

NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

# CHRONICLE

*autumn*

## TECH *talk*

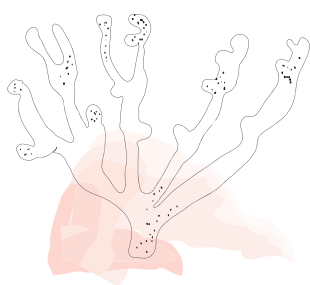
One parent reflects  
on Dr Kristy  
Goodwin's workshop  
'Raising Children in  
a Digital World'.

## BACK FROM *nyc!*

Our Montessori Model United  
Nations delegates share  
their exploits from the  
New York conference.

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**NORTHSIDE CHRONICLE**  
**AUTUMN 2017**

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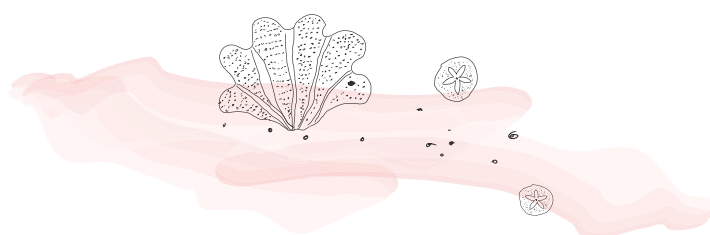
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# FROM THE PRINCIPAL

by Barbara Maxfield



Whilst I knew at age 4 that I was going to be a teacher, I realized by Year 9 that I would be a mathematics teacher. And, as they say...the rest is history!

**B**efore I comment on Northside and its wonderful education, I'll take a moment to share my own educational journey as a child.

From a family of six children, and the fourth daughter, I was lucky to have a learning environment in the home that in some ways was like a Montessori setting. A mixed aged group with older children to learn from, lots of hands-on learning, a natural environment with animals to care for, gardens with freshly grown vegetables, opportunities to do things for myself, and parents who modelled and taught social values. None of the children in my family went to a pre-school - in fact I don't think there were any back then.

Our home was abound with books, and craft activities like knitting, sewing, cooking and embroidery were encouraged. I knitted my first jumper at age 8 and by 10 years of age I would often prepare the full family meal for eight people.

I was not made to feel particularly special as a child but I always felt loved. All of us had responsibilities and mum simply couldn't dote on any one of us, or spend time molly-coddling us, or psycho-analyzing tantrums or bad behaviours. As such, each of us developed resilience and independence, and I know I certainly loved learning. I had a huge appetite for learning; wanting to be able to do everything that my older sisters could do. I must have driven poor mum crazy. At four I demanded to learn how to tell the time on an analogue clock (after-all there were no digital clocks back then!), I was crazy about books and learned to



read well before I went to school. Dad ran a shop and each Sunday afternoon I helped him count the money. I had to group the money in piles and roll the coins in precise quantities so that dad could take it to the bank the following day.

I had basic numeracy and literacy skills through hands-on home experiences before finally arriving at school at age 5. My positive attitude to learning continued throughout my schooling and I was lucky to have many good teachers during primary and high school. I had a few bad ones too but my parents said it was important that I didn't allow those teachers to ruin my education. I was told to learn what I could from them and to never make an excuse for not learning.

Despite being from a truly

working class family (hand-me-down clothes, no TV, no holidays or luxuries) I feel incredibly privileged to have had the foundation I had. Whilst I knew at age 4 that I was going to be a teacher, I realized by Year 9 that I would be a mathematics teacher. And, as they say...the rest is history!

Things are vastly different today on many levels but essentially children are the same as they always have been. They need love, they learn through hands on experiences, and they thrive if they are empowered to do so. As parents, you have chosen an educational environment at Northside that is so right for children and which fosters strong values and attitudes, resilience, creativity and, of course, academic skills! I know I would have absolutely loved to have

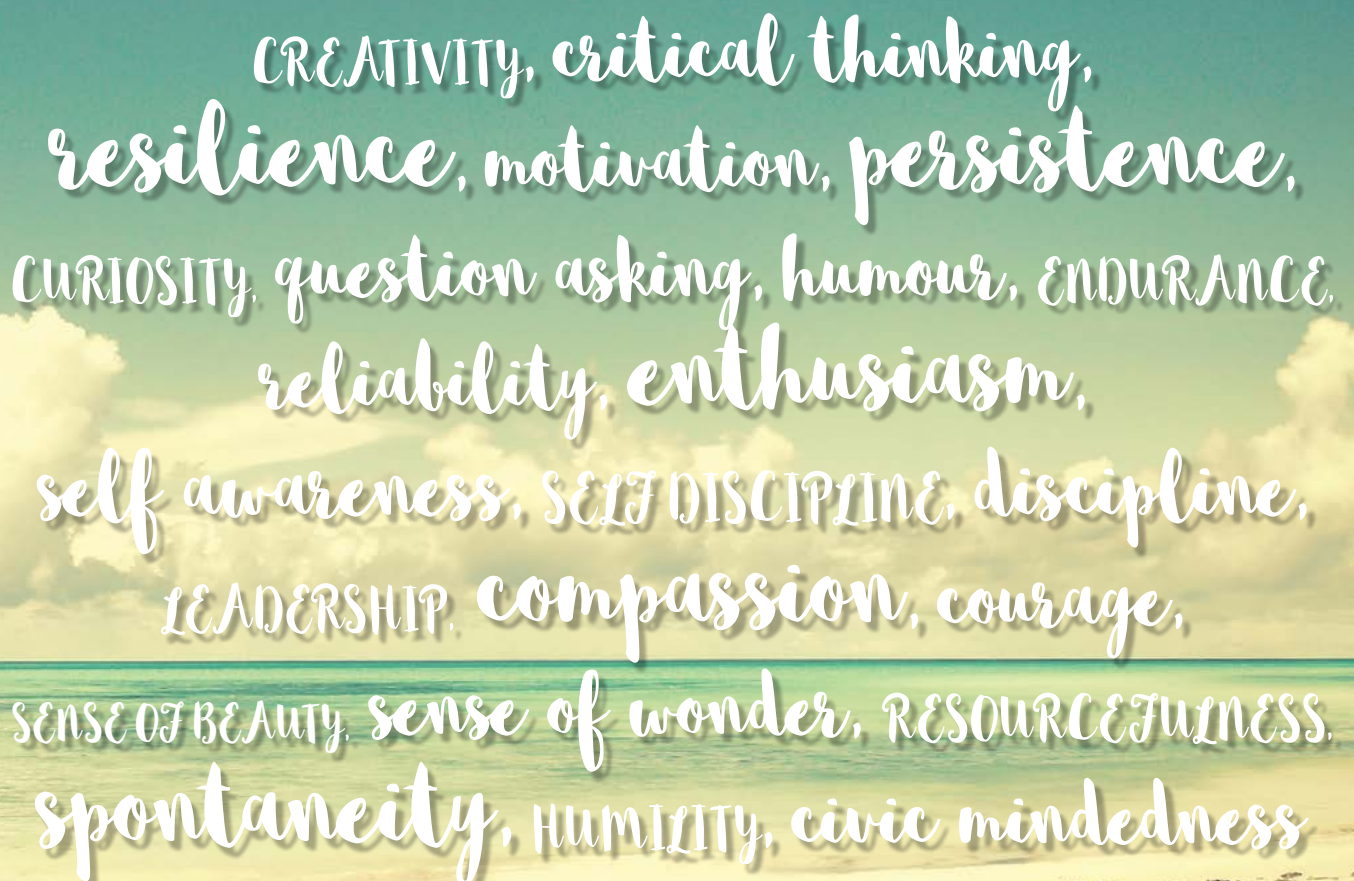
had that same privilege as a child and I also know that I will support my grandchildren to attend Montessori schools too.

As I depart Northside as Principal, I leave with wonderful memories and a conviction that Maria Montessori got it right! The Montessori method is unwavering at our school and whilst staff and, indeed, the management of the school may change, what remains for your child is a powerful education that will benefit them for many years to come.

Below are just some of the qualities and skills that are characteristic of a Montessori graduate.

Wishing you all the very best for the future!

