



MONTESSORI EARLY LEARNING FOUNDATION

MELF PROSPECTUS

2025/26

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INTRODUCING the MONTESSORI EARLY LEARNING FOUNDATION

The Montessori Early Learning Foundation (MELF) previously, known as Early Learning Foundation Montessori Teacher Training (ELF MTT), is a non-profit women's organisation established in 1995 in Cape Town, South Africa. We provide teacher training, support, and advice to individuals and organisations involved in the Early Childhood Development sector (ECD) and the Foundation Phase.

MELF is a Public Benefits organisation, exempt from income tax, in terms of Section 10(f) of the Income Tax Act, and registered under the NPO Act (Registration Number: 048-964 NPO).

Montessori ELF is well known in Cape Town for its quality, training, and support of Early Childhood practitioners, who can provide quality preschool education in their communities. In response to demand for Montessori teacher training services outside of Cape Town, we partnered with organisations in Gauteng (Randburg), the Eastern Cape (Uitenhage), the North West Province (Mafikeng) and Kwa-Duguza (Stanger) to establish campuses in these locations.

In addition to providing teacher training, we are also responsible for running two pre-schools in Cape Town. The first is *Jo's School* in Vrygrond, and our relationship with *Jo's School* started when the *Jo Warrington Charitable Trust* approached us to take over their model township Montessori school in 2016.. In addition to 'Jo's', Montessori ELF more recently purchased *Montessori on Kloof* in Sea Point. These schools offer our students an excellent opportunity to observe children in a natural classroom environment.

Vision

To provide professionally trained teachers for the ECD sector through women and youth training and skills development.

Mission statement

Our commitment is to the young child. To put the young child first, we need to increase the capacity of individuals, communities, and organisations to provide quality ECD services. To this end, we seek to:

- Provide quality accredited ECD Montessori teacher training
- Promote the skills development of women and youth
- Support economic growth and prosperity
- Improve the quality of education and care in existing schools
- Assist communities with the establishment of Montessori schools

Accreditations and affiliations

Policies for Montessori ELF (MELF) are established in accordance with the Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDP SETA: Accreditation Number: **ETDP9994**) in South Africa, South African Montessori Association (SAMA), the South African Council for Educators (SACE), and the Quality Council for Trades and Occupations (QCTO)(

WHY CHOOSE MONTESSORI ELF?

Our specialisation and workshop courses provide a unique opportunity for our graduates to pursue careers in Montessori Early Childhood Development.

They enable anyone working in ECD to gain Continuous Professional Training and Development credits as required by the Department of Education. Teachers in South Africa are required to complete a compulsory 150 hours in a three-year cycle, according to the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

After 30 June 2024, enrolment in ETDP SETA-accredited qualifications will cease. It will then be necessary to register all learners for occupationally directed qualifications through the QCTO starting July 1, 2024. The QCTO is South Africa's public entity responsible for quality assurance and the oversight of the design, accreditation, implementation, assessment and certification of occupational qualifications, part-qualifications and skills programmes.

Our qualifications have been recognised for their quality locally and abroad, with graduates finding work in Montessori schools in London, France, Ireland, Austria, New Zealand, Australia, Vietnam, Saudi Arabia, and Dubai.

All our dual specialisation courses have an in-person and an online component. We use Google Classroom, which can easily be accessed on smartphones, iPad, or laptops.

Our blended learning options allow those with other commitments to engage in a comprehensive study of Montessori theory and educational philosophy, the methodology, and an overview of other educational philosophies.

With a career in Early Childhood Development, you can:

- Travel overseas or work locally as an educator for young children ages 2–7 years
- Au-pair locally or travel and work internationally as an au pair
- Open your own ECD (Early Childhood Development) Centre
- Work as a Montessori Assistant & Directress Nationally/Internationally
- Get involved in ECD Training and material development
- Tutor privately (Literacy and Numeracy)
- Learn about child development, which aids in your role as a parent
- Take a gap year and, while doing this course, receive a grounding in research and other skills which are helpful at tertiary-level studies

A Career in Early Childhood Development:

To become a Grade R teacher in South Africa, it is essential to hold a degree or diploma in Early Childhood Development (ECD) or Foundation Phase Education, a National Senior Certificate (Matric Certificate) or equivalent, and be registered with the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

The *Occupational Certificate Level 4 with Specialisation in Montessori 0-3 or 3-6* equips individuals to work in various ECD settings, including Montessori and mainstream classrooms. Graduates can open their own pre-primary schools, work as au pairs or tutors, or engage in ECD training and material development. This course is an excellent opportunity for students who are not eligible for university admission but wish to advance their studies and pursue a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree in ECD. For example, a student with a Level 3 qualification can first complete the Occupational Certificate in ECD Level 4 and, upon successful completion, apply for a B.Ed. degree

at a college or university. Additionally, individuals with other degrees who wish to specialise in Montessori education can register for the specialisation courses.

Our courses are designed for individuals interested in working with children aged 0–6 years, or those who are passionate about the Montessori philosophy and seek to work in Montessori schools. Our workshops and courses are tailored for those seeking to improve their knowledge and understanding of young children. Level 4 with a specialisation in Montessori 0-3 or 3-6. Below are some of the roles that individuals can fulfil with a Montessori ELF qualification.

