

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



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MONTESSORI

SCHOOLS & CENTRES AUSTRALIA

MSCA 2022 Annual Report

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We envision a sustainable, just and peaceful world where custodians of tomorrow engage, contribute, and thrive.

This Annual Report has been printed in Melbourne, Australia, on 100% recycled paper using environmentally friendly and sustainable printing practices.

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE MSCA BOARD CHAIR

Despite the ongoing pandemic, 2022 was a highly successful year for MSCA. We were delighted to hold two in-person events, those being Meeting in the Middle for Montessori educators working with adolescents and our Grassroots Conference. Meeting in the Middle was held in Perth, Western Australia and hosted by The Montessori School, Kingsley. I thank Principal Des Reuben and his staff for holding the two-day forum in which favourable feedback was received from all that attended.

In September, MSCA was delighted to host our inaugural Grassroots Conference in the Adelaide Hills at the Hahndorf Conference Centre. With over 120 attendees and speakers, this was the most significant event of its kind that MSCA has hosted. Over two jam-packed days, we listened, learned, danced, and discussed key topics facing the Montessori community. The conference theme was 'Montessori Education: A Changing World, Evolving Culture', with sessions covering topics associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, technology and innovation, and neuroscience and wellbeing. It offered school and centre leaders and educators an opportunity to discuss, challenge and support one another in the current education landscape. Many attendees celebrated the chance to be together as a Montessori community. One attendee wrote in their feedback that..... "after a long hiatus, it was wonderful to be back with my tribe", a feeling that was held by all!

Highlights from the Grassroots conference included the keynote from international speaker Professor Pasi Sahlberg on educating children in an uncertain world, incorporating authentic First Nation voices into the classroom by Tim Moore, and implementing school-wide wellbeing by Janis Coffey. All three talks captivated the room and offered practical tips on incorporating key learnings into schools and centres. Attendees were also treated to workshops on Montessori Dance by Kei Ikeda, Neuroscience in the Classroom by Fiona Campbell and supporting big emotions from small people by Katy Walker; it truly was a weekend with a "whole child" focus. I would like to thank our major sponsor of the event, Oskar's Wooden Ark, and the MSCA events committee for organising a fabulous event. In particular, I would like to thank Alice Champion for her attention to detail to ensure our first national conference was a huge success.

Dr Montessori's founding belief was that education is the key to social change. As Montessori educators living and working in Australia, we have a responsibility to help close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. In 2022 MSCA was pleased to be able to support and encourage a young Montessori educator, Amelia Cobb, based in NSW, who worked and produced curriculum documents embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into the Montessori cultural curriculum. Amelia worked with Aboriginal educator Clarence Bruinsma, from Yaegl country in Far North NSW, to develop the content, and MSCA financed the printing and distribution of this valuable resource. Amelia also presented her work online and at our Grassroots conference last year.

We are incredibly grateful to MANZ, the New Zealand Montessori representative body, for allowing MSCA to use, edit, and rebrand their Parent Guides for an Australian audience. This spirit of collaboration and support between the two national Montessori organisations indicates the values embedded within our Montessori community. We were pleased to publish the 3-6 parent guide, and the 6-12 and 12-18 guides are imminent.

In 2022 we trialled our Genuine Montessori Pathway (GMP) program with a few schools and centres, receiving very positive feedback. We are very excited to offer our members the opportunity to participate in this program as of 2023. Rather than an accreditation program, the GMP has been designed to guide schools and centres through a process of self-study, reflection, planning and ongoing assessment. The goal is to assist schools and centres in having a clear pathway forward, with self-determined improvement plans and strategies, as they continually strive towards Montessori best practices. I would like to thank Bill Conway and the MSCA Education Committee for the hard work that has been put in to deliver this outstanding program.

MSCA BOARD DIRECTORS 2022

CATHY FRANCE

Board Chair

JANIS COFFEY

Events Committee Chair

GAY WALES

*Deputy Chair
MarComms Committee Chair*

BILL CONWAY

*Secretary
Education Committee Chair*

DAVID ANDERSON

*Finance Director
Retired May*

CHRISTINE SHAW

*Finance Director
Appointed May; Retired Dec*

VANESSA AIKINS

FIONA CAMPBELL

SYLVIA AROTIN

RACHEL WALKER
Retired May

RENEE BILSTON

YAN WU

It was with great pleasure that we announced to the Montessori community at the start of our Grassroots conference in September, that we had become the new Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) Affiliated Society for Australia. Through this affiliation, we can now offer Australians a direct connection to AMI's suite of services and connections internationally. AMI has endorsed MSCA in upholding the highest Montessori values for the Australian Montessori community and recognises the transparent, democratic, not-for-profit governance structure, which has been the foundation from which we have grown our organisation.

Despite an ongoing pandemic, MSCA continued to provide a broad range of affordable professional workshops, webinars and sessions online for our community, offering learning focussed on every developmental phase and age group, along with sessions for leaders, parents and Board members. Attendance was pleasing at the various online sessions and feedback was positive and supportive. I would like to thank our presenters and our Montessori community, who attended our many online events throughout the year and also provided us with ongoing feedback to improve and refine our practice and delivery.

I would especially like to thank all of the MSCA Board members for their input, contributions and professionalism, and for generously giving their time and energy to the work of the MSCA Board and committees in 2022. David Anderson stepped down from his position in May 2022 and I thank him for his outstanding contributions during his time on the MSCA Board as Director of Finance. I would particularly like to thank MSCA Board members Gay Wales, Bill Conway, Janis Coffey and David Anderson/Christine Shaw, whom each chaired our Communication and Marketing, Education, Events and Finance committees, respectively. I thank them for generously sharing their expertise and leadership, and for the focused and purposeful work that is undertaken at the committee level to achieve MSCA's long-term goals.

I'd also like to thank David Anderson/Christine Shaw, Gay Wales and Susan Harris Evans, who facilitate our Business Managers Hub Group, New Principals Hub Group and Deputies Hub Group, respectively. These Hub Groups meet each term and provide collegiate support and a vehicle for colleagues to share practice and establish supportive networks. At the end of 2022, Christine Shaw stepped down from her position of Director of Finance and I thank her for her input during her regrettably brief time on the MSCA Board as Director of Finance. I would also like to thank Lottie Hazel, who was appointed in May 2022 for six months as an administrative assistant.

Heartfelt appreciation and gratitude are given to Alice Champion (MSCA Administrative Manager) for her dedicated work. Alice is intelligent, resourceful and highly skilled, with amazing initiative and a pragmatic 'can do' attitude, and she is an integral part of our organisation and a hugely valued part of the MSCA team. I would also like to thank our members for showing their support throughout the year, attending events, providing input and feedback and reaching out to MSCA when support or advice is required. We are eternally grateful for the continued support from our wonderful Montessori community. It was pleasing that our membership base was stable throughout 2022, particularly in these uncertain times and that we were able to achieve a solid financial result.

The MSCA Board looks forward to achieving more great work in the future and collaborating with Montessori Schools and Centres throughout Australia to meet their needs so we can continue to connect, unite and serve the Montessori community.



CATHY FRANCE
MSCA Board Chair

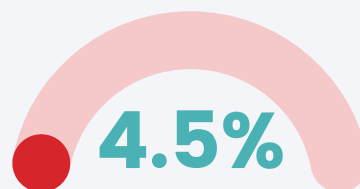
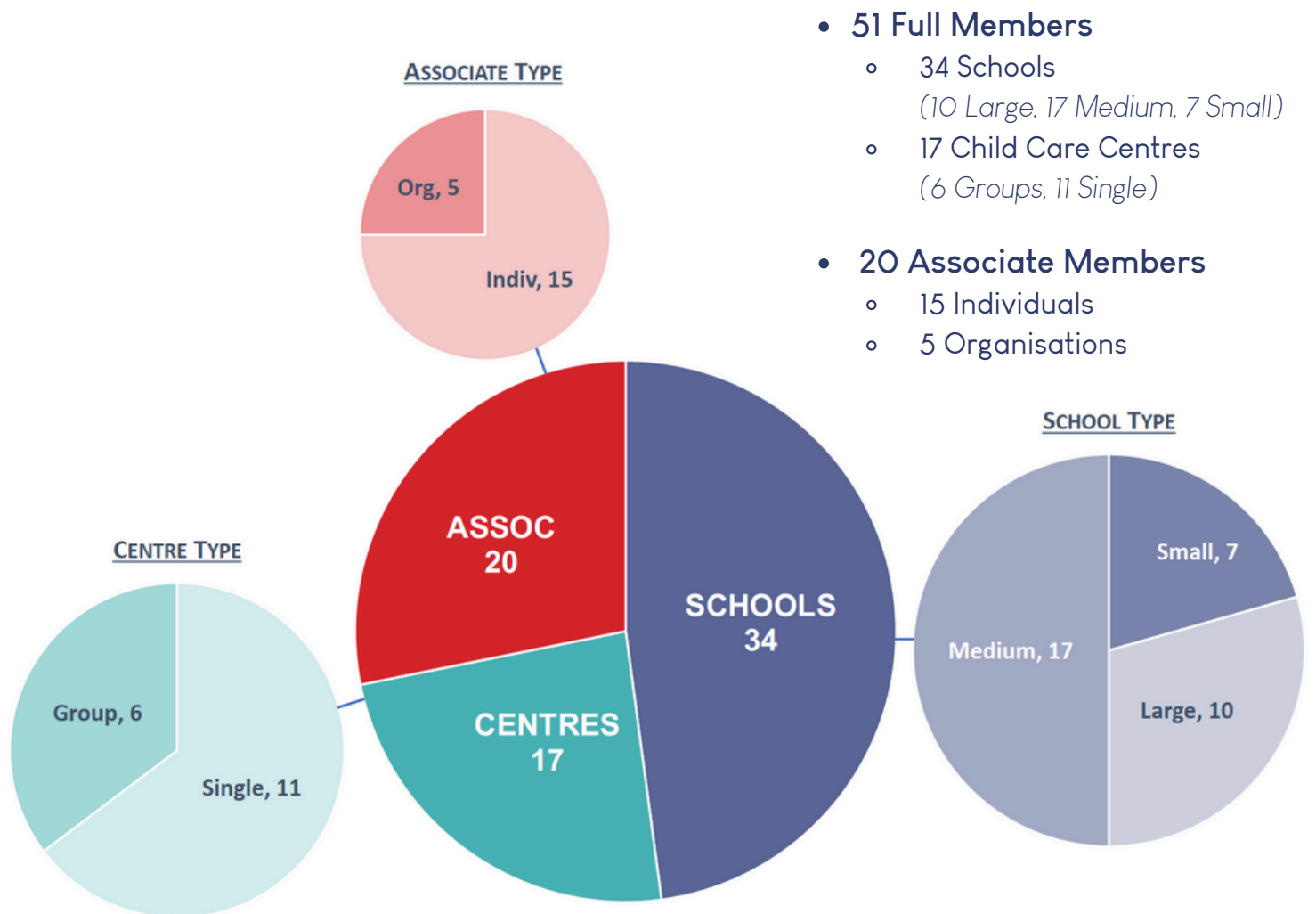


