

NORWAY

Norwegian Montessori Association (NMF)

Events and Activities

In September we had an adolescence gathering with teachers from many of the Montessori schools in Norway with an adolescence programme. The goal was to exchange experiences from working with the Montessori curriculum for the adolescence, and to give feedback and ideas when the curriculum is due for revision.

Our annual administrators conference in October was a great success. This year we had for the first time, a two-day conference for both Children's Houses and schools. The key speakers were Kathleen Minardi, who spoke about Montessori management and leadership, and Norwegian defence lawyer Geir Lippestad. Lippestad talked about how our values should form the foundation for the choices we make and how we communicate. Rebecca Pelton from Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) spoke about the importance of accreditation, and their work.

NMF was also present at the annual Montessori Europe conference in October. We were really inspired by some of the lecturers, and especially the lecture Marvin Reyes gave on sustainability and responsibility.

Special Projects and Outreach

NMF has worked continuously together with the Ministry of Education to ensure the highest quality of education. In the spring, we worked hard to make sure a change in the regulations for Montessori schools, concerning accreditation of Montessori education, would not influence our community in a negative way. NMF continues to work for a high quality standard in our schools and kindergartens.

NMF have begun working on making more high quality Montessori education available in Norway. The need for qualified Montessori educators is constantly present, and will probably be increasing in the future.

NMF is also currently working on a quality programme for our schools and kindergartens, based on the MQAP, which will be ready in the spring of 2017.

Collaborations and Partnerships

NMF collaborates regularly with the following:

- Norwegian University Montessori teacher training
- The Ministry of Education and the Department of Education
- The Independent school organisation, including the Norwegian Waldorf / Steiner school Association and Christian School Association Cooperation with all Montessori entities, and organisations that work for the development of Montessori and the rights of the child are of the utmost importance for the association.

At the end of 2016, NMF signed a partnering agreement with the largest organisation working for all private kindergartens in Norway (PBL). This is an important collaboration

for us, making us more visible in the larger political debate on education in Norway. One of the major purposes of the partnership is to be able to establish more Montessori Children's Houses in Norway in the future.

Publications and Media

NMF publishes *MONTESSORI* magazine four times a year. The magazine features Norwegian Montessori schools and Children's Houses, which helps to raise awareness of the community with regard to Montessori programmes. The magazine also includes Montessori literature and supportive articles for the theme and emphasizes the process of sharing ideas and spreading the knowledge of our goals and principles.

NMF is regularly asked to give a comment on news and articles featuring Montessori schools, Children's Houses and/or Montessori education in general, in local newspapers, radio or TV.

Memberships

Our membership has increased this year. We now have 40 Assistance to infancy and Early Childhood programmes, 80 Elementary programmes and 16 Adolescent programmes for ages 12-15. In addition, we also have about 500 private memberships, mainly made up of parents with children in a Montessori school or Children's House.

Board

- Chairman Jon Terje Bjørke
- Vice Chairman Jennifer Varbanov
- Board Members Petter Torp, Helle Sagstuen, Hilde Tørnby, Stephanie Chaigneau, Ellen Steina

The Board of Directors is a diverse working board with a strong sense of social responsibilities that include the rights of the child, the development of a peaceful world and an educational system that supports the Montessori method and the natural development of the child. The Board is comprised of AMI, AMS and Norwegian University Montessori educated members.

The secretariat consists of two full-time employees, who are responsible for the management and day-to-day work of the organisation. The manager is Nina Johansen, and office secretary is Eirin Eikås.

NMF also have special working groups responsible for projects overseen by NMF. One such group is now working on the revision of the National Montessori Curriculum.

Nina Johansen
Manager, Norwegian Montessori Society