Barbara Maxfield  
Principal



CREATIVITY, critical thinking,  
resilience, motivation, persistence,  
CURIOSITY, question asking, humour, ENDURANCE,  
reliability, enthusiasm,  
self awareness, SELF DISCIPLINE, discipline,  
LEADERSHIP, compassion, courage,  
SENSE OF BEAUTY, sense of wonder, RESOURCEFULNESS,  
spontaneity, HUMILITY, civic mindedness

# NEW STAFF

## INTRODUCTIONS...

*This year we welcomed many new staff members to Northside. Here is a little bit about our newest staff members.*

### Fiona Walker

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

My name is Fiona Walker and I am very excited to have started at Northside this year as Assistant Principal. I started my teaching career as a K-6 French teacher before moving to England. I spent 6 years as a classroom teacher there, developing an understanding of another education system. I also had the opportunity to be Head of Girls' Boarding at the school - a very different experience! I then returned to Sydney and began working at Tara Anglican School for Girls where I spent 10 years. I enjoyed being part of the school's transition to the PYP (International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program). This helped me develop my interest in educating the whole child, as I saw the importance of developing a student's skills, attitudes and inquiring nature alongside the traditional curriculum. I am very pleased to be at Northside and am grateful to all the staff and students for their enthusiasm in educating me in Montessori methodology. The best way for me to learn has been through listening to my son who has started in Extended Day this year. He loves coming to school and is always keen to tell me about the materials he has used each day. I look forward to meeting more members of the school community as the year progresses.

### Sarah Barton

6 - 9 DIRECTRESS

My name is Sarah Barton and I am the new 6 - 9 teacher at our beautiful school. I have done some casual work at Northside for the last two years while I did my Montessori training. My background is in special education but I was drawn into Montessori education by its individualised approach and its sensorial materials among a wide variety of other factors. I enjoy playing the piano and have been playing since I was 3. I am also a published poet. I am originally from the country in NSW (near Dubbo) and grew up on a farm. I look forward to working with the children to provide an authentic Montessori experience.

"Not in the service of any political or social creed should the teacher work, but in the service of the complete human being, able to exercise in freedom a self-disciplined will and judgement, unperverted by prejudice and undistorted by fear."

(DR. MARIA MONTESSORI, TO EDUCATE THE HUMAN POTENTIAL, P.3).

## Blandine Carraro

ASSISTANT, ROSELLA CLASSROOM

Hello! I am Blandine Carraro, and I am originally from France, and my husband is Italian. This explains my name. J. I studied foreign languages at the University of Nice (France). I worked as an events coordinator and admin assistant for a few years before I had my two daughters (now aged 15 and 17). It is thanks to them that I came across the Montessori Method, and it impressed me so much that I became a Montessori teacher's assistant in 2005 and then gained my Associate Montessori Certificate (Early Childhood) in 2008 in Seattle, USA. When my family relocated to Australia in 2009, I obtained my Certificate III in children's services, and went on to become a language teacher for pre-school and primary aged children. Whilst I did use my Montessori skills in my language classes, I did also miss working in a Montessori school. I started working in the Rosella classroom on Thursdays and Fridays in mid-February. I have very much enjoyed my first few weeks in the Rosella classroom and getting to know all the students and their families. I look forward to meeting you at some point throughout the year.

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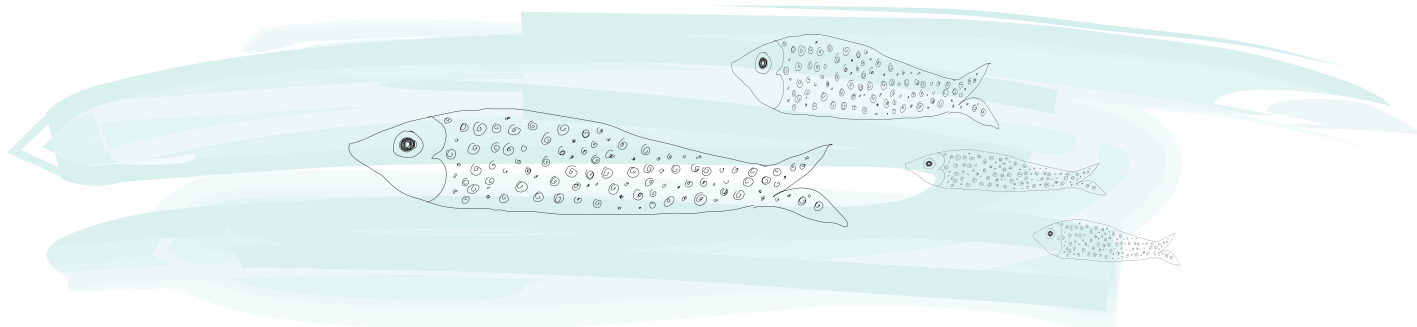
## Andrew Whiskin

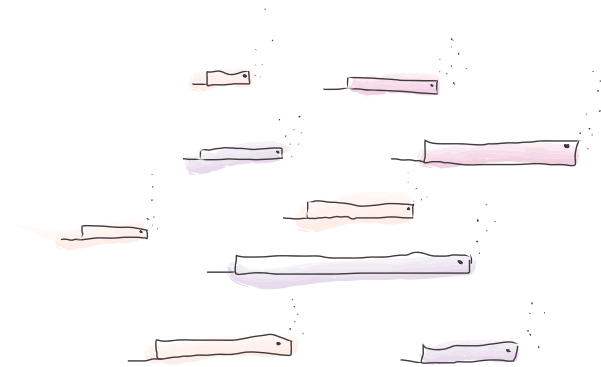
IT SUPPORT

My name is Andrew Whiskin, and I work as IT Support for the Northside Montessori School. I'm currently studying Information Technology at Macquarie University, where I hope to pursue a career in Web Design. I've been working here at Northside since late 2016 and my time here has been extremely educational and enjoyable. The staff at Northside have welcomed me into their school with open arms and I look forward to working with the fantastic people here for a long time.

*...we also welcome*

CHRISTINE CRAFT AS AN ASSISTANT  
IN THE ROSELLA CLASSROOM.





# toddler & transition

## PROGRAMS

*"When is it okay to step in?" I can best answer this with the advice given to me while doing my Montessori training: "If in doubt, stay out."*

by Megan Nguyen (Toddler Directress)

Our first term of the year has almost passed and it has been wonderful watching our toddlers and their carers settle back into the space after a long summer's break. We have also welcomed an abundant number of new families and it has been truly amazing to witness how quickly all of the 'newbies' have transitioned into the environment. Generally a Directress has to brace herself a bit at the start of a new year as we never know how settling in will go. It can often be a roller coaster, however it has been such a pleasant surprise; we seem to have found our rhythm rather quickly this year!

We kicked off the Term with the commencement of our Transition Program for toddlers getting ready to move up to the next cycle.

### OUR TRANSITION PROGRAM

We also kicked off the Term with the commencement of our Transition Program, where toddlers getting ready to move up to the next cycle attend a 1.5 hour session each week without their carer present. All of the children have now settled in beautifully and it is a joy to watch them work so peacefully in the space and also begin their first forms of collaborative, small group work. The bonds between the children are already evident and we are truly enjoying our afternoons together.





## IN OUR TODDLER PROGRAM

I am constantly asking the parents and carers to stretch themselves a little further each week. Our goal in our sessions is to support a journey of independence for the developing child and watch their confidence grow. In order to do this, we as parents have to learn to step back and have trust in the child and his capabilities. It is impossible to do without handing over the power of decision-making to the child. This can be a true challenge for many parents for varying reasons as they fear their child could get hurt, make a mess, break something or act in a destructive manner. Unfortunately the adult often thinks the toddler will make a wrong move in the environment. Too often adult hands and intentions block the child from gaining independence. We see this when parents pour the child's cup of water, hang up their art work to dry or put their shoes on for them. While done with good intentions, it hinders the child on his quest for autonomy and mastery of skills.



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## IF IN DOUBT, STAY OUT!