Parents/Home-Schooling tutors:

This course is designed to help parents understand a child's natural laws of growth and self-construction. It is also suitable for mothers who want to tutor their children and others in the community.

Teachers:

This course will benefit experienced teachers of young children who wish to gain insight into individualising their teaching curriculum for children of mixed abilities. Teachers can consider this course an upgrade and implement the Montessori methodology in conventional schools. The course will introduce teachers to Montessori manipulatives for subjects like maths and language, which are highly effective in enabling children to acquire conceptual knowledge in these subjects.

Students aspiring to start their own Montessori School:

In addition to the benefits mentioned earlier, the course also covers setting up a Montessori classroom or school. Our team will guide students who have completed the course and are interested in starting their preschool. We can advise on finding suitable premises, hiring teachers, obtaining equipment, enrolling new students, and more.

Gap Year:

This course offers a valuable bridge to further studies by providing students with a grounding in research skills at a tertiary level. The skills and information learned also benefit those hoping to travel as teachers, au pairs or for future parents.

MELF TRAINING CENTRES

Main Campus

MELF is located at 55 Main Road, Mowbray, Cape Town, in a beautiful Art Deco building. It includes an adult lecture area, practice classrooms for students attending the respective courses, and a student lounge area. Our satellite training centres offer similar facilities and are in Randburg, Uitenhage, and Kwa-Duguza (Stanger).

Hours of Operation

The centre in Cape Town is open Monday to Saturday from **08h30 to 16h00** during Western Cape Education Department (WCED) Term Dates. Our satellite training centres are usually open on Saturdays from 08h30 to 16h30 on lecture days and by appointment on other days. Facilitators are available by appointment.

A booking sheet indicates times when classrooms are available for practice outside of lecture times. Students can use the booking sheet to book a slot for additional practice. Facilitators, Assessors, and the administrator are available by appointment.

Student Areas

'Environment' is one of the pillars of Montessori, as order and beauty in the surrounding environment enable children to develop autonomy, which is critical for learning. The lecture area and practice classrooms at Montessori ELF are designed to support a professional working atmosphere. Students are encouraged to take care of the materials and shelves in the practice classrooms, the lecture area, and the common areas in preparation for Montessori teaching. Spaces are also available for students who want to work on assignments, complete their readings, or have group meetings.

Transportation and Parking

MELF's main campus can easily be accessed by public transport and car.

MELF is close to the Mowbray train station and taxi rank.

By car: Off-road parking is available at no cost around the centre.

Student Cards

MELF provides students with a student card at the beginning of the course. This may be used to get discounts at various retailers offering student discounts.

The Library and Technology at MELF

MELF offers an online library of resources, which is regularly updated with new books and articles. Upon registration, students will gain access to these materials. The main campus houses a collection of books and articles for MELF staff, registered students, and alumni to use free of charge. Additionally, students can book a laptop for use at the centre.

Media Release

MELF has the right to use students' names, photographs, or other recordings taken by the organisation, for advertising or publications. Photos published will never include your name or surname. If students choose not to release claims concerning the use of photographs or recordings of themselves, they should submit a written statement to the MELF admin office.

COURSE OPTIONS AT MELF

At MELF, many courses and workshops are **either registered by the QCTO and accredited by SAQA, or are SACE accredited for Professional Development (PD) points.**

Upon meeting all requirements, students will receive a Montessori certificate, Professional Development Points, or if registered for the full qualification, their QCTO certificate. Those undertaking the QCTO (0-6) course and one of the Montessori specialisation courses will also receive a Montessori certificate of attendance and completion.

- A. QCTO Occupational Certificate ECD Practitioner: NQF Level 4 (0-6): SAQA ID: 97542
- B. Montessori (0-3) Infant & Toddler Specialisation Certificate
- C. Montessori (3-6) Pre-Primary Specialisation Certificate
- D. SACE Accredited Workshops
 - 1. Numeracy
 - 2. Special Needs
 - 3. Effective Discipline

E. The Nanny Certificate of Attendance Course

F. Montessori 6-9 Specialisation Certificate (starting in 2027)

COMBINED COURSE:

G. QCTO Qualification I.D. Level 4 **AND** Montessori (0-3) Infant & Toddler specialisation

H. QCTO Qualification I.D. Level 4 **AND** Montessori (3-6) Pre-Primary specialisation

I. Montessori (0-3) Infant & Toddler Certificate AND FETC in ECD SAQA Qualification I.D: 58761, Level 4 (30 June 2024 was the last date for enrolment for the 2025 Course)

J. Montessori 3-6 Diploma Level 5: (30 June 2024 was the last date for enrolment for the 2025 Course)

All workshops and courses have an ONLINE component

*Note students opting to do the course online must have access to the relevant Montessori Didactic materials for each lecture/workshop

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS for ALL COURSES

Our courses are open to all students regardless of gender, religion, culture, or nationality. To register for this course, applicants will be required to:

- Hold a Level 3 certificate or equivalent (National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level 3 or National Certificate Vocational (NCV) 3)
- Demonstrate proficiency in English (The ability to read, write and use written resource material for learning and teaching)
- Complete a Pre-Assessment Intake Task
- Have access to a device (smartphone, tablet, computer). * *Note: Should you not have computer skills, you must register for our introductory computer literacy training course.*

Students must provide evidence for an RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) Assessment without the above requirements. This may include international and/or previous local qualifications, products, reports, testimonials mentioning functions performed, work records, portfolios, videos of practice, and performance records.

