

The Icebox

The Monthly Newsletter of Montessori in Redlands



Parent Education Night: Punished by Rewards

Why treating children like trained seals doesn't work

Gold stars. Sticker charts. Praise. Who hasn't used the "tried and true" method of rewarding desired results (and taking away privileges for bad behavior)? The notion of using "positive reinforcement" to foster desired behavior is deeply ingrained in our culture. It's "trained seal" parenting—throw the kids a fish when they do the right trick.

And it doesn't work.

So says Alfie Kohn, author of *Punished by Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise, and Other Bribes*. Learn why not on Wednesday, November 14 at 7 PM at the University of Redlands' Orton Center. This event is co-sponsored by the University. Arrange a baby-sitter and arrive early to ensure a seat!

What's Inside

- MIR Hosts Parent Support Group
- Food Drive to Begin at Halloween Carnival
- Students at Work/Student Work
- Annual Fund Off to Great Start
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- GIS Day: Volunteers Needed
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Role Models Beat Gold Stars

by MAURA JOYCE, HEAD OF SCHOOL

Our next Parent Education Night is a first for Montessori in Redlands. We are teaming up with the University of Redlands to host Alfie Kohn, a prolific writer on the subject of education for the past two decades. I hope by now you have seen the green posters around school and that you are planning to attend. This opportunity is brought to our parent community through Parents and Teachers of Montessori (PTM) who are generously sponsoring the event. As you might imagine, Alfie Kohn, who speaks nationally and has appeared on Oprah, does not speak for free. Thanks, PTM!

You might be wondering why MIR and PTM have gone to so much trouble to hire such a high-profile speaker for our little Montessori school in Redlands. Among his many speaking engagements, Alfie Kohn has been a keynote at Montessori conferences around the country. He, like Maria Montessori, believes that children are intrinsically motivated to learn and will be satisfied by work itself. Rewards for accomplishing tasks or good behavior can be counter-productive to the long-term goals we have for our children. Montessori and Kohn both know that responsibility, motivation, and life-long learning are the result of the environment, example, and work, not lollipops and gold stars.

As we get ready to hear Alfie Kohn inspire us, I share with you Maria Montessori's words about the same subject.

Like others I had believed that it was necessary to encourage a child by means of some exterior...I was astonished when I learned that a child who is permitted to educate himself really gives up these lower instincts. I then urged the teachers to cease handing out the ordinary prizes and punishments, which were no longer suited to our children, and to confine themselves to directing them gently in their work.

—Maria Montessori

We look forward to seeing you at the University of Redlands' Orton Center, Wednesday, November 14 at 7 PM.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Students

Asha Bosworth-Ahmet	11/1
Hanna Skaggs	11/1
Xochitl Brinton	11/2
Amelie Rosso	11/2
Dylan Keller	11/3
Sydney Rice	11/3
Juliann Choi	11/4
Jackson Barkley	11/4
Anusha Keshavan	11/6
Alejandro Martinez	11/8
Kennedy Pagel Mohr	11/8
Marin Cummings	11/9
Tanvee Sai	11/10
Sydney Grames	11/12
Ryan McNaughton	11/12
Dylan Blee	11/13
Aiden Burke	11/14
Oliver Owen	11/16
Jesse Sonntag Garcia	11/17
Zoe Brown	11/18
Grant Gatpandan	11/19
Raegan Ramirez	11/21
Kamron Mabudian	11/22
Benjamin Mickelson	11/24
Jacob Barnes	11/27

Staff

Kara Holzinger	11/1
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PTM Corner



PTM would like to extend our hearts and thoughts to those of you affected by the fires. We all would like to welcome the students and faculty back after a difficult time. Many thanks to the community volunteers and firefighters who make living in this area a privilege!

Don't Miss Alfie Kohn

Parent Education Night, Wednesday, Nov. 14, 7 PM

We encourage parents to attend this event, which will be held in the Orton Center at the University of Redlands. Alfie Kohn, a renowned lecturer and author in the area of family communication and parenting, says that rewards (like punishments) are a way of doing things *to* people rather than working *with* them. He will explain why the use of rewards makes it more difficult for children to grow into generous, responsible people. Admission is free. Child care is not provided. Sponsored by MIR, PTM, and the University.

Canned Food Drive Launch

Family Services is in need of food this holiday season. To participate, bring non-perishable food to your child's classroom by November 20.