So the question is “When is it okay to step in?” I can best answer this with the advice given to me while doing my Montessori training: “If in doubt, stay out.” We often rush to the child’s aid instead of pausing for a moment to see if he really needs it. We all have seen the child walking gregariously about the room with a jug of sloshing water. We need to wait to see if he can manage on his own, especially if this is a task that has been presented to him before. It is instinct for many to rush to the child while explaining, “Don’t spill the water” and stopping him in his tracks. The command teaches the child nothing. Instead, if we remind the child to walk slowly, we give him power to correct his course. If the water spills? Well, we have a mop and a drawer of towels for him to tidy up. If we do not give children the opportunity to make mistakes, they can’t learn from them. It is helpful to think about just doing the ONE thing to help the child get back on track, without taking over the entire process.

### YOU CAN SEE WHY

observation by the adult is so key. It plays a crucial role in identifying the child’s strengths and struggles. Our Toddler Program prides itself on being a place where parents can shut off from the rest of the world for 2 hours and be fully present with their children. It is a wonderful gift and I thank the parents for their openness as they explore what Dr. Montessori called a true “education for life” with their child.

As Term 2 approaches and we become more rooted in autumn, I look forward to seeing what the season of change brings to all of us.

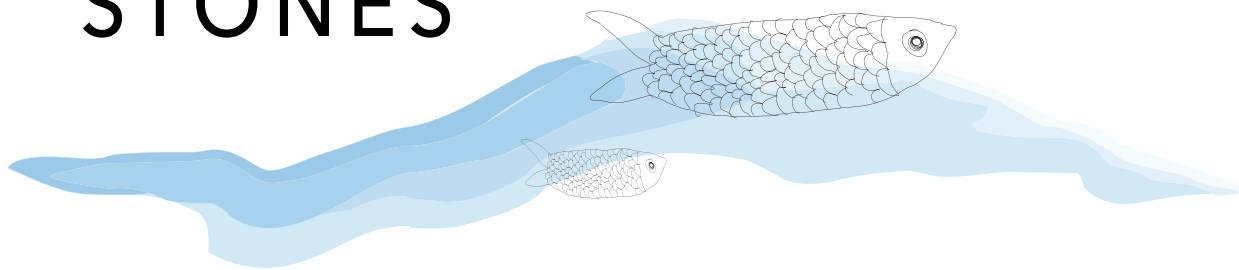
Megan Nguyen

Toddler Directress





# STEPPING STONES



Some of the IC children even give the chicks a little wave each morning, which I just thought was so adorable. They really have been very gentle and caring towards them.

This year, Karla (Room Leader in the Nido Room) and Shallu (Room Leader in the IC Room) and I completed our 0-3 year old Montessori Certificate Course. While at times we found it tiring, we also thrived on the Montessori knowledge we now have gained and appreciate that with anything gained there is a sacrifice to be made. Our Trainer Sara Brady was full of stories and knowledge from teaching Montessori around the globe. She had stories about Montessorian children who lived in colder climates, walking down the countryside, catching ferries to the woods where they were left to roam until a horn was blown, which the children knew signaled that they had to return back to the dock or the ferry would leave! She was enthralled about the experience and amazed about the independence of these young Montessorian children. They went into the woods to gather firewood to make a bonfire that night in the yard of their Centre, where they would also sleep the night. Well, we don't plan on sending our little Stepping Stones children to the Woods however maybe an overnight stay at Sydney's Taronga Zoo for our Preschoolers could be a great excursion and a wonderful experience.

## THIS YEAR

we have lots of exciting incursions booked and as many of you know we have Henny Penny Hatching that have taught the children about the lifecycle of a Chicken. The children have been able to hold the chicks and have enjoyed watching them hatch and grow. Some of the IC children even give the chicks a little wave each morning, which I just thought was so adorable. They really have been very gentle and caring towards them. It makes me think we really need a pet at the Centre. I'd love your feedback and ideas about this, so please feel free to drop in and say hi, or send me an email with your suggestions.

Don't forget to check out our Diversity and Sustainability Calendar for 2017 at the front of the Centre in the glass display cabinet.

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## NIDO ROOM NEWS

We have been busy in the Nido room with many celebrations in the last few months. We began the year with celebrations of families returning and welcoming new families into our room.

We joined in with Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day and Australia Day celebrations through many art and craft experiences, books and songs relating to the events. For Chinese New Year, the children painted and created their

own instruments to play. They created and folded fans and experimented with play dough and materials.

During Australia Day celebrations, Australian animals became an interest and we continued exploring the animals in a variety of experiences over the following weeks. We celebrated Pancake day/ Shrove Tuesday in February with the children taking turns in measuring, pouring and mixing all ingredients to create pancakes. The children got to experience the whole cooking process through observing, smelling and of course tasting the end product. This experience

has lead to future planning for more cooking with the Nido children and also families sharing some recipes that their families enjoy making and eating at home.

We have recently celebrated Harmony day through taking hand prints of everybody within the room and asked families and educators to bring a family photo from home. The plan is to create a family wall at the children's level for all our children to recognise and reflect a representation of our Nido community, providing a sense of belonging for all of our children and educators.

## CASA ROOM NEWS

In these past few months at the start of this Year the children in the CASA room have been emphasising the Grace and Courtesy lessons for Practical Life. Through these lessons the children are learning the social skills consistently of how to respect and use politeness toward themselves and others. Educators have been presenting movement on how to walk with a tray or around the mat and how to keep a distance in front or behind us when in the Casa Room.

Harmony Day was on the 21st of March. The children celebrated by learning about Australia's cultural diversity and a sense of belonging for everyone. They enjoyed activities such as making a Korean fan, hand printing and singing one of our children's favourite French songs 'Frere Jacques'. Some children dressed up in traditional cultural costumes. They were so delighted to show their own costumes to friends.

We have Henny Penny Hatching Program located in our room. The children have enjoyed watching eggs hatching as well as all the educators. Children have been giving very gentle pats to the tiny chicks with lots of enthusiasm and excitement. This Henny Penny Hatching Program helps us to educate the children and talk about how chicks grow in their eggs, what chicks need to grow and how to care for living creatures. Watching the chicks hatch has been a very meaningful and fun learning experience for all involved.

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## IC ROOM NEWS

For the creative development of the child, educators have been giving the children the opportunity to cut out different shapes with the help of a shape cutter.

In the first month of the Year, the IC Room welcomes all the children and helps them to settle in to their new environment. IC children practise a lot of practical life activities which are dry pouring, wet pouring and cleaning and arranging their classroom with their educators. The children enjoy helping the educators with arranging the classroom. The children celebrated Australia Day making boomerangs and dot painting.

We celebrated Chinese New Year in the month of February and the children had the opportunity to make lanterns. Children enjoyed making Valentine's Day gifts for their loved ones and were given the opportunity to make love hearts in the classroom. Children were very excited to make the gifts for their parents and siblings.

We celebrated Pancake Day/Shrove Tuesday with making pancakes in the classroom. Each child was given an opportunity to make a pancake in the classroom and had it for their morning tea with strawberries and whipped cream on top. The children enjoyed this cooking experience.

As a part of children's Practical Life development, the children enjoy pouring with the use of the cone which helps them in developing their hand and eye coordination and control their movements. Children also enjoy washing the windows and cleaning the classroom with dusters and dustpans. This is the next step for child's independence.

For the creative development of the child, educators have been giving the children the opportunity to cut out different shapes with the help of a shape cutter. Children then use glue to paste the shapes onto paper. They enjoy pasting colourful butterflies and tiny teddy bears.

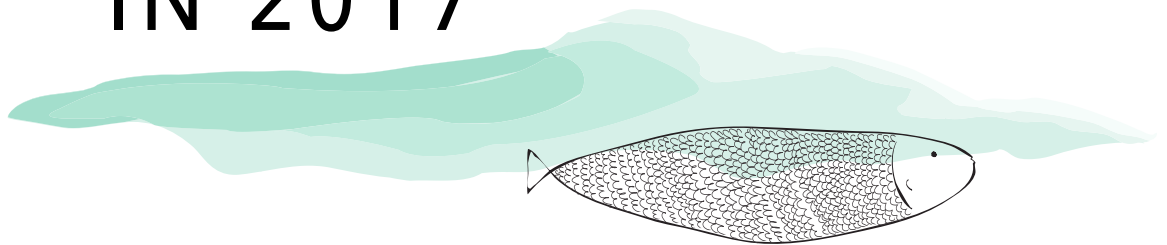
We celebrated St. Patrick's Day in the room by educating the children about the history of this celebration. Children were given the opportunity to do some pasting work with green colours in remembrance of St. Patrick's Day.