Note: Those wishing to work in the ECD context in South Africa will need a B. ED degree.

This is an ideal progression opportunity for students who do not qualify to enter university with their current qualifications but would like to study further and earn a B. ED degree in ECD.

A student with a Level 3 qualification may complete the Occupation certificate in ECD L4. Once they have done so, they can then apply to study for a B. ED degree at a college or University.

Persons with a degree who want to work in Montessori schools may only register for the specialisation courses.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Complete the online application form via this link: [MELF APPLICATION FORM](#). Then, submit it with proof of payment of the non-refundable application fee to admin@elfmontessori.co.za.
2. You will then be invited for a campus tour (which may be done virtually as well) and to complete an Intake Assessment and an interview.
3. Successful applicants will then be offered a placement to study and will be required to accept the offer by paying the registration fee and submitting the following documentation:
 - CV
 - Certified copy of I.D.
 - Certified copy of qualifications/matric certificate/Degree

STUDY OPTIONS

All qualifications (courses and workshops) are offered full-time (FT) or part-time (PT) using a blended learning approach. [See the online course outline for more details on alternative study options]

The full-time course lasts 12 months. Lectures are held from 09h00 to 15h00 during the week at our Main Campus or online.

The duration of the Part-time course is 12-14 months. Lectures are held from 09h00 to 16h30 and classes are held at our various centres or online on Saturdays or during school holidays.

THE BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH

All our courses and workshops follow a blended learning approach, incorporating an online component. Google Classroom is our chosen platform, which can be easily accessed on smartphones, tablets, or laptops. MELF provides on-site access to laptops, tablets, and the Internet. Students must book a device for on-site use. Each student will be given an email address to access the online library, Google Classroom, and course materials such as study guides,

assessments, videos, and the student handbook. Students who need to improve their computer skills will attend computer lessons at the centre because basic computer literacy is required for the course. Additionally, students will receive practical guidance on downloading the Google Classroom App on their devices, using Google Classroom to access course materials, and completing and submitting assignments online.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Successful completion of a module requires students to:

- Read and participate in reading group discussions and practical sessions
- Make materials.
- Practice with the Montessori materials
- Attendance at 80% of lectures per module.
- Compile files/portfolios.

ASSESSMENTS AND TEACHING PRACTICE

Assessments are continuous, and some are done in the workplace. These aim to ensure students are ready to implement what they have learned.

Exams for Specialisation Certificates

Students are required to complete practical assessments and a summative assessment. The assessments are designed to assess the student's ability to present activities to children and knowledge and understanding of the activity and child development.

Exams for the QCTO Occupational Certificate: L4 SAQA ID 17542

Students are required to complete both practical and written examinations. The Practical assessments are conducted in person at the workplace.

An external integrated summative assessment, conducted through the relevant QCTO Assessment Quality Partner, is required to issue this qualification. The external integrated summative assessment will focus on the exit-level outcomes and associated assessment criteria.

Teaching Practice for Specialisation Certificates

The Teaching Practice component (internship) for the specialisation courses intends to familiarise the student with working in a Montessori environment. It is a period of observation, internalisation, and further study to bring together the theory and practice of Montessori education. During their teaching practice internship, students are expected to begin consolidating the theory, knowledge, attitudes, and skills they have learned during the programme in a natural classroom environment under the guidance and support of an experienced, qualified guide and mentor.

This is approximately three full months or one school Term.

Teaching Practice for QCTO Occupational Certificate: L4 SAQA ID 17542

Teaching Practice for The Occupational Certificate ECD Practitioner L4: SAQA ID 17542 will be like the above, but the QCTO will determine the duration and be confirmed.

A. OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATE ECD PRACTITIONER: NQF LEVEL 4: SAQA ID: 97542 (QCTO)

Occupational Certificate: Early Childhood Development Practitioner (Early Childhood Development Practitioner)

Total Number of Credits: 131 credits

Offered Full-Time Blended: Cape Town Campus Only

Offered Part-Time Blended: Cape Town, Nationally

Course Description:

This 131-credit course offers specialised training for preschool teachers and day-care administrators, entrepreneurial skills to establish and manage ECD centres effectively and a comprehensive understanding of child development and well-being... In addition, the qualification offers an excellent combination of hands-on practical experience with theory, resulting in personal growth and skills for life. An Early Childhood Development Practitioner plans and prepares early childhood activities, facilitates and mediates learning, observes and assesses children's progress, and reflects on learning in an inclusive, play-based environment to support the holistic development of children (from conception to school) in different centre-based or non-centre-based settings.

