms for the shape of leaves, their parts and their function, students also undertook work with the flower, its parts and function. Below we see Jim dissecting a flower to identify the different parts that we identified and discussed.

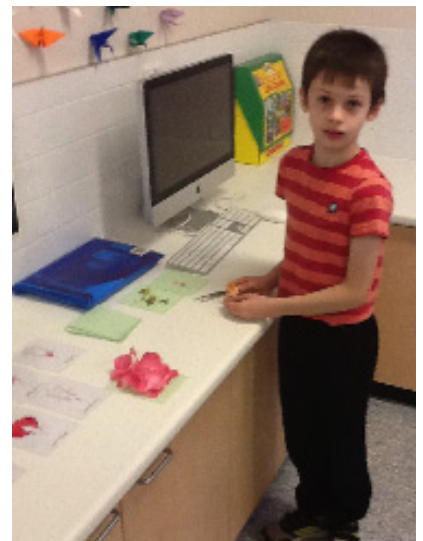
This term the students each chose a country of which to undertake a detailed study. This has been a great experience for them and apart from the study of the country itself many chose to present their work in various and interesting ways, such as dioramas, power point presentations and even videos.

We have had many interesting and enlightening discussions this term about friendships, relationships and resilience. This is a big area of importance for children in the 6 – 9 cycle as it is a main characteristic of the development of this age group. The multi-age grouping of the class provides children with opportunities for social development, social relations, including tolerance and respect for oneself and for others. Friendships begin to develop with depth and importance. These relationships within the class develop in their complexities and are supported by sensitive and respectful discussions which help to facilitate social discussions and help the children to take responsibility for their community. It also assists in building tolerance and appreciation for people's differences.

One of the wonderful experiences in Montessori is the chance for the older children to show responsibility and share their skills and knowledge with the younger children.

Recently we have begun having some of the older children join with the pre-primary younger children to do story time. This has been a great experience for both the younger and older kids. The older children have been responsible for choosing a story to read and then leading the groups with discussions. This has been a wonderful way to build a solid link between the pre-primary and the primary classrooms. Along with this chance, the extended day children have been joining us in the primary playground for lunch and play on Tuesdays. This has become a day that many of the 6 – 9 children look forward to each week as they have begun to develop close friendships with the younger kids.

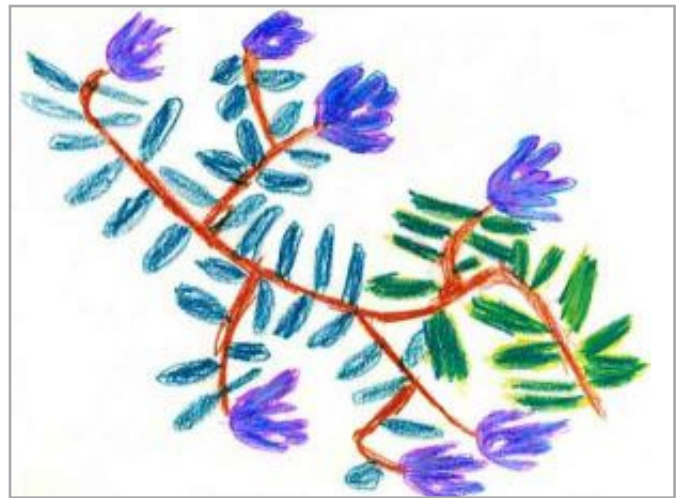
Some examples of some of the work inspired by the excursion to the Royal Botanical Gardens and our study of botany are shown on the opposite page. **We should never underestimate the value and importance of the study of nature to the developing child.**



"Gradually the time comes when the plant world no longer gives to the child a mere impression of greenery, sprinkled with the brilliancy of other colours, but as he walks around, wherever his eyes rest on a plant, on a leaf, on a flower, he recognizes a friend: 'Yes, I know you, and all the details about you.'" (Mario Montessori, The Botanical Cards. NAMTA journal vol. 23 no. 2)

We have had a great term. Who knows what wonderful things we will discover in Term 3.

from Craig



"The task of teaching becomes easy, since we do not need to choose what we shall teach, but should place all before him for the satisfaction of his mental appetite."

Maria Montessori

School Support Hours

The School Support Hours programme serves several purposes. It helps the School:

1. recognise the many, varied and sometimes enormous contributions of our volunteers.
2. find much needed support for our volunteers willing to take on more substantial tasks
3. bring together school wide events that benefit the whole school community

The School executive met with interested parents at the end of April to debrief on the programme thus far. This is a little of what we learned...How have we gone so far...?

