



Operated by MIND

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Message from the Academic Director

Since our previous newsletter we had a Parent Education evening which was well-attended and had representation from each of our classrooms. We presented the models that we use to guide our children to become the people that we aspire for them to be. Our program blends Montessori Peace Curriculum, Daniel Coleman's Emotional Intelligence theory, Linda Kavelin-Popov's Virtues Project, William Glasser's Choice Theory and Dianne Gossen's Restitution. We began the evening, experiencing 'circle', a ritual that we partake in daily with our students. Passing a stone we reflected on our 'intention' for the evening and voiced our appreciation one thing that we experienced throughout the day. We were then led by our music director, Pam Ferguson and her husband in a drumming circle to recreate the experience we shared with our students on Peace Day.

One question that was overlooked in our presentation was to pose the question "What are the characteristics and qualities that we wish to see in our children at the end of their Montessori Education? What do we need to teach? What conditions do we need to provide in order for them to learn these skills?"

Howard Gardner writes that when "the training is of good quality and has been carried out over an extended period of time, schools fashion a specific kind of person...and of course, the effects of schools are most likely to be pronounced in those instances where the graduate actually continues to use the knowledge, skills and understandings acquired in the school."

There are multiple benefits of our focus on the development of emotional and social intelligence. One benefit is that we are preparing our students for the future by teaching them these skills. In a recent workshop on Emotional Intelligence we learned that the attributes that employers are seeking, after the requisite skills are met, are those of relationship management. These are the ability to self-regulate, self-initiate and self-assess. In addition, employers seek people who are self-confident, possess achievement drive, are highly committed and have a high level of empathy. These traits help them to support the development of others and communicate well. Being able to communicate well includes the ability to build rapport, negotiate differences and influence others. The qualities of assertiveness and acceptance are essential components for people in today's work force and allow them to navigate the culture of change that we are now facing as a society. In terms of emotional and social development, the seeds that we plant in the preschool and elementary years foster compassion and empathy. They also provide opportunity for learning the skills of assertiveness, appreciation and acceptance which are essential to building a collaborative and cooperative environment. The argument is that social emotional skills can be learned and these skills, coupled with the academic competencies, are considered measurable and improve performance, therefore business competitiveness, in the marketplace.

Another benefit of our focus on teaching social emotional skills is that the various types of training that the teaching team has undertaken in order to provide specific lessons has helped the teachers in their ability to use communication skills that allow them to work with numerous children in a patient and tolerant manner. It underlines the importance of building empathy towards students and knowing that the emphasis that we place on being clear communicators has lasting a profound effect on our students' lives and their relationship with the world.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

Friday, November 24, 2006

SCHOOL CLOSED

Board Meeting

Monday, November 27, 2006

THREE WAY CONFERENCES

Elementary Students

Primary and Intermediate

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Preschool

Thursday, November 30, 2006

and

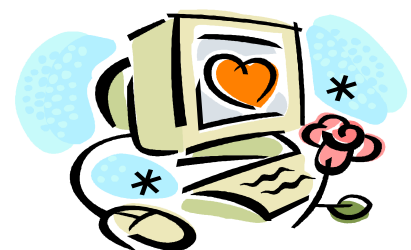
Extended Day Kindergarten

Friday, December 1, 2006

SCHOOL CLOSED (both days)

**"ALL LEARNING
HAS AN EMOTIONAL BASE"**

~ PLATO





On November 1, 2006 we had the pleasurable experience of a Grade 9 student who visited our class to 'shadow' the teachers. This experience reinforced our belief that being a school that stresses the significance of social and emotional behaviours is lasting and of utmost importance. The project is called "Take Your Kid to Work Day" and is expected of Grade 9 Students across the province. It was my pleasure to be called by a former student who spent two years in our program. This young girl, is part of a nurturing family who shares the values of the BBMH community. She is exceptional in a variety of ways but most noticeably in her grace and peaceful composure. Although there are many variables that account for her personal qualities I cannot help but think that she was influenced by the formative years that she spent at BBMH. As you can tell when reading her letter of thanks on the following pages, her writing emotes her strong memory and fondness for her time at BBMH.

Our school environment and curriculum elicits an emotional response from our students. It is because of this effect that our children deeply engage and are so captivated by the lessons with which they are presented. The social dynamic, both large and small, provides opportunity for continuous emotional development. The very age of the children requires constant and consistent behaviour management. Our Parent Education evening capsuled the different ap-

Dear Lize,

Thanks again for the opportunity to spend a day with you earlier this month. I'm sending you a summary of my time there. I hope it gets there in time for your newsletter.

Montessori Revisited

On November 1, 2006 all Grade 9 students across Canada spent the day job shadowing a parent, a relative, a friend or a volunteer host. As my parents were in New Zealand I asked Ms. Lize Hart, a former teacher of mine, if I could spend the day with her. Fortunately for me, she agreed.