We celebrated Harmony Day last week with the children. Children used orange material to make a collage which represented Harmony Day.



# MUSIC

## IN 2017



I am often asked what happens in our music classroom so I thought I would give a brief overview of what is currently happening at Northside and Stepping Stones in the music classroom.

### DAY CARE MUSIC

Children in the under 3 class experience a variety of songs, percussion with music and dances on Friday afternoons. My goal in this class is just to bring a smile to everyone's face but we often get much more. Current favourite is the "Hand Jive"

### 3-4 YEARS

(including Day Care class on Friday) have a broad range of songs and music that are either used for singing or for percussion.

Usually we have one or two songs in different languages and songs from around the world are also used for our percussion ensembles. One of my favourite parts of our lesson is Music Appreciation where we have a story matching a piece of classical music. "Trepak" from the Nutcracker is a one of the favourites and most recently we started listening to "Aquarium" from Carnival of the Animals.

One of my favourite parts of our lesson is Music Appreciation where we have a story matching a piece of classical music.

"Music gives  
soul to the  
universe, wings to  
the mind, flight to the  
imagination and life to  
everything"

PLATO



## EXTENDED DAYS

In this class we also start the fundamentals of reading rhythms and music. The children use glockenspiels in class to learn to play different pieces and ostinato patterns. The extended day class are currently preparing "Doh a deer" for the soiree.

## LEVEL 1 & 2

We have just started recorder in this class. My favourite part at the beginning of the year is watching the new Year 2's take on the leadership role in the music class. Recorder can be a tricky instrument especially for those with smaller fingers however there

is plenty of determination to override the challenge.

## LEVEL 3 & 4

This group is waiting to surprise everyone at the soiree with our new classroom instruments. They have been using our Fire Red Melodicas. Currently they are preparing "Underneath the Mango Tree"

## LEVEL 5 & 6

At this level the children are taught to create arrangements of pieces according to the instrumentation available. The year 5 and 6's have been experimenting with performing a piece in alternative ways using different combinations of instruments. They are preparing

a piece for the soiree called "Aura Lee" which will demonstrate this.

Along with playing instruments and creating ensembles, Theory, Singing and Composition including arranging on Garage Band is included as part of the lessons for Primary.

What I love is that in a Montessori Music classroom the children are so geared to wanting to understand every aspect of music... from the science behind the instruments to the history and timeline, learning to play as an ensemble to just being able to enjoy listening.

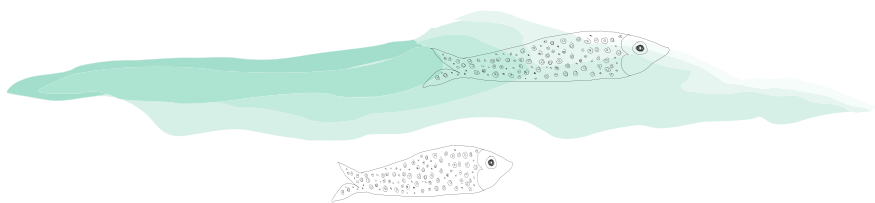




# an alternative education

*One parent's Montessori journey.*

by Malcolm Hebblewhite



As an  
engineer  
by training, I  
guess I'm a little  
conservative  
about education  
in some  
respects...

I was quite sceptical when my wife Valéria suggested we visit a Montessori school when considering daycare and schooling options for our then 3 year old daughter, Isabella. As an engineer by training, I guess I'm a little conservative about education in some respects and I probably had a preference for a more 'conventional' approach, such as pre-school or daycare and the public system, which is what I experienced as a child. I also certainly had a negative impression about Montessori being rather 'alternative' in terms of the way it operated; I had fears that my daughter would end up entering high school without being able to read because she'd been encouraged to roam around the primary playground picking flowers and exploring her creative instincts. How wrong I was. I think it highlights a misunderstanding amongst the uninitiated within the broader community about the Montessori Method - that it is categorised together with a range of other alternative educational options without being appropriately differentiated.

Lucky for us, Val had an Aunt in the USA and a friend in China who were Montessori teachers, so she had some insight into the methodology, philosophy and the results with her younger cousins. Nevertheless, it was with some difficulty that Val tried to convince me to keep an open mind and consider the benefits of a Montessori education - but she did manage to get me to attend an observation at Broadmeadow Montessori in Newcastle, where we were living at the time.

I still remember entering the classroom and being amazed at how quiet and ordered the environment was, and wondering how it was possible for children

so young to be so focussed in concentrating on the tasks they were each engaged in. A child got up from her place at an activity, carefully lifted and placed her chair under the table, approached us while we were in conversation, gently tapped the teacher on the hip, and stood waiting patiently for a break in the conversation to make a polite request.

I came away from the observation asking Val if she thought that the children had been sedated in order to get them to behave

in such a calm, productive manner! The difference with the local daycare centre was stark.

Needless to say, it was an easy decision to start Isabella at the school, and at the end of the 3 year cycle the results in terms of her development, and that of her peers, was remarkable - as any parent of a 3-6 graduate can attest. The joy that this brought us was shortlived, however, when she was compelled to enter the public school system for year 1, as Broadmeadow only offered the 3-6 cycle.

I had fears that my daughter would end up entering high school without being able to read because she'd been encouraged to roam around the primary playground picking flowers...

## THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

that Isabella attended was a reputable one and the teaching staff were competent and caring, but the contrast between the two environments was dramatic and highlighted some of the benefits of the Montessori system. The teacher in the public classroom seemed to be focussed on crowd-control, with behavioural issues hampering learning and productivity at every turn. The system demanded that the teacher position lessons to suit the middle-ground of class abilities, with out-performing and under-performing students suffering as a result.

As the year progressed, it was clear that the priceless love of learning that Isabella had acquired at Montessori in her formative years was slowly being depleted, despite everyone's best efforts - the school, us, and Isabella. We began looking at alternatives.

The opportunity for Isabella to learn in a Montessori environment again was a major driver in our decision to move cities and relocate close to Northside. From the moment she arrived in level 2 in 2014, Isabella began once again thriving and quickly regained that love of learning that makes Montessori so special (and vindicates our 'alternative' choice).



# MY CHILD'S WRITING IS FULL OF *spelling mistakes!*

*When do you correct the child's spelling errors? The answer of the 3-6 Directress to this question is - 'not right away'.*

by Marina Ridley (3-6 Directress)

**W**e recently had a parent evening in Pre-Primary focusing on the progression of Language in 3-6 Montessori. One of the questions that we are usually asked during a talk on Language is 'When do you correct the child's spelling errors?' The answer of the 3-6 Directress to this question is - 'not right away'. What does this mean and why would we not correct spelling? Surely a story or a sentence with correct spelling indicates progress, skill, pride in one's work and many other admirable traits. Yes, certainly correct spelling can reflect these things; but what if spelling isn't the most important factor for the child right now?

...but what if  
spelling isn't the  
most important  
thing for the child  
right now?



## THE SYNTHESIS OF MANY SKILLS

I recently read a wonderful analogy of the process of writing by Jennifer Gonzalez, a Language/ Arts Teacher and Trainer of Teachers. Gonzalez writes, "Producing a finished piece of writing is a lot like putting on a polished musical performance: it requires the synthesis of many skills, some of which need to be handled separately. Imagine if a band conductor brought a brand-new piece of music to her band and expected all sections to play it together, perfectly, the first time. Even someone with no musical training can see that this is an unreasonable approach. Instead, if each instrument section starts by practicing their part separately, the performers will get really solid on their individual parts before pulling it all together to refine the complete performance." So then, if we have a number of skills to take into account or things to 'pull together' before we get to the polished piece, then what are they?