A qualified learner will be able to:

- Plan and prepare inclusive activities to support the holistic development and well-being of children
- Facilitate and mediate appropriate holistic learning for every child
- Observe, assess and record each child's progress according to the age and stage
- Develop reports of children's development and learning
- Promote the well-being, health, safety and protection of children

Curriculum Outline:

This Qualification is made up of the following compulsory Knowledge Modules and Practical Skill Modules:

Knowledge Modules: 43 Credits

Practical Skill Modules: 43 Credits

Work Experience Modules: 45 Credits

Knowledge Modules: Credits: 43

1. Introduction to the early childhood development sector, NQF Level 4, Credits 4
2. Theories and Perspectives of Child Development, NQF Level 5, Credits 6
3. Planning and Programme Development in Early Childhood Settings, NQF Level 4, Credits 8
4. Facilitation and mediation of active learning, NQF Level 5, Credits 12
5. Observation and assessment in early childhood development, NQF Level 4, Credits 4
6. Promotion of health, safety and well-being of children, NQF Level 4, Credits 6
7. Administration for early childhood development services and programmes, NQF Level 3, Credits 3

Practical Skill Modules: 43 Credits

1. Plan and prepare inclusive educational activities and routines using an approved programme based on the curriculum framework, NQF Level 4, Credits 12
2. Facilitate and mediate active learning in an integrated and holistic learning programme, NQF Level 5, Credits 9
3. Observe, assess, record and report each child's progress according to the age and stage, NQF Level 4, Credits 4
4. Support and promote the health, nutrition, safety, protection and well-being of children, NQF Level 4, Credits 12

5. Build and maintain collaborative relationships with parents and other service providers, NQF Level 4, Credits 3
6. Prepare and maintain administrative systems, NQF Level 3, Credits 3

Work Experience Modules: 45 credits

1. Learning programme and routines planning and preparation process, NQF Level 4, Credits 13
2. Processes of facilitating and mediating the learning programme in a variety of contexts, NQF Level 4, Credits 15
3. Processes of observation, assessment, recording and reporting on children's learning and development, NQF Level 4, Credits 7
4. Processes and procedures for promoting the health, nutrition, safety, protection and well-being of children in an early childhood development setting, NQF Level 4, Credits 10

International Comparability

The comparability exercise focused on three countries, namely the United States of America, United Kingdom and Kenya, thereby ensuring that the qualification is aligned with best practice in these three countries.

For more information, go to the QCTO website (www.qcto.org.za)

B. MONTESSORI (3-6) PRE-PRIMARY SPECIALISATION

Montessori (3-6) Pre-primary specialisation

Offered Full-Time Blended: Cape Town Campus Only

Offered Part-Time Blended: Cape Town, Nationally

Course Description:

This course gives students the knowledge required to work in a Montessori environment. It is also an ideal starting point for parents or Grade R teachers interested in applying Montessori educational or disciplinary principles at home or in their classrooms. It provides a balanced mix of hands-on practical experience and theoretical knowledge, leading to personal development and essential life skills.

The academic aspect covers an in-depth study of Montessori philosophy and practice, classroom management, techniques for initiating a Montessori class, and the use, sequence, and presentation methods of Montessori didactic materials across all curriculum areas. The course involves a hands-on learning approach, with lectures and practical sessions facilitated by experienced educators. In the Academic Component, students must practise each practical module in the training classroom and conduct observations at various ECD/Montessori pre-schools. A list of schools can be provided upon request.

Curriculum Outline:

Montessori Philosophy: This module aims to give students a comprehensive understanding of Montessori theory, Dr. Montessori's philosophy, and human development psychology. It covers the role of the environment, freedom, movement, discipline, sensitive periods, and principles of order as part of a holistic methodology. The emphasis is on early childhood development (3-6-year-olds).

Child Development/Psychology:

Students will be introduced to various theories of child development, child psychology, and education by prominent constructivist theorists such as Piaget, Erickson, Vygotsky, and Steiner. The focus is on gaining insight into a child's cognitive development and understanding how children learn, why they test limits, and how adults should effectively engage with children. Understanding these theories helps teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of various educational methods for cognitive development.

Observation methods:

This module is designed to cultivate the observational skills necessary for Montessori educators. It emphasises applying theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios to meet children's individual needs. Students will observe children in Montessori classrooms and learn the significance of observations as the primary source of information about children. Accurately recorded observations are key to understanding child development and Montessori theory.

Practical Life:

In the Montessori environment, activities in the Practical Life area are the main driver of children's early development. Students will learn how to help children develop self-reliance, independence, confidence, concentration, social skills, empathy, life skills, and fine motor skills. The "cycle of activity" theory will be taught through lectures, demonstrations, observations, and supervised practice sessions with increasingly complex activities involved in dressing, caring for one's environment, preparing food for others and so forth.

Sensorial:

Perceptual activities like listening and visual perception form the basis of all later learning. These lectures will concentrate on the theory and techniques essential for promoting sensory growth and refining perception. Students will understand the importance of educating the senses to enhance intelligence and imagination. They will also explore how children solve problems, make decisions, classify the world, and think critically. Practice sessions with materials will help students gain familiarity and proficiency.