While the location and the buildings had changed since I was a Montessori student in Grade 1, the school felt the same - warm, loving and stimulating. The day started with a tour of the school. As nine o'clock drew near, kids filed into the school. The kids were beaming as they shook Cathy's hand and entered the school to get ready for the day.

Lize took me around to meet the kids in Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2 and 3. In the Kindergarten and pre school class I learned about United Nations Day. Then I moved to the Grade 1 to 3 class. I sat back and watched the magic of the kids interacting with their teachers. The class was full of energy as the students chatted amongst themselves. However, they each took their own time to approach me to figure out who I really was.

During lunch I enjoyed eating with the teachers and the opportunity of being on the other side of the desk was an experience of its own! After lunch, the children were more comfortable with me. As it was the Read-a-thon day the children and I read together. I enjoyed every minute that I was able to be with them. Sadly, 3 o'clock came all too quickly and it was time for the kids to go home. I walked around the empty classroom. I stopped to feel the edges of Africa on the world map, I opened all the boxes of verbs and adjectives, and I held mathematics in my hands again. Eight years had passed since I was a student at Montessori. Nothing had changed. Everything I loved eight years ago was still there.

I want to thank all of you. Thanks to the students; I enjoyed getting to know each of you. I wish the day had been longer. And thanks to the staff for accepting me and for helping me to feel at home. Thank you for letting me follow you around and to learn from you. A special thanks to Lize for making this day possible. Who knows, some day I may be a Montessori teacher.

Much love, Sarah Kuhl, Gr. 9
Point Grey Mini School

CLOSURES TERM I
November 30 - December 1
November 24
December 20 PM
Last Day December 21
December 22-January 8

Physical Education Schedule Term One	
PRIMARY/EDK	INTERMEDIATE
SKATING—WEDNESDAYS	SKATING—WEDNESDAYS
10:30-11:30 AM	10:30-11:30 AM
NOVEMBER 8, 15, 22, 29	NOVEMBER 8, 15, 22, 29
DECEMBER 6, 13	DECEMBER 6, 13



From the Preschool/EDK Classroom,

One of the activities that occurred last month was our "in-house" trip to the Pumpkin patch which was great success! The children enjoyed choosing their own pumpkins and baking cookies to take home. Skating has begun for Extended Day Kindergarten children. Please ensure that your child has proper gear for these outings. In class, we have begun practicing our songs for the Winter Concert. Music class takes place on Tuesdays for both the morning and afternoon program. Please take this into consideration when scheduling your children's appointments etc. We are also asking for donations of hand-me-down clothing (especially pants) in good condition. These items can be handed in to any of the Directresses. Thank you ~ Jana, Christina and Elicia

From the Intermediate Classroom...

Students have reached what Montessori called a *normalized work cycle*; they are deepening their focus and productivity, particularly in the areas of Math and Language.

In Art the students have enjoyed their scratch art and mask making – we are looking forward the finished product. The Year Four to Six students have also enjoyed exploring an archaeological site in the field adjacent to the playground. We prepared, dug and recorded an authentic site that had been "seeded" with artifacts; this did not stop the students from becoming enthusiastic each time they discovered a 'new' object.

Twenty-three students have committed themselves two practicing chimes twice a week during their lunch time. They are starting to make beautiful music together.

Intermediate students, on Remembrance Day, wrote Haiku poems and made paper cranes after listening to a retelling of the *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* story. This story is about a girl who was two when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and died from the affects of the radiation ten years later.

War

Horrible despair

Bringing ruin and sadness

Evil memories

Peace

Soft whisper of joy

Remembering the people

Happiness for all

From the Primary Classroom...

Our class is abuzz with joyful preparation for the Winter Concert. We have delightful songs to sing and there are a few voices who lead with unbridled enthusiasm. Those who love to sing create a love for song and performing. Soon the children's homework will be to practice the lyrics and your help will make a difference to their success. So enjoy! Make sure the singing is fun and if it isn't, then leave it to our wonderful music teacher, Pam Ferguson, to encourage your child. The children can lead you in the tunes, some which require a pause or an unexpected high note.

We have the opportunity for musical appreciation and our field trip to the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, on November 20th. We listen in advance to recordings of the composers and even practice proper conduct suited for a concert hall. When children are given preparation for special occasions they know what to anticipate and learn how to show their respect and appreciation.

Just for the fun of it, we are collecting copies of *The Night Before Christmas*, a favourite tale told in rhyme. We shall keep these books in a basket and return them to the children. When we read the first copy, some children declared, "I know this one!" It should be no surprise to be familiar with age-old rhymes. We encourage children to learn to love the classics and Mother Goose rhymes.