For us, the red pen was more often than not wielded freely and often! Yes, we learnt to spell, eventually, but would other skills have been honed to a higher level had we been able to focus on them rather than spelling at this fragile point?

## WHEN CHILDREN

first learn to write there are many skills that come into play. First a child masters the sounds that they are hearing, you may have heard of this as the teaching of phonics. You teach this skill to your child perhaps unconsciously; playing I spy, listening to stories together, playing rhyming games and so on. When your child comes to 3-6 Montessori, we continue phonics instruction and also begin to add the abstract symbols of our language - letters (or phonemes). We use a multi sensory approach to helping the child learn their letters. There's touch of the sandpaper letters, the sound and the visual representation of the letter. Then the child practices and eventually knows all 26 phonemes. Now comes the joy of putting two parts together; the phonics and the phonemes and suddenly your child exclaims; "I can write!" What joy! What excitement for that child to have unlocked the mystery of words. To know that sounds and letters make words and that he or she can communicate all sorts of ideas permanently! This we know is a fundamental human need and tendency - to communicate.

Now the spelling in this communication would not meet the standards of many of my past educators or perhaps yours. For us, the red pen was more often than not wielded freely and often! Yes, we learnt to spell, eventually, but would other skills have been honed to a higher level had we been able to focus on them rather than spelling at this fragile point? Dr Montessori and many other educators would argue that yes, other skills are being honed and they are of great importance.



## WHEN THE EDUCATOR

leaves spelling alone at this point, it isn't an indication that we don't care or we're being too empathetic and soft around the child's struggles. Rather, we and the child are focusing on something rather wonderful unfolding before us. What rich vocabulary flows from the child that is uninhibited by fear of incorrect spelling. How exciting the content and how long do the stories go on for? We watch with delight as the child runs out of space on their mat when writing with the Moveable Alphabet because there is so much to say! We watch with goose bumps forming when the child can't wait to write about a hippopotamus at 4 years old because, they can!

We watch with goose bumps forming when the child can't wait to write about a hippopotamus at 4 years old because, they can!

## 'INVENTIVE' SPELLING

Kolodziej and Columba, (2005) support this manner of spelling. They say that children who are allowed to use 'inventive' or sometimes known as 'temporary' spelling learn to write more quickly, more fluently and with richer vocabulary than children whose educators and parents focus on the correctness of their spelling too early.

While this delightful writing is bursting forth from the child, the Montessori Directress is beginning to introduce phonograms or double letter sounds in our language. These help children to begin to decode the sounds that they are writing and hearing at another level. They learn the 'th' sound in think and the 'er' sound in wonderful and so on. Simultaneously, the child is taught sight words and high frequency words to add to their kit bag of skills. By the time the child reaches the 6-9 stage, these skills are starting to synthesise and more emphasis can be placed on the correctness of spelling. Certainly as the Primary years move on, more deliberate editing and rough drafting is consciously taking place with the guidance of the Directress/or.

One remark from Gonzalez that makes such sense to me is; 'Correct spelling can't make up for a poorly structured, underdeveloped piece of writing'. Hence, we lay the right foundations so that all other skills are built on solid ground. What then if the child asks 'how do you spell ....' Does the Directress in 3-6 ignore the request? Certainly not, but it is the older child who is generally focused on the spelling. We also don't just give the answer. We guide the child through the steps. I'll often ask the child to bring a chalkboard and chalk and we together begin the process. I'll start with, 'what do you think the word begins with?' The child usually knows this. "What is the middle sound that you hear?" and then "What is the end sound that you hear". After this, we together look at the sounds. "Could this sound here be one of the phonograms?"

"Is there another way we could make this sound?" and so the questioning goes until the word is spelt.

So, next time your 3-6 child comes home with some writing or you see a photograph of an exciting piece of writing by your child, marvel at what they can do already, and know that the next 'layer to the symphony' is waiting around the corner, when your child is ready.

# Tech Talk

Should we keep little hands from swiping and tapping for as long as possible?

*One parent reflects on Dr Kristy Goodwin's workshop - Raising Children in a Digital World.*

by Doug Parsons

**A**s parents of children growing up in a digital age, most of us have questioned the effect of digital technology on our children. Should we keep little hands from swiping and tapping for as long as possible? Is a little Ok? If so, how much is Ok? Are government recommendations a good guide?

Dr Kristy Goodwin visited our Northside campus recently to answer these and many more questions. Kristy is a technology and development expert, author, speaker, researcher, and a mother who has dealt with what she refers to as "techno tantrums" and "techno guilt" as many of us as parents have.

As a father of three Montessorians aged 17, 14 and 5 and with a career in the IT industry, I am always eager to hear how we can preserve and protect our children in this digital age, yet at the same time, allow a healthy interaction which will give them the intelligence to thrive in this world they have been born into. Kristy is clearly passionate about sharing her research based information to help parents overcome the confusion surrounding what is harmful and what is helpful and to give them confidence to make decisions regarding screen use.

Most useful were her recommendations that if we are allowing children to use devices, rather than fixating on a specific amount of time or a time limit, look at what the child is doing, what they are missing while they are doing it, (the opportunity cost), and when they are doing it. For example, research tells us that the blue light emitted from screens can delay sleep so it is optimal to avoid this activity in the hour leading up to bed time.

Kristy also discussed the 7 developmental building blocks which children need to grow and thrive; relationships, language, sleep, play, physical movement, executive function skills and nutrition, and parents can consider these to formulate a practical measure of whether screen time is helping or hindering a child's development. Using the analogy of a glass jar and placing each of these 7 blocks into the jar for a 24 hour period, how much space is left in the jar for screen time after these needs have been met first? If there is screen time available and the chosen activity has educational value, it won't displace what is most important for a child's growth.

Her many suggestions for making choices that can enhance these seven building blocks were thought provoking. For instance, a half hour skype call with grandma or a family member will enhance a child's relationship need, and co-viewing apps or videos with our children can provide opportunities for discussion and language development.

## LOOKING BACK

15 years ago to when our daughter first toddled into a Montessori environment we were most certainly of the opinion that screens were to be avoided as much as possible and I'm glad we took that direction. How fortunate we are that all three of our children have experienced a school environment which unfailingly and beautifully provides for those essential developmental needs. In those 15 years since, the advancement and prevalence of digital technologies has been phenomenal. Today, with two teenagers whose assessments, research and textbooks are all presented and submitted digitally, our youngest Montessorian has many screens around the home and incredible software used by his siblings all vying for his attention. I certainly feel there were many insights from this workshop which will guide our use of technology and encourage us to set aside a little time to plan and prepare for our young one's exposure. And what could be better than a prepared environment!





# AN EDUCATION FOR LIFE

*Can you believe we are finished Term 1 already? The time has flown by and we are well into the school year now.*

by Janene Johnson (6-9 Directress)

It has been lovely having all of the new Level 1 children settle into their respective classes so well. From Day 1 it has seemed like they have been here forever. I think the lunches in Primary every Tuesday last year certainly helped this process. They are really feeling like 'big kids' now.

Montessori is  
an education for  
independence,  
preparing not  
just for school  
but for life.

MARIA MONTESSORI

If you are not doing it already, get your child to pack their school bag the night before, and also get them to either help you make their lunch or let them do it on their own.

This is the time when it is the perfect opportunity to assist their independence by allowing them to do more things on their own. Please let them walk up to their classroom alone. They should also be carrying their own bags and hanging them up without any assistance. Let them bring any notes you might want delivered to us (follow up with an email if you are unsure of its arrival). If you are not doing it already, get your child to pack their school bag the night before, and also get them to either help you make their lunch or let them do it on their own. These are all very small steps which will assist your child in learning to be responsible, independent teenagers and adults.

## MONTESSORI'S GREAT LESSONS

The beginning of the year is also a very exciting because Montessori's Great Lessons are presented. These include the stories of The Beginning of the Universe and Life on Earth. The lessons lay the foundation for a huge part of the curriculum and they spark the children's curiosity, imagination and lead to further exploration of their world. The level 1's were all very enthusiastic participants and you may have already had the stories retold to you at home.





## HARMONY DAY

We hope you all enjoyed Harmony Day. It was a wonderful way to get together with all of the children. We'd like to thank all of the Class Parents for organising this special event.



