



Third Assembly of Educateurs sans Frontières

Dallas, Texas

Arrival July 28 – Departure August 11, 2011

The Educateurs sans Frontières Assembly is a special opportunity for a small international group of Montessorians to reflect on Dr Montessori's profound contribution to the understanding of the key role of children, who form a unique link between the past and the future. Together we will study Montessori's core writings related to the child, social reform and how the home, school and community can promote life-enhancing, peaceful environments for all children, including a brief review of multiple strategies Montessori used to promote the cause of all children in her own time. Our reflections will benefit both from the experiences of colleagues and also other experts in the development field serving children worldwide, as we learn and explore ways to extend Montessori's contribution more widely. Site visits to Montessori programmes in the local Dallas community will provide the opportunity to view some concrete larger-scale examples where aspirations have been transformed into reality.

We hope to have a wide diversity of participants from within the international Montessori community, even though the group will be limited to approximately 50 people, in order to facilitate deep and meaningful discussion, interaction and reflection during the study program itself as well as over the two weeks of the shared living experience. The selection process will consider geographical representation, AMI diploma levels, life experience and interests, and applicants' motivation in serving children from diverse backgrounds.

The EsF Mission Statement.

- ❖ Montessori principles will be revisited, and lectures and discussions will take place on the relevance of Dr Maria Montessori's work in the wider context of society.
- ❖ Montessori speakers will address the gathering on the characteristics of the universal child and the formation of the human being. Guest lecturers will talk about their work in cultural and social fields.
- ❖ The Assembly is open to AMI diploma holders with a special interest in the welfare of children in the global community, outside the classroom setting.

Background on

Educateurs sans Frontières – Moving and Enthusing Communities

A programme established by the Association Montessori Internationale

Educateurs sans Frontières (By-Law no. 17) is an A.M.I. programme in which participants revisit the Montessori principles and practices from the perspective of society at large. As individuals, the participants of Educateurs sans Frontières will contribute to the aims of the Association Montessori Internationale, in particular as laid down in Article 4f of the A.M.I. Articles of Association.

The first Assembly of Educateurs sans Frontières was held in 1999 in Città di Castello, Italy, and the second one in Burgos, Spain in 2004. These hugely successful events inspired participants either to start up or continue projects and initiatives outside Montessori classroom settings. In the words of the EsF coordinators, the

programme's aim is to invite and encourage those who have participated to emulate 'Maria Montessori in her unceasing work of sowing seeds of knowledge, awareness and understanding of the natural laws of human development, wherever, and whenever (...).'

Educateurs sans Frontières is a new program for those in the Montessori Movement who are actively involved, or interested, in working to create more harmonious neighbourhoods, communities, regions, countries, and the world through new forms of collaboration and innovation, both small and large. It's for people who are committed to Montessori's core ideas on the child and social reform—who come together to discuss how they can make a difference, whether at the grass roots level or beyond.

In 1998, the *Raison d'Etre* of the Educateurs sans Frontières was defined as follows:

When using the term Educateurs sans Frontières, we refer to borders that transcend the obvious ones to do with nation states. The truly important ones are the psychological and spiritual frontiers - the ideological, religious, racial, social and economic, cultural and linguistic boundaries which artificially divide a humanity as yet largely unaware of its intrinsic unity and its interconnectedness with the earth that brought it forth.

Dr Montessori's work can be applied in a wide variety of ways that can benefit the cause of the child beyond the school and the home. Her own term for the pedagogy she created was 'Education as an Aid to Life', and education as an aid to life is applicable at any time, in any place, within all social strata, through public or private agencies, in settings rural, urban and remote.

When Montessori principles are applied in the wider context of society, their possibilities are vast and all-encompassing. They can be of incalculable help to parents, social workers, child-care workers, family counsellors, in short, to any person involved with the developing human being.

Renilde Montessori, 1999

Each Assembly of Educateurs sans Frontières has three elements:

Deeper Understanding: To deepen the individual and collective understanding of the essential Montessori principles. This is achieved through the collective study of Dr Montessori's writings in an equitable atmosphere and suitably designed prepared environment.

Preparation: To support participants through a process of self-examination and self-awareness around the many and deep issues involved in our work thereby empowering them to go out into the world ready to sow the seeds of Montessori thought and practice. Outside speakers from a variety of fields will support this element as well as a close examination of Dr Montessori's own inspirations and work.

Applicable Practice: To develop and encourage individual and collective knowledge of the innumerable possibilities, openings and opportunities for our work in the world, and to acknowledge the power of one person to make a difference.

The EsF Assembly is a gathering, **the purpose** of which is to inspire and motivate AMI graduates to expand their knowledge and understanding of human development from the Montessori perspective for the benefit of the greater community. The work will follow many paths, with no fixed parameters.

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi