

‘Are we really listening? - The Power of Dialogue in Interpreting Young Children’s Signals’

Jackie Baxter and Mariam Raihani



About us...



Our Mission

To honour children and empower them to express their voice and rights through an educational program that inspires them to be agents of change.



Infant Toddler Curriculum

Initial version focussed on:

- well-being and belonging
- calming and stimulating environment
- responsive communication
- secure attachment



Reflect Respect Relate



Marte Meo

Marte Meo means 'On One's own Strength'

'The central focus of Marte Meo is to identify, activate and develop skills to enable and enhance constructive interaction and development (Aarts, 2008)'.



Video recordings

Enlarge possibilities and capture non-verbal signals, body language, gestures, and the rhythm and tone of a conversation.




Basic Idea

Marte Meo reads the developmental message behind challenging behaviour i.e.

- ‘I have not developed ... yet’
- ‘I need support about developing ...’

(Aarts, 2008)

A decorative background pattern at the bottom of the slide. It features a row of stylized, rounded human figures in a light pink color. Above and around these figures are various small, faint icons representing different concepts: a musical note, a flower, a leaf, a gear, a lightbulb, a heart, and other abstract shapes. The overall style is simple and illustrative.

Stepping into the child's world...



Learning to listen



The model of natural supportive dialogue

Consists of the following elements:

- follow the child's initiatives and identify their focus
- confirm the child's focus by naming the child's initiatives at action, verbal or emotional levels
- wait for the child's reaction to his/her action
- adult puts words to their actions by naming
- adult names for the child what they can do and confirms when they manage
- adult names what's happening around the child
- adults names beginnings and endings







Self-Awareness

“When you enter the school in the morning you, you carry with you pieces of your life – your happiness, your sadness, your hopes, your pleasures, the stresses from your life. You never come in an isolated way; you always come with pieces of the world attached to you. So the meetings that we have are always contaminated with the experiences that we bring with us”.

(Malaguzzi, 1994)



What it takes to listens


- know and honour every child
- being present and available to every child
- know how each child's seeks to connect
- know each child's triggers and signals of discomfort
- being able to translate children's signals of discomfort
- developing emotional literacy
- staying in and lifting up children's moments



Pedagogy of Listening

“Listening should be open and sensitive to the need to listen and be listened to, and the need to listen with all our senses, not just with our ears. Listening should recognize the many languages, symbols and codes that people use in order to express themselves and communicate”.

(Rinaldi, 2000 p.2)



Pedagogy of Listening

“Listening isn’t easy. it takes a deep awareness and at the same time a suspension of our judgements and above all our prejudices”

(Rinaldi, 2006 p.65)



Pedagogy of Listening

“Observation involves much more than simply perceiving reality, but also constructing, interpreting and revisiting it. Forms of observation include written notes, observation charts, diaries and other narrative forms, as well as ... videotapes ... it is important that all documentation provide partial findings and subjective interpretations, and they are biased by the tools employed. In turn, they must be reinterpreted and discussed with others, in particular, with colleagues”.

(Rinaldi 1998, p.121)

References:

- Aarts, J. (2005). Checklist: The Marte Meo School Programme. Marte Meo Magazine. professional Journal on the Marte Meo Method Vol. 32 (3) 4-6.
- Aarts, M. (2008). Marte Meo. Basic Manual (Revised 2nd Ed.). Eindhoven: Aarts Productions
- Edwards, C., Gandini, L. & Forman, G. (Eds.). (1998). The Hundred Languages of Children. The Reggio Emilia-Advanced Reflections (2nd Ed.). Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group
- Gandini, L., Edwards, C.P. (Eds.). (2001). Bambini: The Italian Approach to Infant/Toddler Care. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Giacomini, E., Moscatelli, R. & Colla, L. (2007). Observation, interpretation, documentation. Reggio Emilia Study Tour
- Malaguzzi, L. (1994). Your image of the child: Where the teaching begins. Exchange Vol.(3)
- Rinaldi, C. (2001). The Pedagogy of Listening: The Listening Perspective from Reggio Emilia. Innovations in early education: the international reggio exchange Vol.8, (4) Fall
- Rinaldi, C. (2004). Reggio Children as “Cultural place”, reChild December p. 1
- Rinaldi, C. (2004). The Relationship between documentation and assessment. Innovations in early education: the international reggio exchange Vol.11, (1) Winter
- Rinaldi, C. (2006). In Dialogue with Reggio Emilia. Listening, researching and learning. London: Routledge
- Rinaldi, C. (2013). Re-imagining Childhood. The inspiration of Reggio Emilia education principles in South Australia. Government of South Australia
- Sims, M., Guilfoyle, A., & Parry, T. (2005). What Children's Cortisol Levels Tell Us about Quality in Childcare Centres. Australian Journal of Early Childhood, Vol. 30 (2). p. 29-39.
- South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services (2008). Assessing for Learning and Development in the Early Years using Observation Scales: Reflect Respect Relate. DECS Publishing.