**WE HAVE HAD** several parents come in this term to do some special activities with the classes and we would like to thank them very much for giving up their time. Clayton Spencer came in and talked to 6-9 about the martial art of Nijitsu. It was such an informative presentation and we all learned so much about this ancient martial art. Asiyeh Ansari came and shared Persian New year with us and made 3D fish with the class. Several parents have been in to cook with us and we would like to thank Linda Appleyard, Letitia Castellanos and Andrew Arrowsmith.

Asiyeh Ansari came and shared Persian New Year with us and made 3D fish with the class.

## PJ CLASS

would also like to thank all of the volunteers who have helped with the guinea pigs this term. We are looking for a home for them for the holidays if anyone from either class is interested. Parents from PS are also very welcome to take them for a weekend if their child would like to do so. Just let Janene know.

As always, please contact us if you have any concerns or worries. If it's something important it's best to make an appointment for a proper discussion. You can contact us in person or via email.

Have a safe and restful break and we look forward to seeing you in Term 2.

Janene, Sarah, Sharon, Sandra and Sue.



# GAMES CHILDREN

# PLAY

*When teamed up, our OOSH children interestingly and almost surprisingly devise their own games.*

by Sirisha Anupindi (OOSH Coordinator)

I'm sure most of our parents here who send their children to OOSH are aware of the Arts and Crafts we do with them—children frequently bring them home, running to their parents saying, "look what we made today!"

But when teamed up, the children interestingly and almost surprisingly devise their own games. Together, they take on the roles of designer, executor and the opposer.

In light of this, I wanted to provide you with a sneak peek into their world of play!

## HIDE AND SEEK

Hilarious for a bystander. Of course, when the children are playing hide and seek we have to be on high alert to make sure all the children are within sight and in a safe place. But, after years of witnessing it in action, it is hard to believe that there is usually any reason for concern-- their principle is "if I can't see you, you can't see me!"

## THE BOAT JOURNEY

The fun of this game lies in its many components; deciding on the destination, fighting fiery sharks on the way, loading and unloading all the luggage for the journey-- Who is the captain and who is the baby? Packed with action!

## MONKEY BARS

Not only is this the most popular equipment among children, but I dare say it should be popular around us adults-- it can help with building up the child's upper body strength and burns out lots of excess energy. The fun of the game is its ability to start out easy- just one bar at a time, escalating to a skipping movement, ensuring that they continue to challenge themselves and their friends of course!

## CONSTRUCTION

I think that it's in this particular activity that we witness the most amazing combinations, raw materials of imagination and the sheer improvement of gross motor skills, the increase of balance and of spatial awareness.



"PLAY is freely chosen activity, but it is not freeform activity. Play always has structure, and that structure derives from rules in the player's mind. ... The rules are not like rules of physics, nor like biological instincts, which are automatically followed. Rather, they are mental concepts that often require conscious effort to keep in mind and follow. ... The main point I want to make here is that every form of play involves a good deal of self-control. ... Play draws and fascinates the player precisely because it is structured by rules that the player herself or himself has invented or accepted."

PETER GREY, THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PLAY AND OF MONTESSORI WORK.

In conclusion, although playtime may seem like the time during school in which the children learn the least, it is actually this time spent together outdoors which not only serves as a time for invention, creativity, and very regulated and controlled emotions, but also accommodates the improvement of a set of developed physical and social skills.

# BUILDING bridges

*Being the first Chronicle for the year, we welcome all our 9 - 12 families to a new school year.*

by Margaret Kroeger (9-12 Directress)

This has been a valuable time for us as we get to know our new students, Claire, Lara, Andie, James and Hana and to welcome our returning Year 5 and 6 students. Each year it's very satisfying to see the new classroom community form, as older students adopt fresh leadership roles and younger students relax into a new setting with new expectations. This has also been a time for us to review previous learning and set new academic goals with each student.

## IN TERM 1

many of our students have participated in our Montessori 'Great Story Lessons' that form a framework for future learning - especially in Science, History and Geography. Some of our older students have reworked these stories and made them their own. They have created models, plays and cartoons and will soon be sharing them with the 6 - 9 students. Level 6 have been working on compare and contrast essays in English. Level 5 and 6 have been preparing debate speeches. We were recently involved in an inter-school debate on 'Should Australia adopt a new national flag?' Level 4 students have been focusing on the parts of a sentence including predicate, subject and direct object. We have also prepared story starters to be sent to 9 - 12 students at the Montessori school in Bali. They will finish the narratives and send them back to us. Our research work on animals and first people is almost at an end, with students sharing their work and speeches with the class.

Wishing everyone a wonderful holiday and a great start to Term 2. Margaret, Kay and Kim

## THANK YOU

to our new class parents, Michelle and Niki for their contributions this term.

## TO AIDEN, CHIARA & CHRISTOPHER

Congratulations on representing Northside Montessori at the MMUN Conference in New York.

## PLEASE NOTE

that the date for our 9 - 12 production has now been changed to the 25 August with the rehearsal on the 23 August after school. If you need further information, please see Margaret.

## HARMONY DAY

It was beautiful to come together as a whole school for Harmony Day. Thank you to all those who helped make this possible. The 9 - 12 children enjoyed reading about human rights and the similarities and differences of all people in the books 'People' by Peter Spier and 'We are all born free' by Amnesty International. The discussions that ensued were thoughtful, mature and affirming. The sentiment of Harmony Day reminded me of a speech given recently by a 11-year old student at the MMUN Conference. He said, "Instead of building walls, we should be building bridges - bridges of understanding and bridges of trust." The future is in good hands with such wise and compassionate young people.

# DELEGATE FOR VIETNAM

*Recently I went to New York to represent Northside Montessori School as part of a program called Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN).*

by Chris Duff (Northside Montessori Year 6 Student)

In the conference, I was a delegate for Vietnam and had to represent their needs and interests. I have been researching, writing position papers, learning about the United Nations and the rights of all humans and creating speeches since Term 3, last year in preparation for this event. My particular focus was finding ways to improve the world by identifying and eliminating land mines as part of the 'Special Political and Decolonisation Committee (Specpol).'

The conference was great. It started with a flag procession. In total, 4,000 children participated from Montessori Middle Schools [for 12-15 year olds] and Montessori Upper Elementary Schools [for 9-12 year olds] from around the world. Over 90 countries were represented. There were 3,000 students alone from Upper Elementary - spread over 7 committees based on the real structure of the United Nations. We debated and problem solved real issues faced by the United Nations General Assembly. My topic was assistance in mine action. We had to reach consensus on a draft resolution to take to the UN after committee session ended on Friday. Committee sessions ran over two days where we gave speeches, collaborated together, wrote working papers, agreed on draft resolutions, did line by line reviews and voted together. It was hard work moving motions and reaching group agreement but we did it. You had to wear suits all the time except at the cultural and social nights.

On the last day of the conference we got to vote at the actual United Nations. The UN itself is a huge place. It is not classed as being on U.S soil so you have to go

My particular focus was finding ways to improve the world by identifying and eliminating land mines as part of the 'Special Political and Decolonisation Committee (Specpol).'