Over the weekend the teaching team and visiting teachers from other schools took part in a two day workshop on Math and Geometry. We were re-inspired after studying with Irma Rodriguez from Victoria. She clarified many interesting lessons and presented the materials with the ease of one who has worked for 40 years in the Montessori classroom.

~ Cathy, Elicia and Lize

From the MIND Board

Fundraising

Pistol Burnes Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate and Cocoa -- The next order will be due December 7 with delivery on December 14. This is perfect timing to plan to give Pistol Burnes items as gifts this holiday season.

Thrifty Gift Cards—This is an easy way to support the school while buying your groceries. BBMH gets 5% of the total purchased. Your cheque is not cashed until the day your card is issued, so your money is not "tied up" in between submitting your order and delivery of your card. And you can submit post dated cheques so you don't miss the due date each month! Look for your order form in your family file.

Bottle Returns—Both Ladner and Tsawwassen have BBMH accounts to which you can direct your refunds.

We will be holding a Wine **Raffle** at the Winter Concert in December. Please watch for the request for donations.

Spring Gala—please contact Diana Nesbitt if you have suggestions for this year's major fundraising event.

Family Advisory Committee

As has been done for many years, all the children participated in the creation of a Remembrance Day wreath made from tracings of their hands out of foam sheets. Several of our children were present to lay the wreath at the Cenotaph at Memorial Park in Ladner on November 11.

The Family Advisory Committee will be facilitating a holiday service project. Watch for posters outlining the specifics of how we will aid the less fortunate in the coming holiday season.



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Three-Way Conferences Duration: 15 – 20 minutes

Three-way conferences are different from parent-teacher interviews because they seek to involve the child in a discussion of their progress. Even from the earliest years children can reflect on things they have learned, and things they still find challenging. Their voice is an important guide to assist us as we plan goals which meet their needs as well as the aspirations of parents and teachers. In seeing their parents involved in this process, children understand the importance that parents place on school and learning, which is a powerful motivator for children to succeed at school. As well as actively involving students in the reporting and planning process, three-way conferences serve to improve the communication between home and school. We believe that involving the student in the conference helps emphasize the partnership between parents and teachers in the learning process. We know that home background has a significant effect on children's attitude to learning and their achievement levels. If each of the 'stakeholders' in the learning process are involved in setting goals, they will each accept greater ownership of that process. Because of the importance of our goal-setting for the individual learning plan for each child, it is vital that parents attend the conferences with their child.

Goals:

For the students

- ♥ During class time, to draft goals with the Directress for discussion at the conference.
- ♥ To identify goals for the coming term with parents before attending conference
- ♥ To demonstrate what they know as they share their accomplishments and set new learning goals;

For the parents

- ♥ To find out about their children's learning
- ♥ To ask questions and express their ideas and goals for their children,
- ♥ To help plan to support their child's learning at home;

For the directresses

- ♥ To facilitate the conference,
- ♥ To suggest areas which require further work,

CALENDAR 2006 2007 FALL TERM 1

SEPTEMBER	6	SCHOOL BEGINS TERM 1
	8	FAMILY BARBEQUE—ALL WELCOME
	11	NEW PARENT ORIENTATION
	12	PEACE DAY
	25	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY
OCTOBER	29	TERRY FOX RUN/Potluck Dinner AGM
	5	GANDHI BIRTHDAY
	9	THANKSGIVING DAY
	12	PARENT EDUCATION SERIES 1
	20	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 2
NOVEMBER	24	UNITED NATIONS DAY
	1	READ-A-THON
	13	REMEMBRANCE DAY
	14	OBSERVATION WEEK
	24	PROFESSIONAL DAY 3
DECEMBER	30	PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE PRESCHOOL
	30	3WAY CONFERENCES INTERMEDIATE/PRIMARY
	1	3WAY CONFERENCES—INTERMEDIATE/EDK
	18	CONCERT REHEARSAL
	19	CONCERT REHEARSAL
JANUARY	20	CONCERT REHEARSAL—SCHOOL CLOSED PM
	20	CONCERT EVENING
	21	SKATING PARTY 9:30—10:30 TSAWWASSEN
	22	SCHOOL CLOSED FOR WINTER BREAK
	9	SCHOOL BEGINS TERM 2

- ♥ To clarify, elaborate and respond to specific questions and concerns.
- ♥ To record the discussions which will include a summary of the goals nominated by children, parents and their teacher and agreed to by each participant.
- ♥ To ensure that the conference runs smoothly and that all questions from students and parents are answered

Special Consideration:

This is a time of positive interaction between all immediate stakeholders in the education of the child; children should leave this discussion with increasing self-esteem and confidence in them as learners and as well-regarded individuals.