Next PTM Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 8, at 6 PM in the Yoga Room. We hope to see you there!

MIR Parent Support Group: Bringing the Village to You

If it takes a village to raise a child, MIR wants to bring the village to you. Find support for your parenting challenges at the new parent support group, held monthly and moderated by parent educator Penny Davis. The meetings offer a friendly, non-critical atmosphere for you to share and learn new, effective techniques for managing discipline issues.

Penny Davis has taught several highly popular parenting classes and Parent Education Nights at MIR. Fees are \$10 per person or \$15 per couple. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 27, at 6 PM.

Bluebirds About Town



Elementary student Blake Rice proudly models his Bluebird t-shirt and clean hair as he heads out with his family.

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Parent Education Night, Wednesday, November 14, 7 PM
- ◆ Parent/Teacher Conferences, Monday, November 19 and Tuesday, November 20
- ◆ Toy Drive, December 3-15
- ◆ Holiday Sing Program, December 18, 7 PM

Share Your Bluebird Photos

Show your school spirit around town and submit a photo of you or your child wearing a Bluebird t-shirt for publication in *Icebox*. Photos can be dropped off in the office, or e-mail them to lisa@lisakensok.com.

World's Largest Bluebird



Courtesy Frits Verdonk. © 2007

Dog Walking and Washing

Hi, our names are Baily Kerr and Katelyn O'Brien from Mara and Emily's class. We are starting a dog walking and washing business. We are starting this because we are raising money for our Washington, D.C. trip next year. We do not know exactly when we're starting this, but you will know when we put up posters around campus. For more information, contact us at kidshors@aol.com. Thank you.

Elementary Class Raises Money for Trips

BY HANNA S.

This year Mara's 5th year students are raising money all over the campus and the City of Redlands for their Washington, D.C. trip next year.

We are raising money by selling things and all sorts of other stuff. Also, this year Mara's 6th year students are going to Washington, D.C. for the very first time! Every year the 5th years are going to be raising money to go to Washington, D.C. when they're 6th years.

Dutch-owned airline Air France-KLM christened one of its new MD-11 airplanes *Maria Montessori* in honor of her work in the

Netherlands. She died in Noordwijk, the Netherlands, on May 6, 1952. The resemblance to the MIR Bluebird is purely coincidental!

MIR to Start Fall Food Drive at the Halloween Carnival

MIR was informed by Family Services Association (FSA) of Redlands that it is in critical need of canned and dried food for the more than 1,500 families it serves each year. FSA provides basic life needs to families in our community including food, housing, and clothing.

As a result, we will hold a fall food drive to begin at the Halloween Carnival and end on Tuesday, November 20 before the Thanksgiving holidays.

Students will be encouraged to bring canned food or boxes of dried food to the carnival, or to deposit them in the boxes that will be provided by PTM for each classroom. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

Calling All Aspiring Artists!

MIR students: Draw what MIR means to you and your creation may be featured on this year's yearbook cover! Submit all artwork to Jill McDermott in the office by Tuesday, November 13. Questions? See Sandy (assistant in Mara and Emily's class).

BOARD CORNER

by LEELA MADHAVARAU, PRESIDENT,
MIR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Workings of the Board

Several parents have asked Board members to describe our function and structure. Over the next few issues of the *Icebox*, we will provide information about our internal workings, including the various Board Committees.

Montessori in Redlands, like many of its counterparts in southern California, is accredited through the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). In many ways, this accreditation makes certain that we live up to standards of excellence that we have set for ourselves. Both the recent WASC accreditation, as well as the bond process that resulted in the purchase of the school, have focused the attention of the Board on our own professional development.

Although all MIR Board members are volunteers, our expectations are that all Board members perform their role in a professional manner. To this end, we have developed Board training procedures, synthesized from a Montessori Board training two members attended in Oregon. While training requires a greater time commitment from our members, we know that it will pay dividends as we move forward with our committee-driven Board model. While one of our Committees is charged with Long Range Planning, the entire Board participated in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, assisting in moving forward towards a formal strategic plan.

The MIR Board is still seeking new

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Students at Work

“Help me to do it by myself.”

All photos are courtesy of Maryhelen Campa, Primary teacher.



Student Work

If the World was Peace

If the World was peace there would be no war. If the World was peace there would be no segregation or slavery. How can you make world peace?