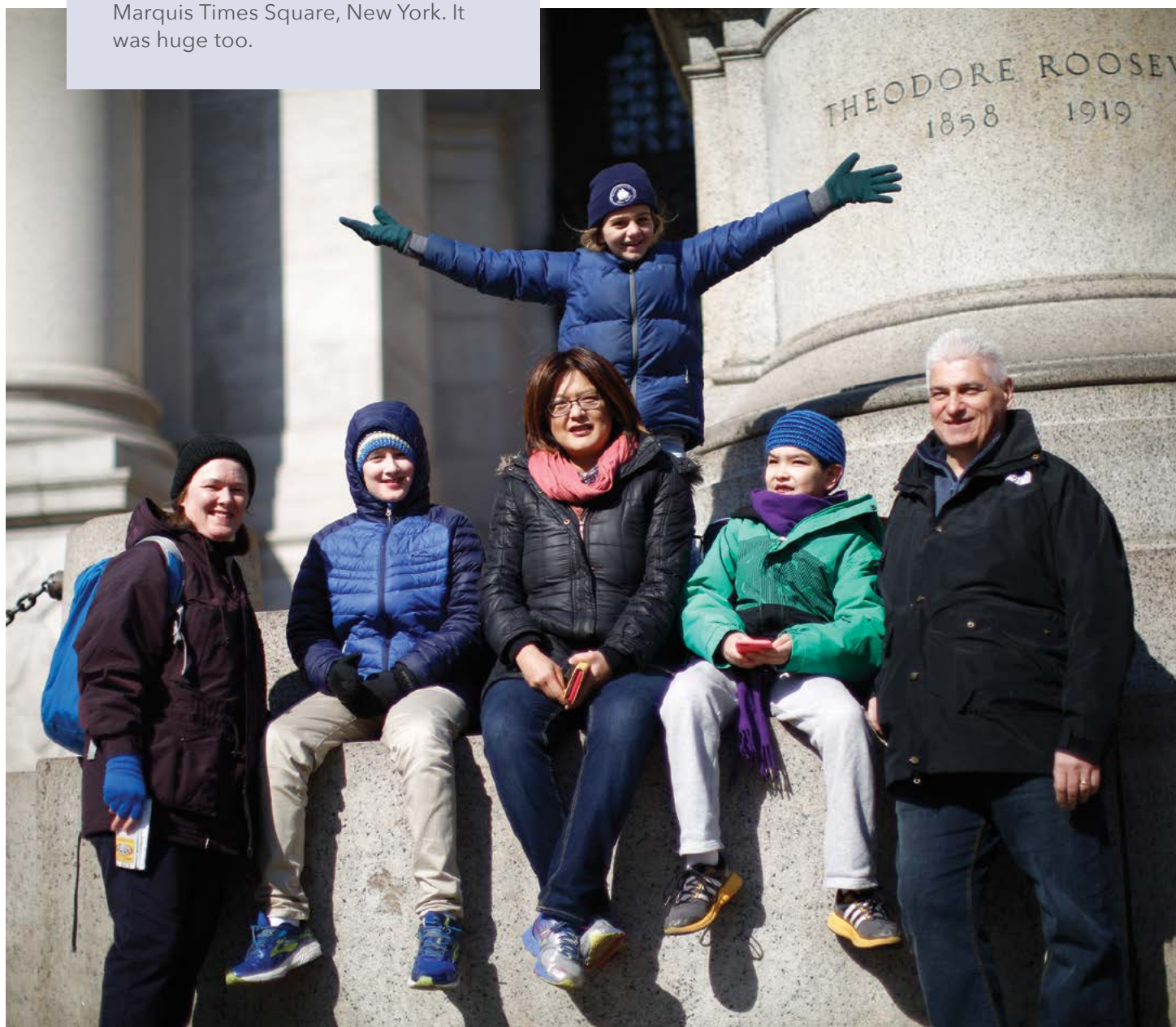


## MMUN WAS AN EXPERIENCE I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER.

Apart from the conference, just walking around NYC was amazing. It's hard to imagine how big it is - from Brooklyn and Staten Island all the way to the Bronx and the Statue of Liberty to Central Park and from Uptown to Downtown. We walked most of it. New York was a massive place. The conference was held in the Marriot Marquis Times Square, New York. It was huge too.

through a lot of security. As you enter the U.N building you have to pass through airport style screening and show your security pass. After that you get directed to your seat. As I represented Vietnam, I sat where the real delegates for Vietnam sit when the United Nations is in session. The draft resolutions were then voted on. My draft resolution was passed. This meant that it would be given to the Secretary General to be examined by the real delegates of the United Nations. If they agree, our work will become an international agreement.

I think this was a valuable experience and I feel good about changing the world for the better.





# DELEGATE FOR RWANDA

*Together with Aiden, I represented Rwanda in Africa  
at the MMUN in New York,*

by Chiara De Marco

(Northside Montessori Year 6 Student)

**T**ogether with Aiden, I represented Rwanda in Africa. I focused on nutrition and food security. I looked at how to protect the distribution of food, how to make food safe and healthy and how to have more food for everyone.

I felt very nervous giving my speech in front of over 100 people in New York - but I felt very proud of myself that I did it.

Before I got to the conference I had to research Rwanda and compare it to other countries. I researched their food, resources, animals, transport, clothes, history, customs, education and famous people. We created a giant poster about Rwanda and made sculptures and artefacts based on Rwandan life. I had to write a position paper on how Rwanda has dealt with food security and ways we could get more food to more people.

When I got to the conference I liked the flag ceremony and talking to others about Rwanda. We had to share our solutions to the problems of food security and food shortages. We filled over 12 giant posters on the wall of our committee room with ideas from everyone. Some of my ideas were educating farmers on sustainable farming and using solar powered tractors. By the end of the conference everyone in my committee, Economics and Finance (Ecofin), had made and agreed on a draft resolution. On the last day, we got our resolution passed at the United Nations. The U.N building was very exciting with lots of security.

I felt very nervous giving my speech in front of over 100 people in New York - but I felt very proud of myself that I did it.

Apart from the conference, it was fun to be in New York. It snowed on Aiden's birthday. I got to make snow angels. The food was very good especially the Chinese restaurants and the pizza.

I'm really glad I was part of MMUN because I want to help the world with its food issues and I loved all the project work. It was great to travel and be with other Montessori kids from around the world.



## EXTRACTS FROM THE MMUM students essays and speeches

### CHIARA DE MARCO Year 6 EXTRACT FROM SPEECH

The government of the Republic of Rwanda feels very strongly that everyone should have enough food to eat. Dr. Borlaug said 'You can't build a peaceful world on empty stomachs and human misery.' Two billion children in the world do not get enough food or vitamins. The world is running the risk of not achieving the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal to "end hunger, achieve food security".

Rwanda feels that stopping hunger is very important. Ten percent of children in Rwanda don't have enough to eat and 37% have stunted growth. Despite these problems, we have made some great changes to help our people grow more food. We launched the Rwanda Vision 2020 to improve our agriculture. We have worked hard to make our farms more modern. We are now using more fertiliser and educating farmers on sustainable farming. We are now growing more food. As our President said, 'We have lifted one million people out of poverty'. Traditional farming

methods, which were lost, are now being used again. We have developed programs so that farmers can access the internet to find where they can best sell excess food.

We propose holding a summit on these issues before the end of next year as a matter of urgency for the world. Latest technologies should be shared such as solar powered tractors, new plants that bring greater yields and improved soil care. If more food can be grown and the food more safely shared there will be less hunger.

## AIDEN LE HELLOCO Year 6 EXTRACT FROM POSITION PAPER

Desertification is a major threat to the environment, people and animals. Desertification occurs when dry lands are turned into deserts - with the loss of top soil and nutrients. This process is called land degradation. Desertification affects 1.5 billion people worldwide. Twelve million hectares of land are lost to desertification each year. Drylands store 43% of the world's carbon. Desertification of drylands could worsen global warming by releasing carbon into the air. Natural disasters, such as droughts or climate change, also cause desertification. Humans create deserts too. Mining, not managing water properly, overpopulation, over grazing and irresponsible farming can change drylands into deserts. Deforestation - the clearing of forests - can also lead to desertification. When you cut down trees, air quality and climate could be affected. The clearing of land also leaves the soil exposed, allowing it to be carried away by the wind and water and to be baked by the sun. The soil then cannot absorb water. "The top 20 centimetres of soil is all that stands between us and extinction." (Executive Secretary, Luc Gnacadja, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification). With no dead plant material to enrich the soil, soil quality becomes poor. Desertification also reduces the variety and amount of plants and animals (biodiversity). 27,000 species are lost each year from this. People are forced to move because lost lands mean they can't farm, leading to poverty and fear. Over 50 million people may have to move due to desertification in the near future. ("World Day to Combat Desertification"). Then overcrowding and competition for resources such as food and water can occur. Farms, schools and hospitals cannot be built on deserts. It is bad



for society and the economy.