Language:

This module explores activities for enriching vocabulary, from naming objects to more advanced activities that teach children to write and read. It will present a complete analysis of reading and writing, didactic materials, and their sequence, along with storytelling, composition, literature, and functional aspects of grammar and syntax, along with educational methods like dialogic talk.

Mathematics/Numeracy:

Mathematics manipulatives can significantly reduce a child's mental load while acquiring new maths concepts. In this module, students will develop an understanding of the "mathematical mind" and how to support a young child's mathematical development. They will receive presentations on didactic apparatuses for teaching numeration, emphasising the developmental process from sandpaper numbers to the decimal system. Sensorial foundations for geometry, algebra, counting, and arithmetic will also be covered, along with an introduction to the four operations.

Culture and Science

The Culture module encompasses the subjects of geography, history, botany, and zoology. It includes using manipulatives to build an understanding of landforms, globes, maps, flags, timelines, and supplementary activities. Botany and zoology will be explored through various activities, including anatomy puzzles.

Students will explore and research science experiments suitable for young children using natural materials or readily available resources. Class time will be devoted to various experiments and discussions about their educational outcomes.

Classroom Management:

This module will focus on the relationships between adults, children, and the environment, covering how to manage and prepare for group activities, circle time, and the first day of school. Discussions will also include the relationship between the director, assistant, other staff members, parents, parent education, and the alignment of common goals between teachers and parents. Additionally, students will learn to communicate and guide children using a kind and firm approach to discipline using the Montessori approach.

Google Classroom & Computer Literacy:

Students will receive training in basic computer skills and an introduction to Google Classroom, the platform for submitting assignments.

Note:

Each module for the Montessori (3-6) Pre-primary Specialisation Certificate will include continuous assessments, such as essay assignments and article reviews, as well as the design and presentation of new and existing Montessori materials.

** Qualified Teachers can earn SACE Professional Development points through completing this course*

C. MONTESSORI INFANT/TODDLER (0-3) SPECIALISATION

Offered Full-Time Blended: Cape Town Campus Only

Offered Part-Time Blended: Cape Town, Nationally

Course Description:

The Montessori (0-3) Infant & Toddler Specialisation Certificate is suitable for adults and new parents in an infant/toddler classroom and new parents. This course is a hands-on experiential program that covers Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, child psychology, human development, classroom design, class management, and techniques for caring for and supporting the healthy development of infants and toddlers.

Curriculum Outline:

1. Montessori's Philosophy: This module provides a comprehensive understanding of Dr. Montessori's philosophy, theories, and views on human development, focusing on conception to early childhood. Concepts like the absorbent mind, the spiritual embryo, and sensitive periods are explained in relation to teaching methodology.

2. Child Development/Psychology: Students explore human development from conception and study Magda Gerber's RIE theory in detail, along with practical implications in a Montessori context.

3. Observation: Emphasis is placed on developing observational techniques required of the Montessori guide, specifically for understanding the communication and needs of infants and toddlers.

4. The Caregiver's Guide: Designed to empower parents and caregiving professionals to provide a nurturing environment for infants and toddlers to build trust and self-reliance.

5. Stimulation Through Play: Students learn to create age-appropriate activities and toys that promote language and sensory-motor development.

6. Communication and discipline the Montessori Way: Students understand child development and learn to communicate and guide children using a kind and firm approach.

7. Classroom Design and Management: Explores the relationship between adults, children, and the environment, aiming to create nurturing and engaging spaces.

8. Google Classroom & Computer Literacy: Students receive basic computer skills and an introduction to Google Classroom for assignment submissions.

Assessments are continuous and conducted in each module for the Montessori (0-3) Infant & Toddler Specialisation Certificate.

D. SACE ACCREDITED WORKSHOPS

Montessori ELF hosts workshops on topics of interest to parents and young adults interested in a teaching career, or supporting their children's development. These workshops can be attended in person, online or can be viewed on the SACE or MELF website at:

www.melf.co.za

https://sacecptd.co.za/courses/?course_category=early-childhood-development

D1. Numeracy for the young child (Grade R-2)

CPDT CREDITS: 15

Name of Programme:

Numeracy for the Young Child (Grade R - Grade 2)

Please take note of the following information:

Description:

This course will teach participants how to introduce mathematics and numeration concepts using developmentally appropriate activities in an engaging, concrete way. This includes recognising, identifying, and reading number symbols and ordering and comparing numbers. Place values and problem-solving techniques will also be covered.