MSCA's charitable purposes, as outlined in Section 6 of our Constitution are:

- To advance education by promoting the pedagogical principles and practice formulated by Dr Maria Montessori for the full development of the human being;
- To assist, strengthen, represent and promote the interests of its members in any way whatsoever;
- To support and encourage Montessori education in Australia;
- To foster, promote and sustain a climate in which Montessori education becomes or remains pre-eminent in early childhood, primary and secondary education;
- To support and encourage the establishment and sustainability of bodies delivering Montessori education and programs to ensure more children have access to Montessori education in Australia;
- To represent in a professional manner the collective interests of members to Government at all levels, other regulatory bodies, other relevant peak bodies, media, and the general public;
- To do all such other lawful things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of any of the above purposes.

2022 MEMBERSHIP

BY DECEMBER 2022, MSCA HAD 71 MEMBERS.



Increase in membership since December 2021

71
MEMBERS

Centre groups often have multiple services. As membership is held at the provider level, the number of members is 17, however, we represent a total of 35 centre sites.

Strategic Goals 2022-2024

Throughout 2022, our Strategic Goals guided our operations. Although many goals overlap across committees and also the work of the Board, each Strategic Pillar aligns well with our four Board committees. The Strategic Pillars are used to document progress in each committee's annual report.

Education and Learning

Reported on by the Education Committee

- TO IMPROVE and maintain Montessori skills by supporting training, professional development, and mentorship.
- TO SUPPORT authentic practice through the Genuine Montessori Pathway.
- TO FACILITATE the creation and full accessibility to curriculum documents, mapping structures, and other curriculum resources for the Montessori community.

Business and Governance

Reported on by the Finance Committee

- TO ENSURE the continued viability of the organisation.
- TO RETAIN and increase membership of MSCA.
- TO MAINTAIN professional and transparent governance practices.

Community and Connection

Reported on by the Events Committee

- TO ESTABLISH strategic, systematic structures to be able to grow and develop Montessori.
- TO PROVIDE high quality learning opportunities for educators, parents, boards and educational leaders.
- TO FACILITATE sustainable Montessori networks.

Representation and Promotion

Reported on by the MarComms Committee

- TO GROW unprompted awareness of genuine Montessori.
- TO BUILD the reputation of MSCA.
- TO INCREASE engagement with Montessori and MSCA.
- TO REPRESENT Montessori on the national stage.

FINANCE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Chair: Christine Shaw

*Members: Alice Champion, Cathy France,
Rachel Walker, Yan Wu*



CHRISTINE SHAW
MSCA Finance Director (May to Dec)

2022 saw quite an increase in MSCA's operations, holding our first in-person events and printing and selling our Parent Guide booklets and Amelia Cobb's Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives Curriculum Handbooks.

