

Montessori Memo

Quarterly, Curated, and Collaborative
Research for practitioners, researchers, and community members



MONTESSORI MEMO™

A quarterly, curated memo of peer reviewed research and policy papers accessible and contributed to by a broad community of Montessori and non-Montessori researchers and practitioners via our community found at www.Montessori-Forward.org.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Research: Montessori.....1
Research: Related.....2

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The Center for Montessori Studies collaborates across the Montessori community, Association Montessori International and American Montessori Society, and values the institutional collaborations with and among KU Center for Montessori Research, National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector, and Montessori Public Policy Initiative.

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RESEARCH: MONTESSORI

Title: Grappling with the miseducation of Montessori: A feminist posthuman rereading of “Child” in early childhood contexts.

Citation: Osgood, J. & Mohandas, S. (2022). Grappling with the miseducation of Montessori: A feminist posthuman rereading of “Child” in early childhood contexts. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 23 (3), 302-316.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/14639491221117222>

Summary/Abstract: This article demonstrates how feminist posthumanism can reconfigure conceptualisations of, and practices with, 'child' in Montessori early childhood contexts. It complicates Montessori's contemporary reputation as a 'middle-class phenomenon' by returning to the earliest Montessori schools as a justice-oriented project for working-class children and families. Grappling with the contradictions and inconsistencies of Montessori thought, this article acknowledges the legacy of Montessori's feminism while also situating her project within the wider colonial capitalist context in which it emerged. A critical engagement with Montessori education unsettles modernist conceptualisations of 'child' and its civilising agenda on minds and bodies. Specifically, Montessori child observation (as a civilising mission) is disrupted and reread from a feminist posthumanist orientation to generate more relational, queer and expansive accounts of how 'child' is produced through observation. Working with three 'encounters' from fieldwork at a Montessori nursery, the authors attend to the material-discursive affective manifestation of social class, gender, sexuality and 'race', and what that means for child figurations in Montessori contexts.

Title: A preliminary examination of a kindergarten school readiness assessment.

Citation: Macy, M., Pool, J., Chen, C. I., Rusiana, T. A. & Sawyer, M. (2022). A preliminary examination of a kindergarten school readiness assessment. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 50(6), 1035 -1046.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10643-021-01237-7>

Summary/Abstract: This study examined selected parameters of two newly developed measures called AEPS-3 Ready-Set and Ready-Set Family Assessment of Children's Skills (FACS). Ready-Set is a school readiness measure designed to gather information from teachers or other professionals on children's kindergarten school readiness skills across important developmental areas. FACS is a companion measure developed to provide a simple way for parents to assess and report their child's skills across the same developmental areas addressed by Ready-Set. Montessori educators practicing in Florida and Idaho observed groups of preschool-age children and completed the Ready-Set assessment on selected children. In addition, selected children's parents completed the FACS designed to provide information about their child's skills across the same developmental areas targeted by Ready-Set. Analyses found a robust correlation between parents' and teachers' ratings on total area scores and more modest agreements on individual items. Teachers reported that they considered Ready-Set a user-friendly tool that provided relevant information on children's' readiness skills. In addition, teachers reported they would use Ready-Set again, as well as recommend its use to co-workers. This study has implications for assessing school readiness of children from both teachers and parents.

RESEARCH: RELATED

Title: Practice-based coaching to improve culturally responsive practices in early childhood classrooms: A single-case experimental design.

Citation: Kranski, T. A. & Steed, E. A. (2022). Practice-based coaching to improve culturally responsive practices in early childhood classrooms: A single-case experimental design. *Psychology in Schools*, 59(8), 1587-1608.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/pits.22703>

Summary/Abstract: An experimental analysis of a workshop plus practice-based coaching (PBC) was conducted to enhance four early childhood educators' use of culturally responsive practices. A multiple baseline design across participants was used to examine the effects of a workshop and PBC on four early childhood teachers' use of culturally responsive practices, such as learning about children's home cultures and ensuring books reflect cultural diversity. A functional relation was established between the intervention and targeted culturally responsive practices for three of the four teachers. Descriptive findings suggested that particular culturally responsive practices were implemented at higher rates than others. School personnel viewed the goals, process, and outcomes of the workshop and PBC positively. Implications for practice and research are discussed, including the complex nature of providing coaching on the topic of culturally responsive practices in early childhood classrooms.

Title: Picturebooks in the primary grades: Representation and the stories shared about who belongs in STEM.