Duration:

This 15-hour course consists of 5 sessions of 2-3 hours per session and will cover the following:

Session 1: Pre-Numeracy Activities (Songs and Games; Geometry shape activities;)

Session 2: Material Making

Session 3: 1-10 Activities

Session 4: Introduction to the Decimal System

Session 5: Teens, Tens and Hundred Board

Outcomes:

You will learn how to introduce some of the following mathematical concepts using different techniques and:

1. Understand how children learn and use this knowledge to facilitate the learning of mathematics skills with young children.
2. Develop The requisite *knowledge and skills* in the following areas:
 - a. Theory of how children learn and domains of development
 - b. Relevant and appropriate terminology concerning Numeracy
 - c. Monitoring and recording the progress of the children
 - d. Developing/ designing activities suitable for children ages 0-6 years

NOTE: Participants can attend the classes in person or online. (some sessions will require access to the Montessori didactic apparatus)

Assessment:

Participants must engage in discussions, practice during designated sessions, and work in teams. Assessment tasks include reading, completing online assessments, and creating didactic materials. Each session will include both a theory and a practical component. Additionally, each lesson plan will include the appropriate age for the activity, the materials needed, the developmental outcomes, how to facilitate the lesson, and the language used.

D2. Effective Discipline

CPDT CREDITS: 15

Description:

Listening and guiding, without resorting to corporal punishment (which is not permitted as a form of discipline today according to the [Children's Act 38 of 2005](#)), is a challenge both parents and educators face. Each child comes from a different background, and parents or caregivers may apply various disciplinary approaches. Therefore, the same response may not work in the same situation with different children, particularly in a classroom setting.

A positive approach to discipline usually requires a complete paradigm shift for adults. This entails looking at the child differently, understanding the child, and, most importantly, making changes within us.

Duration:

This 12-hour course consists of 5-6 sessions of 1-2 hours per session and will cover the following: (Participants can select to join the classes in-person or online)

The workshops will take the participants through the following key themes:

1. Understanding the philosophy of the approach, how we see discipline; why we do things a certain way – e.g. why not use rewards, praise or punishments? Boundaries & ground rules
2. Learning how to be 'the adult' in the situation; Making choices in line with our philosophy, getting into the 'right' space, modelling appropriate behaviour for conflict resolutions, dealing with emotions, and controlling our responses and appropriate reactions
3. Understanding how children think and process information; recognising their feelings and 'behaviour codes', decoding these and taking time to "train" them
4. Strategies & responses; learning specific strategies, listening, problem-solving, and encouragement
5. The choices and consequences children have/experience because of their behaviours or choices or strategies for specific scenarios (E.g. Biting/fighting others; telling lies; sharing/sibling rivalry, etc)

Outcomes:

You will learn how to introduce some of the following approaches using different techniques

1. An overall approach to discipline and talking to the child
2. An understanding of how children process information and think
3. Personal control management (controlling ourselves & our responses)
4. Choices & consequences (These are the choices and consequences children have/experience because of their behaviours or choices or strategies for certain scenarios)
5. Specific scenarios (E.g. biting/fighting others, telling lies, sexually acting out behaviours)

Assessment:

Participants will be expected to contribute to discussions, work in small groups to role-play scenarios and participate in discussion sessions during designated times.

D3. Special Needs and Barriers to Learning

CPDT CREDITS: 15 Description:

This programme aims to introduce teachers and ECD practitioners to methods for understanding, identifying, and supporting young children (ages 0-9) with barriers to learning. The approach involves using case studies, theory, and discussions. Through this program, teachers and ECD practitioners will learn how to identify a barrier and engage with the child meaningfully to provide support.

Duration:

This 15-hour course consists of 5 sessions of 2-3 hours per session and will cover the following:
(Participants may select to join the classes in-person or online)

The workshops will take the participants through the following key themes:

1. Inclusion in the SA context.
2. Bronfenbrenner ecological model. A practical activity will follow this to identify human developmental norms in the young child.
3. Session three will focus on case studies about barriers to learning. It will be more practical and require participants to extract and discuss the case studies about a particular barrier, with strategies to support the child.
4. Sessions four and five will look at the identification criteria of Autism and ADHD and referral processes.
5. Neurodivergence and neurodivergent will be explained with strategies to support the child.

Assessment:

Participants will be expected to contribute to discussions, work in small groups to role-play scenarios and participate in discussion sessions during designated times.

D4. Literacy: Teaching Reading and Writing to the Grade R-2 Child:

Description:

This training aims to introduce teachers and ECD practitioners to methods for introducing literacy concepts to children from Grade R to Grade 2. The approach involves using concrete didactic materials and supporting the various learning styles of learners in this age group. Teachers and ECD practitioners will learn how to engage children who do not yet know how to read and write by introducing literacy in a hands-on and interactive way.

Duration:

This 12-hour course consists of 5 sessions of 2-3 hours per session and will cover the following: Participants may choose to attend in person or online.

Outcomes:

You will learn how to introduce some of the following literacy concepts using different techniques and:

1. Understand how children learn and use this knowledge to facilitate the learning of literacy skills with young children.
2. The requisite *knowledge and skills* in the following areas will be developed:
 - a. Theory of how children learn, and domains of development
 - b. Relevant and appropriate terminology and approaches concerning literacy, including a balanced language approach, muscle memory, phonological awareness, synthetic phonics, alphabetic awareness, grammar, vocabulary, syntax, orthographic patterns, irregular spelling patterns and many others
 - c. Identification of developmental milestones of language (listening, speaking, writing, reading) in children (0-6 years)
 - d. Monitoring and recording the progress of the children
 - e. Developing/ designing activities suitable for children ages 0-6 years

Assessment:

Assessment tasks will include reading, completing online assessments, and creating didactic materials.