The United Nation is concerned how desertification and deforestation affect the environment, people and countries. They recognise that desertification is getting in the way of their 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' for stopping poverty and creating a sustainable environment. The United Nations has focused on education for farmers and young people on traditional and sustainable farming methods, reforestation, land management, raising world awareness, helping those affected by desertification, and keeping track of the amount of land affected by desertification. The United Nations has made 2010 to 2020 the 'Decade of Desertification'. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was created in 1994. Their aim was for countries to raise awareness of the problem and to work together to reduce desertification by increasing soil productivity.

There are some other ways to help. The Committee on Science and Technology, from the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), could do further investigation into the latest ideas to fight desertification and deforestation. These include cloud seeding, planting of new genetically modified seeds and

"Desertification occurs when dry lands are turned into deserts - with the loss of top soil and nutrients".

"More research could be done on companion planting (plants grown together that help each other). One example of this is a fungi, called mycorrhiza. It latches onto plant roots and helps them get more nutrients and water".

the use of specialised fertilisers. Farmers could be helped to develop skills in soil testing, so they know which nutrients to add. This would require funds to educate farmers on soil testing and support to make fertiliser more available. More research could be done on companion planting (plants grown together that help each other). One example of this is a fungi, called mycorrhiza. It latches onto plant roots and helps them get more nutrients and water. This would keep the soil in place and increase the amount that can be grown. Financial support should be given to farmers who farm sustainably such as using crop rotation. Traditional methods of farming should be taught. Farmers should be rewarded for mulching to make the soil better able to absorb and keep water and for building things that keep the soil in place like shelter belts and windbreaks.

While significant work has been done by the United Nations, Non-Government Organisations and the government and people of Rwanda to fight desertification and deforestation, these problems need to remain a focus for the benefit of all people and our future.

## CHRISTOPHER DUFF Year 6

### EXTRACT FROM POSITION PAPER

People have the right to safety from land mines. Landmines, including ordnances, cluster munitions and other explosives, can cause great damage to any living thing that gets too close. Land mines kill or injure between 4000 to 20,000 people a year worldwide. When civilians are victims, 39% of them are children. When children are victims, they often die as their vital organs are closer to the blast. Women are often victims too, as they collect fire wood and water. Landmines don't just kill - they injure. Victims then need long term care and often cannot work to provide for their families. This causes hardship for the family and long term costs for the community. Landmine injury and death rates peaked in 2015 - the highest rates since 2006. Landmines are scattered throughout different parts of the world. Many of them are not mapped. Where there are land mines, people cannot safely build houses, schools, hospitals or roads. They cannot plant crops, graze animals or move around safely. This can lead to a loss in resources, poverty, hunger, fear, injury and death. The cost to humans is great. People cannot use the land so they are forced to move to other areas, leading to overcrowding and overuse of limited resources. Landmines affect the world socially, environmentally and economically.

The People's Republic of Vietnam recognizes the issue of mines, though they have not signed the Ottawa Treaty. 15% of Vietnam is occupied by landmines. The Vietnam government estimates that there were around 14 million tonnes of ordnances dropped on Vietnam between 1959 and 1975. Between 10 and 15% failed to detonate and still pose a serious threat to the Vietnamese people today. According to the Landmine Monitor 2016, eighteen Vietnamese are killed daily by land mines. The Vietnamese and Cambodian armies are mapping landmines with metal detectors, prodders and specially trained dogs and rats. While this is clearing some land, progress is slow.

The United Nations is very concerned about land mines too. Ban Ki-Moon said "Millions of people in nearly 80 countries still have the fear of landmines and explosive remnants of war, which take an unacceptable toll on lives and limbs and people's



Currently the latest technology involves mine sweeping with bees who have been specially trained to detect landmines.

live hoods." The United Nations helps with land mines by educating people about the dangers, mapping mines, helping victims, destroying mines and convincing countries to stop putting down mines. There are over 12 United Nations' Departments and Offices working to help with this issue. In 1983, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons came into force with an aim to ban land mine use against civilians. Vietnam was part of this convention. In 1992, many Non-Government Organisations created the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL). This led to the Ottawa Process. In the year 2010, the Convention on Cluster Munitions came into force. Vietnam signed this. One quarter of all those killed by smaller cluster bombs are children, as the mines are brightly coloured. More education is needed to warn children. The United Nations also recognises the suffering of victims due to disabilities as a result of mines. In 2008, a convention came into force to protect the rights of disabled people. It was called the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. While all these actions are important, land mines remain a huge threat. Some countries still have large stockpiles and there are military groups not connected with a government that use land mines. The United Nations cannot force countries to join.

Vietnam would benefit from further support, both with funds and the sharing of knowledge, to allow them access to the latest technology in combatting mines. Currently the latest technology involves mine sweeping with bees who have been specially trained to detect landmines. Also, Gambian Giant Pouched Rats are being tested in some parts of Africa to smell TNT. Both of these are too light to

trigger mines. There are also plants that have been modified to change colour when they are near nitrous oxide which leaks from mines. The seeds for these plants are sown by helicopters.

Mine plows are also being perfected to dig up mines and flip them

over. This causes an explosion, but the force is directed downwards. Tanks are also being designed with state of the art materials to withstand blasts. They trigger an explosion but blanket the blast. The chemical burning of mine fields burns out the explosives and trip wires. Research is promising for ground penetrating radar, acoustic detection and drones with artificial intelligence. The Vietnamese Government could set up work for food and education programs to reduce poor people selling scrap metal from mines. With assistance, Vietnam's issue with land mines could be reduced to the benefit of the people, environment and economy.

Mines are a global issue. With the right funding, we could stop unnecessary casualties. We should prioritise mine safety education, and pilot projects to test new technologies for removing mines.



# HARMONY DAY



**ON THE 21ST MARCH** we celebrated our traditions, culture and diversity. The different country displays made by parents were spectacular, as was all the yummy food!

Photos by Megan Nguyen.









# WHAT'S ON...

## THESE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS



18-21 April - Westfield Hornsby - Kid's Fashion Festival

### KID'S FASHION FESTIVAL

Westfield Hornsby is creating little Fashionistas these school holidays! Kids will have the opportunity to explore the Fashion shop and style themselves before hitting the runway in front of the family. Kids can also create their own fashion doll while they wait for their turn on the runway. Tuesday 18 to Friday 21 April. 10am-1pm each day. Level 3, opposite Cotton On. Parents get in early to get your front row seat. Ages 4-11.

### BRAIN CRANK WORKSHOPS

Science, technology and craft collide at St Ives Shopping Village from Monday 10th to Thursday 13th April. 9:30am, 10:30am & 11am. Ages 6+ . Bookings essential. [stivesvillage.com.au/brain-crank-workshops/](http://stivesvillage.com.au/brain-crank-workshops/)

### MY PET DINOSAUR

A fun, interactive & informative activity where children learn interesting facts, dig for their own fossils and interact with Cera the 2 week old Triceratops and Slash the 1 year old Raptor. Thursday 20th April, 10:30am at Hornsby Central Library. Ages 5-12. Cost \$15. Book online [www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au) or in person at the library.



### KOALA PARK SANCTUARY

Get up-close-and-personal with kangaroos and koalas, there's also emus, wombats, dingoes, bats and many more animals. Kids will love the talking cockatoo! It's easy to walk around with little ones and there are picnic tables for lunch. 84 Castle Hill Road, West Pennant Hills. Adults \$27, children \$15. Open Monday-Sunday. 9am-5pm. [www.koalapark-sanctuary.com](http://www.koalapark-sanctuary.com)

### MARIAN STREET THEATRE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Take your place on the stage with holiday drama classes for 5-12 year olds in Killara & Chatswood. Students work together in groups and also by themselves to create pieces of theatre. Workshops include voice and movement skills, improvisation, character development, script work and plenty of fun, with a short performance on the last day. Cost: from \$50. Runs from 10th-13th April. [www.mstyp.org.au](http://www.mstyp.org.au).





A photograph of a tree trunk with a vine wrapped around it, set against a blurred background of a forest floor. The tree trunk is on the right side of the frame, showing rough, textured bark. A green vine with small leaves is wrapped around the trunk. The background is a soft-focus view of a forest floor with brown leaves and other trees.

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