—Zoe Brown, age 9, presented at the 2007 International Day of Peace celebration

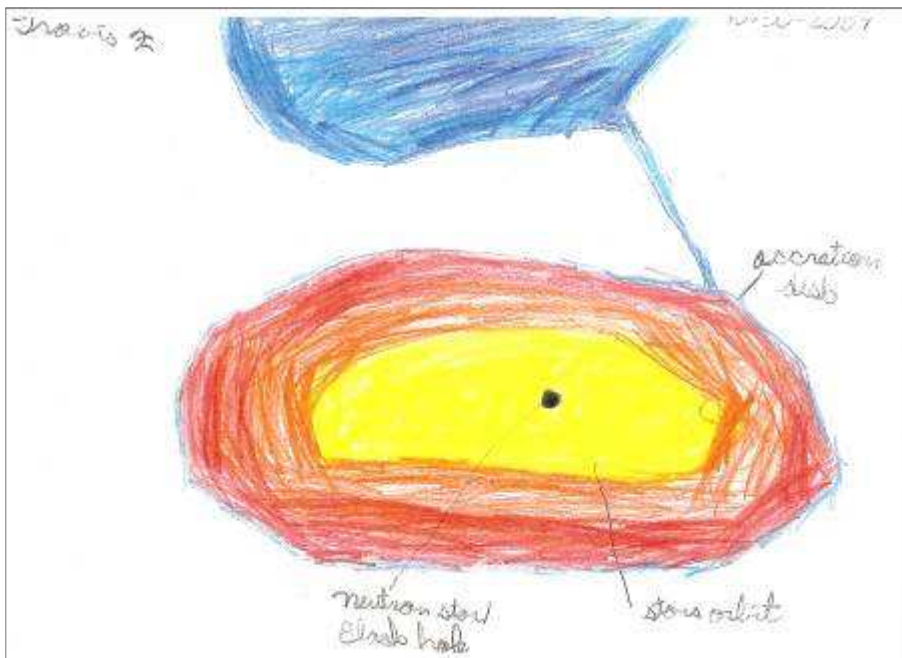
Peace Pledge

BY ANASTASIA IBRAHIM, AGE 11
Mara and Emily's Class has been working on a peace pledge which includes the following values: grace, peace, respect and integrity. The students have agreed to follow the final version of the pledge as much as possible. The coordinator of developing the pledge is Hannah Brenchley. She has really taken this project under her belt.

Neutron Stars & Black Holes

BY TRAVIS ZOOK, AGE 9

Usually after a super nova explosion, the core that is left may sometimes become a neutron star. If it has enough mass it could become a black hole. A super nova is like a really bright star and when it gets too much energy, it explodes. A black hole is something that sucks in matter. When protons and electrons push together they can make neutrons, which makes the star shrink. The black hole or neutron star will soon form a rotating accretion disk. An accretion disk is something that is usually made of gas, and it get's energy by sucking in stars. Which they orbit the black hole (neutron star). They get a accretion disk because of gravitational attraction. We don't know much about black holes cause they suck things in but we have gotten some information. The information we got so far is it sucks things in. One of the things we also about know is where everything goes when it gets sucked in. Maybe the matter stays in or comes out the other end we don't know.



in the haunted house
the mummies chatter
with mad scientists
—a haiku by Leila Clutter, age 5



When Did Gandhi Come Back to India

BY ANNA KENSOK, AGE 7

Gandhi returned to India in 1911. Gandhi wanted the British to give India back to his people. He wanted Indians to rule their own country. For the rest of his life he worked to reach this goal. Gandhi made lots of money as a lawyer, but he decided to live very simply. This was hard on his wife and family. He gave away his money to help the poor.

Montessori Centenary Call to Action: *Champion the Cause of All Children*

BY DORAMA MONTOYA, PRIMARY TEACHER

In 2007, Montessori schools all over the world have celebrated the Centenary of the Montessori Movement, the 100 years since Maria Montessori founded her first classroom in San Lorenzo, Italy. MIR held its celebration on May 5, 2007, details and pictures of which are available at www.montessoricentenary.org (click on “Highlights of the Centenary Year”).