Citation: Cardullo, V. & Burton, M. (2022). Picturebooks in the primary grades: Representation and the stories shared about who belongs in STEM. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 1082-3301.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-022-01379-2>

Summary/Abstract: This study investigates the representation of diversity in STEM picture books for the primary grades. Research suggests that the inclusion or exclusion of various identities contributes to how children view their potential and sense of belonging, which can shape their STEM identity. Children often view books with the lens of understanding what role they can and cannot inhabit based on the characters they see represented within the pages of a book. Results indicated that primary STEM books had an absence of cultural specificity across all categories examined, showing relative invisibility for many groups of individuals. The authors conclude that there needs to be more intentionality related to culturally responsive pedagogy, pairing books with additional research that diversifies the curriculum and stimulates STEM dispositions in students, building bridges between cultures, teaching, and learning.

Title: A meta-analysis of forgiveness education interventions' effects on forgiveness and anger in children and adolescents.

Citation: Rapp, H. Wang Xu, J. & Enright, R. D. (2022). A meta-analysis of forgiveness education interventions' effects on forgiveness and anger in children and adolescents. *Child Development*, 93(5), 1249-1269.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13771>

Summary/Abstract: Forgiveness education interventions instruct children and adolescents in understanding forgiveness and its role in healthy relationships. In this meta-analytic review, 20 studies involving 1472 youth (51% female; $M[\text{subscript age}] = 11.66$) from 10 countries (studies: 40% North American, 25% East Asian, 20% Middle Eastern, 15% European) were retrieved to determine forgiveness education interventions' effects on youth outcomes. Hedges' g and confidence intervals (CIs) were used to assess treatment effects. Findings suggest that forgiveness education interventions have a significant positive effect on forgiveness ($g = 0.54$, 95% CI [0.36, 0.73]) and anger ($g = 0.29$, 95% CI [0.11, 0.47]). Results lend support to the idea that children and adolescents who experience hurt from the unjust actions of others may benefit from learning about the process of forgiveness.

Title: Mindfulness with children: A content analysis of evidence-based interventions from a developmental perspective.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/20590776.2022.2081072>

Citation: Vekety, B., Kassai, R., & Takacs, Z. K. (2022). Mindfulness with children: A content analysis of evidence-based interventions from a developmental perspective. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologys*, 39(2), 231-244.

Summary/Abstract: As the number of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) for children has been constantly growing, there is a benefit to be derived for a comprehensive study that gathers what mindfulness activities have been reported to be effective at particular developmental stages, and how these practices have been modified to make them age-appropriate. Method: To address this problem, the content of 26 (cluster-) randomised controlled studies was analysed to identify any quantitative and qualitative differences. Results: The duration of MBIs varied greatly ranging from 4 to 25 weeks, 8 to 144 sessions, and 3 to 45 h, with session duration from 3 to 90 min, which is an important factor to take into account. However, there were no age group differences due to number of sessions or program length. MBIs for early childhood were more likely to use mindful movement practice, psychoeducation, and story-based context. In case of other components, such as breathing awareness or working with thoughts and emotions, qualitative differences were found between early and middle childhood regarding how the activities were implemented age appropriately. Conclusions: The present study offers practical implications and distinguishes differences in mindfulness activities for early and middle childhood. Important developmental considerations have been raised for future program developers and practitioners.

Title: Beyond Pronouns: The Case for Gender-Expansive and Democratizing Practice in Teacher Education.

Citation: Blair, E. E. & Deckman, S. L. (2022). Beyond Pronouns: The Case for Gender-Expansive and Democratizing Practice in Teacher Education. *Teachers College Record*, 124(8), 275-286.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681221124194>

Summary/Abstract: Many teacher education programs are committed to social justice. This commentary argues that gender-expansive education--teaching that opens up, democratizes, and complicates our understandings of gender, gender identity, and gendered embodiment in our classrooms in ways that make space for all kinds of students--must be meaningfully, intersectionally included in teacher education that aims to promote equity, democracy, and freedom through schooling. We suggest ways that teacher education programs can leverage many of the critical skills and dispositions already cultivated in social justice education to integrate gender-expansive perspectives throughout their curriculum.



Montessori Memo is a resource found via the *Montessori Forward* webpage. A contemporary format for people to learn about Montessori education. *Montessori Forward* is the shared effort of the Center for Montessori Studies, University of Hartford degree programs, and the Montessori Training Center Northeast to sustain a virtual space as well as an intellectual community for researchers and practitioners contributing to Montessori education and research.

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