Each session will include both theoretical and practical components. Each lesson plan will include the appropriate age for the activity, the materials needed, the developmental outcomes of the lesson, how to facilitate the lesson and potential variations for the lesson.

E. THE NANNY CERTIFICATE COURSE

The nanny course is designed for anyone who wants to work with babies and toddlers up to the age of one and a half years.

Duration:

The course will take over 30-40 hours. The days will be determined by the number of participants, with an option of 3-4 full days over a week or once a week for 6-8 weeks. Participants may attend classes in person or online.

The nanny course encompasses a comprehensive curriculum that includes the following components:

1. An exploration of human development from conception through the age of three years.
2. An examination of the ways in which children learn through play and interaction with their surroundings.
3. The development of essential *knowledge and skills* in the following areas:
 - a. Identification of developmental milestones pertaining to language acquisition, movement, and social skills.
 - b. Design of activities appropriate for children aged 0 to 6 years.
 - c. Principles of meal planning and nutrition.
 - d. Health and safety considerations for young children.
 - e. Caregiving practices, including bathing and dressing.
 - f. Preparation for the caregiver role, with an emphasis on physical, spiritual, and communication competencies.

Assessment:

Assessment tasks include reading, completing online assessments, and creating didactic materials.

Each session will include both theoretical and practical components. Each lesson plan will include the appropriate age for the activity, the materials needed, the developmental outcomes of the lesson, how to facilitate the lesson and potential variations for the lesson.

GET IN TOUCH

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Add your name to our database by emailing admin@elfmontessori.co.za with the word WORKSHOPS. This way, we will keep you informed about all upcoming workshops and apparatus training sessions.

We look forward to you joining us.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Where did Montessori come from?

Montessori (pronounced MON-tuh-SORE-ee) education was founded in 1907 by Dr Maria Montessori, the first woman in Italy to become a physician. She based her educational methods on scientific observation of children's learning processes. Guided by her discovery that children teach themselves, Dr Montessori designed a "prepared environment" in which children could freely choose from several developmentally appropriate activities. Now, nearly a century after Maria Montessori's first *Casa dei Bambini* (children's home) in Rome, Montessori education is found all over the world, spanning ages from birth to adolescence.

Q. What is the difference between Montessori and traditional education?

Montessori is a knowledge-based curriculum, which teaches children essential concepts in maths, language, science, geography and botany that they will require for success in later schooling. The Montessori approach follows a constructivist view of child development which favours a self-determined pace of learning for each child. The purpose of this is to allow children to develop deep levels of concentration or focus which is a sign of learning. Under the age of six, Montessori emphasizes learning through all five senses, not just through listening, watching, or reading. Children in Montessori classes learn at their own, individual pace and according to their own choice of activities from hundreds of possibilities. They are not required to sit and listen to a teacher talk to them as a group but are engaged in individual or group activities of their own, with materials that have been introduced to them individually by the teacher who knows what each child is ready to do. Learning is an exciting process of discovery, leading to concentration, motivation, self-discipline, and a love of learning.

Above age 6 children learn to do independent research, arrange field trips to gather information, interview specialists, create group presentations, dramas, art exhibits, musical productions, science projects, and so forth. There is no limit to what they created in this kind of intelligently guided freedom. There is great respect for the choices of the children, but they easily keep up with or surpass what they would be doing in a more traditional setting. Children enjoy their work and study. The children ask each other for lessons, and much of the learning comes from sharing and inspiring each other instead of competing.

Montessori classes place children in three-year-or-more age groups (3-6, 6-9/6-12, etc.), forming communities in which the older children spontaneously share their knowledge with the younger ones. Montessori represents an entirely different approach to education.

Q. Can I do Montessori at home with my child?

A. Yes, you can use Montessori principles of child development at home. Look at your home through your child's eyes. Children need a sense of belonging, and they get it by participating fully in the routines of everyday life. "Help me do it by myself" is the life theme of the preschooler, school-age child, teenager, and young adult. Can you find ways for your child to participate in meal preparation, cleaning, gardening, caring for clothes, shoes, and toys? Providing opportunities for independence is the surest way to build your child's self-esteem and to build the skills required for life-long learning.

In a school setting, only a trained Montessori teacher can effectively implement Montessori education using the specialized learning materials acquired during their training. However, there are many ideas that families can incorporate at home, especially for those whose children attend school full-time or for families where the adults oversee the entirety of their child's education.

Montessori Children

Q. Is Montessori good for children with learning disabilities? What about gifted children?

Montessori is designed to help all children reach their fullest potential at their own unique pace. A classroom whose children have varying abilities is a community in which everyone learns from one another, and everyone contributes. Moreover, multi-age grouping allows each child to find his or her own pace without feeling "ahead" or "behind" in relation to peers.