The focus of the Montessori Centenary is a call to action to *champion the cause of all children*, in all strata of society, of all races and ethnic backgrounds, within and beyond the educational institutions. As part of this movement, Montessori schools and supporters all over the world are encouraged to sign the *Declaration of the Centenary Movement* by the end of the year. This declaration will be presented to the governments of the world.

Alumni Stories: Yvette Montoya

My name is Yvette Montoya. I am 20 years old and I have been a Montessori student since I was 2 ½ years old; but it has not been until recently that I learned to appreciate what that really means.

I have such an admiration for the administrators and teachers who made it their personal goal for me to succeed. I can name all the teachers I have ever had at Montessori in Redlands, and I am still in contact with a few of them as well. I never realized how much they really influenced my success in school.

Being a Montessori student my whole life means I got an education tailored to my individual needs from the time I was little. My middle school teacher, Gena Engelfried, is more or less the inspiration behind why I am an English major, not to mention that in 9th and 10th grade, I read in her class most of the books I am reading now as a 3rd year college student.

I attribute a few of my habits to my Montessori education. I sit cross-legged; I am comfortable expressing my own thoughts and opinions, which might not be the same as the group; and I manage my time well.

Montessori is also responsible for my love of writing and artistic ability, because I was always allowed to pursue things that I was personally interested in. I truly believe a Montessori education allowed me to become an individual. I am extremely thankful for all of the opportunities MIR had to offer me. I visited places I otherwise might have not visited, and learned things I might not have learned had I gone to a traditional school. The small classroom size and overall sense of community is a crucial catalyst for learning.

My mom, Dorama Montoya, a primary teacher at MIR, tells me the parents of her students often wonder how pouring and cutting exercises help children learn about the “real world.” Montessori *is* preparation for the real world. A successful Montessori child is self-sufficient and able to do for herself. I feel I am a successful Montessori child. I am a 3rd year English major at UCLA and I am sure my Montessori education has everything to do with my accomplishments. Thank you to all of my teachers and to everyone who knew me and helped me grow.

MIR would like to invite you to sign the Declaration either in the office or online at the site noted above. **The school’s signature number is MIR.** MIR has collected 101 signatures for so far. Thank you for supporting this important movement!

[C]hildhood still seems to me an inexhaustible source of revelations and—let me say—hope. Childhood has shown me that all humanity is one...”

—Maria Montessori

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Board Corner

members, particularly those from the local community, although parents are more than welcome to pick up nomination packets in the front office. We hope that our new model will prove increasingly time-effective, allowing us to accomplish large projects with the greatest efficacy.

As always, please feel free to contact me with questions or comments: Leela MadhavaRau
President, Board of Trustees
leela_madhavarau@redlands.edu
Phone: (909) 792-2406

2007 08

"Help me to do it by myself" MIR ANNUAL FUND

Montessori in Redlands kicked off its 2007-2008 Annual Fund on Thursday, October 11, with the ambitious goals of raising \$50,000 and reaching 100% participation by MIR family, friends, staff, and the Board of Trustees. We're happy to report we're almost 20% of the way toward one of our goals.

That's right—only three weeks into our campaign, the MIR community has pledged \$9,645 toward our \$50,000 goal.

Why should I donate to the MIR Annual Fund?

Tuition pays for your child's education. The MIR Annual Fund pays for program enhancements, staff training and development, and capital improvements to our facility, allowing us to provide the highest quality Montessori education for your child in ways that tuition alone cannot

provide. A percentage is also deposited into our endowment fund to ensure the short- and long-term financial security of the school.

Why not raise tuition instead?

A substantial tuition increase would mean that many families could not afford to send their children to MIR. A diverse population has always been part of our identity. By offering the opportunity for voluntary contributions, families can give according to their financial ability. Unlike tuition, donations may be tax deductible.



As a parent of multiple MIR students, do I need to make more than one donation to count toward the classroom participation program?

One gift is all that is needed to be applied to each of your children's classroom participation levels.

If you have already pledged or made your donation, thank you! Donations can be made at one time or in monthly installments. All contributions must be received by June 30, 2008.

New Classroom Incentives Introduced

MIR has introduced new classroom incentives to acknowledge important milestones on the way to 100% participation in the 2007-2008 Annual Fund. The incentives are cumulative.

If you have more than one student enrolled at MIR, one gift is all that is needed to be applied to each of your children's classroom participation levels.

