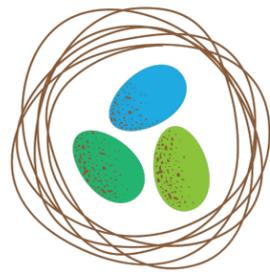




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# Montessori Conference

January 13, 2018

UW-La Crosse

*Engaging and Serving Every Learner*

Helping children reach their fullest potential –  
at their own unique pace.

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# Montessori Conference

Saturday, Jan. 13, 2018 — UW-La Crosse *Engaging & Serving Every Learner*

8-8:45 a.m. REGISTRATION, CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & VENDORS *The Bluffs Ballroom*

8:45-9 a.m. WELCOME *The Bluffs Ballroom*

9-10 a.m. KEYNOTE *The Bluffs Ballroom*  
**Paving the Way to Fully Inclusive Montessori Education ... and Navigating the Bumps in the Road Along the Way!**

*Jennifer Spikner M.Ed.*

When a Utah mom couldn't find a school able to meet the needs of her daughter who has Down syndrome, she began to research various educational methods and discovered Montessori. Armed with faith and determination, she founded Elizabeth Academy and began an unexpected journey to bring fully inclusive Montessori education to the children of Utah. Ten years later, it is apparent that this journey has just begun.

10-10:15 a.m. BREAK *The Bluffs Ballroom*

10:15-11:30 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 1:  
**Simple Songs for Primary Classroom** *Rm 3130*  
**Level: Children's House**

*Sara Matthes, M.Ed.*

Singing is a fun and effective way to support language development in the young child, enhance classroom management, and build classroom community. In this workshop, I will teach participants simple, easy-to-learn songs that can be woven into the curriculum, used as transition time strategies, and incorporated into circle/line time (some silly songs and easy dances included!). All voices welcome; please come ready to try the tunes out as we go! Participants may also want to come with a voice recording device to help remember the songs after the workshop is done.

**Thinking Like a Historian: The Doing and Assessing of Historical Thinking Skills for all Learners** *Rm 3115*  
**Level: EII, EA**

*Katbryn Garfin*

Traditional history classrooms focus on the memorization of history as a way for students to learn about the past, which is important in order to know where we came from and how we became us. However, in Montessori classrooms we want students to do more than know the past, "we want them to gain the skills of a historian. Instead of reciting events, we use events as engaging stories through which students can think and work like a historian by practicing valuable skills such as critical thinking, research, and evidence-based writing. In this workshop we will first define what it means to do history. Then, we will dive into how to make thinking like a historian accessible to diverse learners as well as how to assess in a meaningful way.

**A Cosmic Program: It's Not Just Elementary, It's for Everyone—Part 1** *Rm 3314*  
**Level: CH, EI, EII, EA**

*Michael Dorer, Ed.D.*

This two-part workshop with Michael Dorer offers an overview of the Montessori Cosmic program including how it begins in Children's House and extends in a continuum across all levels. This first part begins with an overview of the meaning and use of the cosmic concept. What does "cosmic" mean? What is encompassed? What are its components? Participants will begin to explore cosmic education at the elementary level, which will serve as a point of reference for all levels. We will explore how these cosmic concepts lead to the great themes that form the basis of Montessori education at elementary and beyond.

**Power Struggles: Defusing Potential Tantrums Before They Escalate** *Rm 3120*  
**Level: Families, Toddlers**

*Nancy Schaitel, M.Ed.*

Remember when your child did everything you ever wanted and life was perfect? Then one day he decides no, he's not going to do what you ask. Enter your very first power struggle! By now you've encountered quite a few struggles and, dare I say, they aren't your favorite part of parenting? In this workshop, we will look at power struggles in the most common of places: at the dinner table, in the store, at bedtime, when separating, and in the car, and you will gain some Positive Discipline tools in your parenting toolbox to strengthen your skills at defusing these situations.

**How to Integrate the Classroom Curriculum into Physical Education** *Rm 3105*  
**Level: Administration, EI, EII, EA**

*Nicolas Lepine, M.A.*

No one argues the importance of physical education, but many times it feels independent from the rest of the curriculum. By integrating the classroom curriculum with physical education, learning and concept retention are enhanced. Participants will leave the workshop feeling confident in their ability to merge their culture curriculum with physical education.