"Great to see so much productive work being done" (observer at a working bee)

LONG TERM PLANNING POSSIBLE:
25% of all volunteering is an annual commitment.

An amazing 504 hrs in term 1 alone!



"So convenient!" (from a parent able to make her contributions from home)

A 96% completion rate in term 1 – stunning! Pie chart to left

You saved the school almost \$22,000 in maintenance costs through your work at the three working bees so far this year.

Making it better

We love that you can get an hour of support hours a term for attending parent education evenings. We've made it possible for both parents in a family to benefit in this way.

Got a busy term coming up? We're happy for you to carry any extra hours you've done this term over into a following term. Making the available jobs easier to find is important - we heard you find it useful when we put lists of jobs in the weekly newsletter. More improvements in this area coming soon.

You believe surveying parents about the ways they can contribute is also a great way to connect parents with jobs they love to do.

Going forward

The school benefits in tangible aesthetic and monetary ways from all of your contributions. It makes the Northside experience for your child so much richer and aesthetically pleasing and it makes for a stronger more vibrant school community.

Thank you!

"A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in."

Get in quick for the Term 3 Free North Ryde Go4Fun Program

Join a FREE local Go4Fun program and help transform your 7 to 13 year old child into an active, happy, motivated kid this year. Go4Fun involves both parents and children, and focuses on developing healthy eating habits, building self-confidence and getting kids more active. The 10 week North Ryde Go4Fun program is a collaboration between NSW Health, the City of Ryde and Active Opportunities. Sessions run after school and include informative games, fun and active exercise activities, tips on healthy food and portion sizes, label reading, a supermarket tour and more.

If you would like your child:

- Getting active every day
- Spending less time watching TV or on the computer each day
- Drinking more water and less sugar-sweetened drinks OR
- Eating nutritious food

Then Go4Fun may be for you! To find out more information, make a free call to 1800 780 900, visit www.go4fun.com.au, or contact the Go4Fun Coordinator on 9976 9579.

The details for the Term 3, North Ryde Go4Fun Program are:

Term 3 North Ryde Go4Fun

Venue Address: Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre, 504 Victoria Road Ryde NSW 2112

Time: 4.30pm-6.30pm

When: Wednesdays, starting the 15th July 2015



Holiday Clinics



When: Monday 6th July,
10am – 1pm
Where: Storey Park, Hornsby
Who: Boys and Girls aged 5 - 12
years
Cost: \$40 per participant
(Includes Morning tea and NRL
Pack)
ALL REGISTRATIONS ONLINE at
playnrl.com
Contact: Daniel Hutton
dhutton@nrl.com.au
» PLAYNRL.COM

0-3 Parenting The Montessori Way



Date: Thursday 16 July 2015

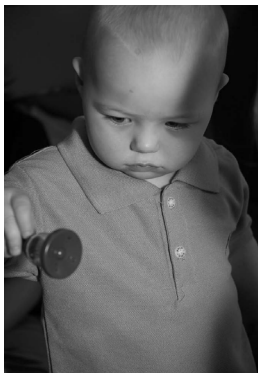
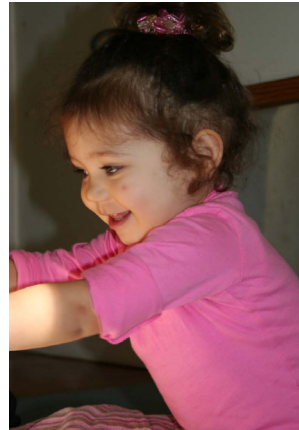
Time: 6:45pm for 7:00pm start - 8:00pm

RSVP: by 14 July 2015 (limit of 20 people)
admin@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au
or phone 9144 2835

Note: One Parent and Carer, per enrolled child, is required to attend at least one Parent Information evening each term, as per Toddler enrolment conditions

This workshop will include:

- ❖ Grace and Courtesy – why it is important
- ❖ Use of language with toddlers (choice of words, vocabulary, tone of voice)
- ❖ Discipline and freedom with limitations/boundaries



Please arrange for child care
as this event is for
adults-only.

At Northside Montessori, we work with your child's natural drive to grow and learn.

Their individualised and independent learning occurs with choice of activities, peer-learning, and hands-on experiences, based on their development and facilitated by their directress/director.

Our school offers an experience that fosters your child's desire to discover and create, both in the classroom and in life.

A love of learning for their future and for our future.

Northside Montessori School
northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au