- ◆ 20%—New books for the classroom library
- ◆ 40%—Plants for the classroom or class garden
- ◆ 60%—Mounted artwork for the classroom art curriculum
- ◆ 80%—New music CDs and instruments
- ◆ 100%—\$150 toward a field trip of the class's choice

If we reach both of our fundraising goals—100% participation in all classes and \$50,000—the whole school will celebrate with a special musical performance and all-school picnic.

Top 5 Reasons to Contribute

1. **Your donation directly benefits your child and his or her classmates** by giving MIR the resources to provide the classroom materials your teacher needs.
2. **Your donation helps build school programs** by supporting new construction and facilities improvements required to provide those programs.
3. **Your donation keeps tuition costs down.** By raising a portion of its funding through voluntary contributions to the MIR Annual Fund, MIR is able to keep monthly costs down for all families.
4. **Your donation may be tax deductible.** Annual Fund contributions allow families to give according to their means and at a potential tax benefit. Raising tuition would not offer this benefit.
5. **Your donation lets you support the school with little time investment.** We fully understand that busy lives make it hard for most parents to volunteer at the school or in their children's classrooms as they would like. The MIR Annual Fund gives you an opportunity to help the school and its mission without requiring a time commitment.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

November marks the fall Parent/Teacher conferences. The conferences are your opportunity to discuss your child's progress, classroom curriculum, and other issues you would like to cover.

Conferences will be held on Monday, November 19 and Tuesday, November 20. Sign up in the office for meeting time slots for each child.

School will be closed during conferences. Childcare will be available by reservation for both days, or you can request childcare for only your meeting time. Register for childcare in the office.

Students to Prepare Thanksgiving Feast

Elementary and Middle School will hold a students only Thanksgiving feast on Tuesday, November 13. The feast is planned, cooked, served, and shared among all the classes.

The feast is an opportunity for your children to participate in a Thanksgiving ritual for which they are entirely responsible. Teachers will be requesting menu items from each student in preparation.

Due to space considerations, we are not able to accommodate parents at this feast. We appreciate your understanding.

GIS Day Helps Students Learn about Crucial Technology

Wednesday, November 14 is GIS Day. Parents and local community members will show MIR students how geographic information system (GIS) technology is being used for everything from response to the local fires to keeping the electricity running to helping conservation efforts.

GIS Day is a global event and is held on the Wednesday of National Geographic Society's *Geography Awareness Week* (November 11–17, 2007). For more information, visit www.gisday.com.

Volunteers are still needed to present to some of our classes. If you are interested, contact Bob Booth at bbooth@esri.com for information.

November 2007

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			01 Dance class, 3:30 PM	02 Halloween Party, 5:00 PM-8:00 PM (rescheduled from Oct. 26)
05	06 Nikki's class field trip	07	08 Dance class, 3:30 PM PTM meeting, 6 PM	09 Staff in-service afternoon. School closes at 12 PM. No childcare.
12 Veteran's Day. No school, childcare by reservation.	13 Kara/Dorama's class field trip Elementary and Middle School Thanksgiving Feast	14 Toddlers' field trip Parent Ed. Night at Univ. of Redlands—Alfie Kohn, 6 PM	15 Dance class, 3:30 PM Middle School field trip	16 Jean and Maryhelen's class field trip
19	20	21	22	23
Parent/Teacher conferences		School closed for Thanksgiving holidays. No childcare.		
No school, childcare by reservation.	No school, childcare by reservation.		Thanks-giving 	
26	27 Dance class, 3:30 PM Positive Discipline Parent Support Group meets, 6 PM	28	29 Dance class, 3:30 PM	30 Bluebird Day Assembly, 9:15 AM

School Closure Date Change—Update Your Calendar

MIR will be rescheduling one of its childcare days to Friday, February 1, 2008 from Friday, February 15, 2008.

MIR traditionally closes the Friday before Presidents' Day, providing childcare while teachers attend training. This year, an exciting, new training opportunity related to our First 5 goals has come up. Teachers at all levels will attend the course *Meeting Special Needs in the Montessori Classroom* on February 1-3, 2008. This requires that we adjust the school calendar. **The school will be closed Friday, February 1, 2008 and childcare will be provided by reservation. Friday, February 15, 2008 will be a regular school day.**

Please note the change on your school calendar, and thank you in advance for your support for your teachers in their professional development.