**Behavior & Academic Intervention Process in a Montessori Environment** *Rm 3310*  
**Level: Administration, Children's House, EI, EII, EA**

*Michael Wridt, Diane Betzolt, & Sarah Streytle*

The presentation will discuss the process we have developed in intervening, both academically and behaviorally, in our Montessori Environment. We will discuss Universal Expectations, a tiered approach, observations, communication with families, intervention strategies, and practice with student scenarios.

**Essential Elements of a Montessori Middle School** *Rm 3110*  
**Level: EA**

*Paul Epstein Ph.D.*

Montessori completed relatively little work about the adolescent. She referenced a popular educational model found throughout Europe. Accordingly, the prepared environment for young adolescents should offer working, studying, and living on a farm. Montessori postulated that this would result with adolescents learning to contribute to an economically successful social community. Today, the majority of Montessori secondary schools are not farm-based, and we can identify several essential elements that make a program a "Montessori" secondary program. We will discuss how to: (1) focus on the adolescent developmental journey; (2) establish and maintain an adolescent community; (3) provide structured inquiry-based learning; (4) operate a business.

11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. LUNCH & VENDORS *The Bluffs Ballroom*

1-2:30 p.m. SPECIAL SESSION FOR PARENTS *Rm 3103*

*Paul Epstein, Ph.D.*

We live now in an ever-changing future. This changes what and how children must learn. Instead of learning to memorize (which most of us successfully did), children must learn how to think. Thinking involves comparing, contrasting, categorizing, creating, collaborating, communicating, empathizing, persisting, and more. During this session, Paul will use photographs and video to demonstrate how children learn to think in Montessori early childhood and lower elementary classrooms.

1-2:15 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 2:  
**Troubleshooting in the Montessori Classroom: Using Progress Monitoring Procedures to Push All Students Forward** *Rm 3314*  
**Level: EI, EII, EA**

*Leslie Rogers, Ph.D.*

This session will be led through interactive activities to help them identify specific strategies to use to identify and assist students not making sufficient progress. Montessori teachers will be reminded of the steps they already take to ensure they are drawing valid conclusions about students' strengths and challenges (e.g., record reviews, observations, interviews) and will learn how to create and use progress monitoring (PM) procedures to assist them in their efforts. After attending the session, participants will identify 8 rules of good judgment, how to create PM instruments, and how to use graphing techniques to monitor student progress.

**Discipline is Not a Bad Word** *Rm 3310*  
**Level: Children's House**

*Charlotte Cushman*

Discipline is essential in order for the child to develop properly, yet there is a current trend to move away from discipline in favor of unsuccessful techniques such as continuous direction. Sadly, this trend has gained traction among Montessorians which is ironic, since Montessori, herself, was an advocate for strong correction from the adult until the child develops self-discipline.

**Mindfulness in Montessori: Bringing Awareness and Connectedness to the Elementary Classroom** *Rm 3110*  
**Level: EI, EII**

*Rose Dorer, M.A.*

Learn activities that engage elementary children in mindfulness! Making silence, storytelling, and walking the line will be offered as participatory experiences, and their use in the elementary classroom will be discussed as enhancing mindfulness. We will also discuss and experience sewing, art, music, and movement presented to help students focus and calm their minds, spirits, and bodies.

**A Cosmic Program: It's Not Just Elementary, It's for Everyone—Part 2** *Rm 3115*  
**Level: CH, EI, EII, EA**

*Michael Dorer, Ed.D.*

Michael Dorer will continue describing Cosmic components of Montessori education and programming. In part one, we began with the Elementary levels. In this second part, we will use that Elementary program as a reference point to look at the Children's House. How do we get to the elementary program? What is needed in the Children's House? We'll also briefly review the continuing cosmic program at the adolescent or secondary levels.

**What a Public Montessori Middle School and High School Program Looks Like for Our School** *Rm 3120*  
**Level: EA, Administration**

*Tami Holtslander, M.A.*

What does one do without a farm for a Montessori Adolescent program? Montessori for the adolescent level, middle through high public school, does have its challenges and opportunities. I will share our journey as we expanded our program from elementary to secondary levels at La Crescent Montessori & STEM. What are the benefits, pitfalls and joys experienced of expanding a program? I will share our organizing tools, schedules and encourage questions as Montessori expands to new levels—a path you may also be considering for your program.

**Connecting Current Brain Research to Montessori Practice in Infant and Toddler Environments** *Rm 3130*  
**Level: Toddlers**

*Tracey Hall & Marie Pipowski*

Learn how current brain research points us toward creating Montessori environments that support brain development and help children to be successful learners throughout their educational and work lives. Deepen your understanding of infant and toddler development and discover how this understanding will give you more tools as you create environments and materials that match the needs of your particular community of children.