Q. Are Montessori children successful later in life?

Research studies show that Montessori children are well-prepared for later life academically, socially, and emotionally. In addition to scoring well on standardized tests, Montessori children are ranked above average on such criteria as following directions, turning in work on time, listening attentively, using basic skills, showing responsibility, asking provocative questions, showing enthusiasm for learning, and adapting to new situations.

Montessori Schools

Q. I recently observed a Montessori classroom for a day. I was very, very impressed, but I have three questions.

1. There doesn't seem to be any opportunity for pretend play
2. The materials don't seem to allow children to be creative
3. Children don't seem to be interacting with one another very much. Any help you give me would be appreciated. Thank you very much.

I can give you three very incomplete answers to your perceptive questions:

1. When Dr Montessori opened the first Children's House, it was full of pretend playthings. The children never played with them if they were allowed to do real things - i.e. cooking instead of pretending to cook. It is still true.
2. The materials teach specific things, and then the creativity is incredible. Like learning how to handle a good violin and then playing music. It is not considered "creative" to use a violin as a hammer, or a bridge while playing with blocks. We consider it "creative" to learn how to use the violin properly and then create music. The same goes for the materials in a Montessori classroom.
3. There is as much interaction as the children desire, but the tasks are so satisfying that, for these few hours a day, children want to master the challenges offered by them. Then they become happier and kinder—true socialization. Also, since concentration is protected above all, as all "work" is respected, children learn early on not to interrupt someone who is concentrating.

Specific Details of the Montessori Method as practised in Montessori Schools

Protection of the "best" in each child through respect of choice and concentration

The most important discovery that Dr. Montessori has contributed to the field of child development and education is the fostering of the best in each child. She discovered that in an environment where children are allowed to choose their work and to concentrate for as long as needed on that task, they come out of this period of concentration (or meditation or contemplation) refreshed and full of goodwill toward others. The teacher must know how to offer work, link the child to the environment, and protect this process. We know now that this natural goodness and compassion are inborn, and do not need to be taught, but to be protected.

The schedule - The three-hour work period

Under the age of six, there are one or two 3-hour, uninterrupted, work periods each day, not broken up by required group lessons. Older children schedule meetings or study groups with each other, the teacher when necessary. Adults and children respect concentration and do not interrupt someone who is busy with a task. Groups form spontaneously or are arranged ahead by special appointment. They almost never take precedence over self-selected work.

Multi-age grouping

Children are grouped in mixed ages and abilities in three to six-year spans: 0-3, 3-6, 6-12 (sometimes temporarily 6-9 and 9-12), 12-15, 15-18. There is constant interaction, problem-solving, child-to-child teaching, and socialization. Children are challenged according to their ability and never bored. Younger children learn from older children, while older children are given opportunities to recap work previously learned, practice leadership skills, and be role models. The Montessori middle and high school teacher ideally has taken all three training courses, plus graduate work in an academic area or areas.

Work centres

The environment is arranged according to subject area, and children are always free to move around the room instead of staying at desks. There is no limit to how long a child can work with a piece of material. At any one time in a day all subjects -- maths, language, science, history, geography, art, music, etc., will be being studied, at all levels.

Teaching method - "Teach by teaching, not by correcting"

There are no papers turned back with red marks and corrections. Instead, the child's effort and work are respected as it is. The teacher, through extensive observation and record-keeping, plans individual projects to enable each child to learn what he needs to improve. Children are encouraged to develop a friendly relationship with mistakes, and the teacher models this same attitude.

Teaching Ratio - 1:1 and 1:30+

South African regulations are 1:25 for 3-6 year olds. In the Montessori environment, the teaching ratio is one trained Montessori teacher and one non-teaching aide to 30+ children. Rather than lecturing to large or small groups of children, the teacher is trained to teach one child at a time and to oversee thirty or more children working on a broad array of tasks. She is facile in the fundamental lessons of maths, language, the arts and sciences, and in guiding a child's research and exploration, capitalising on his interest in and excitement about a subject. The teacher does not make assignments or dictate what to study or read, nor does she limit how far a child follows an interest. Time is spent, mainly at the beginning but throughout the year, teaching social skills called 'grace and courtesies', which ensure the smooth flow of social interactions in the classroom.



Basic lessons

During teacher training, the Montessori teacher spends a lot of time practicing the many lessons with materials in all areas. To be certified, she must pass a written and oral exam on these

lessons. She is trained to recognize a child's readiness according to age, ability, and interest in a specific lesson and is prepared to guide individual progress.

Areas of study

All subjects are interwoven and not taught in isolation. The teacher models a "Renaissance" person of broad interests in the children. A child can work on any material he understands at any time. The benefit of an integrated curriculum for young children is that it allows for the repetition of vocabulary and concepts across various subjects to enhance learning.

Class size

Except for infant/toddler groups, the most successful classes are of 30-35 children to one teacher (who is very well-trained for the level she is teaching), with one non-teaching assistant. This is possible because the children stay in the same group for three to six years and much of the teaching comes from the children and the environment.

Learning styles

All kinds of intelligences and learning styles are nurtured: musical, bodily-kinaesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, intuitive, and traditional linguistic and logical-mathematical (reading, writing, and maths). This model is backed up by Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.