**Do's and Don'ts of Montessori Inclusion: Policies and Procedures for Montessori Inclusion** *Rm 3105*  
**Level: General**

*Jennifer Spikner, M.Ed.*

As Montessorians, we often want our schools and classrooms to be fully inclusive, but we don't know where to start. This workshop will discuss methods related to the practice of full inclusion in the Montessori classroom and offer tangible strategies to help you meet every child's needs. Topics will include: admissions procedures, classroom balance, student vision statements, curriculum adaptation, visual schedules, whole child reading, technology and collaboration.

2:15–2:30 p.m. Break *The Bluffs Ballroom*

2:30-3:45 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 3:  
**Engaging and Serving a Child Who Experienced Trauma** *Rm 3310*  
**Level: General**

*Linda Jacobson, M.A.*

In recent years, there has been significant research on the effect trauma has on children. Children viewed as oppositional, challenging, antisocial, and exhibiting inappropriate behaviors are often given any number of alphabet soup diagnoses. In reality, these behaviors are often simple survival techniques of a developmentally traumatized child. Trauma significantly affects a child's development, behavior and ability to learn. Through real life stories of children with trauma histories, we will understand why these behaviors occur. Then, our challenge is managing our own behaviors, helping the child learn to manage behavior, and learning how to support them to promote both relational competence and classroom achievement.

**Celebrating and Supporting Literacy Growth Through Differentiated Instruction** *Rm 3130*  
**Level: EI, EII, EA**

*Gay Ward, Ph.D. & Margaret Phinney, Ed.D.*

In this interactive workshop, participants will practice differentiated instruction techniques that support elementary students' literacy growth along a developmental continuum in engagement, comprehension and language-to-print. All activities will be in a rich literary context with fiction and nonfiction resources supporting students' cross curricular exploration of biological and cultural interconnectedness. Participants will leave with a model for supporting literacy learning in Montessori classrooms using differentiated instruction and choice while exploring a universal concept.

**Self-Awareness: The Mindful Brain** *Rm 3110*  
**Level: EII, EA**

*Ashleigh Bartz, M.Ed.*

Who needs mindfulness? Everyone. Maria Montessori had a deep wisdom for peace, social justice, respect, grace and courtesy. Come learn more techniques and lessons to help students become self-aware, compassionate, and responsible citizens. We will start by understanding the neuroscience of the brain and finish with motivating students to make the world a better place. Walk away with a year's worth of hands on lessons to use in your classroom.

**Building Visual Literacy Skills Through Brain Gym** *Rm 3120*  
**Level: EI, EII, EA**

*Cindy Goldade, M.Ed.*

Montessori pedagogy relies on observation. We invite children to "watch" every presentation. But what if they don't know how? In this workshop, learn how to develop your students' visual observation skills, how to encourage respectful expression of what is seen and ultimately how to cultivate an environment conducive to critical thinking. To prepare the eyes and body, we will experience physical movements to support our visual intake system.

**The Power of Problem Solving** *Rm 3105*  
**Level: Children's House**

*Anna Aarre, M.A. & Evie Hansen*

What can you do to solve this problem? This question empowers children with responsibility and ownership. This question is a tool, a reference, and a reminder to students about their choices when solving a problem. We will introduce three ways to increase problem-solving skills by concentrating on solutions. You will learn how the Wheel of Choice, Class Meetings, and the Agenda allow your students to independently and respectfully problem-solving. Your students are fully capable of positive social behaviors and choices when they are provided with positive discipline tools within their environment. We will discuss what role "I" statements and the peace rose play along with how students become aware of their responsibility to cooperate.

**Administrators Round Table** *Rm 3314*  
**Level: Administrators**

*Stephanie Webman, M.A.*

Join us for a lively conversation around key topics for administrators of Montessori programs.

**Magda Gerber's Resources for Infant Educators (RIE®): An Overview for Montessori Toddler Guides** *Rm 3103*  
**Level: Toddlers**

*Dawn Rouse, Ph.D.*

Based on the Resources for Infant Educators® (RIE®) philosophy, participants will view selected videos from the Pikler Institute and reflect on observational and interaction practices that promote social-emotional development, cognitive development, communication development and problem solving development. Participants will be asked to reflect on their own practice and identify ways to enhance their instruction, environment and assessment.

3:45-4:15p.m. Closing Celebration & Door Prizes *The Bluffs Ballroom*