The Finance Committee's work throughout 2022 focused on upholding the Strategic Goals of the Business and Governance Pillar of MSCA's Strategic Plan for 2022-2024.

TO ENSURE the continued viability of the organisation.

Being able to finally hold in-person events greatly improved our financial position. In 2022, for the first time since our inception, revenue from Conferences and Events (55%) surpassed the revenue generated from Membership Fees (35%). A further 10% was made up of Other Income.

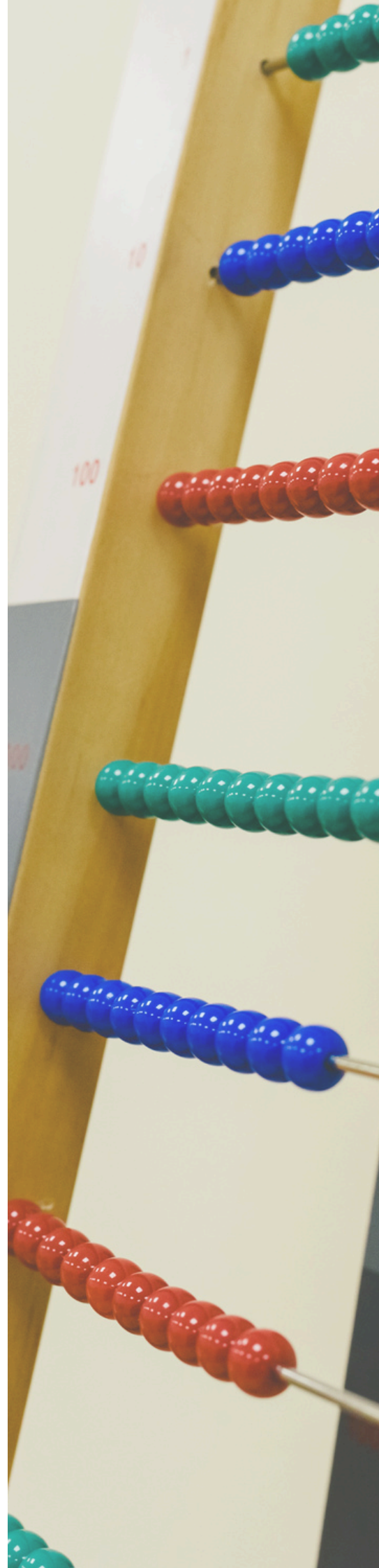
Sufficient financial resources were available to ensure that all financial and legal obligations were met throughout the year as and when they fell due, and this continues to be the case looking forward. We ended the 2022 calendar year (our financial year) with a small surplus for the second year in a row, enabling us to increase and improve our offerings for 2023 and beyond.

TO RETAIN and increase membership of MSCA.

We retained our existing membership base of Schools, Centres, Associate Organisations, and Individuals from across Australia and overseas. We also saw an increase in membership of 4.5% compared to December 2021. Thank you to all our members for your ongoing support and participation.

TO MAINTAIN professional and transparent governance practices.

We continue to operate under a democratic governance structure, holding Annual General Meetings and notifying the community about available board positions. We also maintain the annual audit of our finances, with these Statements made available to our members and uploaded to our public ACNC Charity Profile. We adhere to professional governance practices in all our Board work and conduct an annual Board review. Sound governance processes are embedded in all aspects of our operations.



EVENTS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Chair: Janis Coffey

Members: Alice Champion, Cathy France, Fiona Campbell

The Events Committee supports progress in the Community and Connection Pillar of MSCA's Strategic Plan.



**JANIS
COFFEY**
Events Chair

As the Events Chair of MSCA, I take great pride in contributing to the Montessori community by guiding our programming and offering high-quality professional development experiences for educators and enriching content for our parent communities.

TO ESTABLISH strategic, systematic structures to be able to grow and develop Montessori.

By collaborating with our Montessori Training organisations in Australia, including Sydney Montessori Training Centre, and Montessori Institute, as well as scouting out speakers who are expert Montessori practitioners, or align with our pedagogical and philosophical values, we aim to bring a diverse range of voices to our programs.

TO PROVIDE high-quality learning opportunities for educators, parents, boards and educational leaders.

In its third year of operations, MSCA has established its reputation as a provider of excellent professional development, which aims to support the community of Montessorians throughout Australia. The events program offered seminars designed to cater for educators in the 0-3, 3-6, 6-12, and 12- 18 age groups. It was another year of well-attended professional development by our community, and MSCA will continue to serve the community in this space in the years to come.

In 2022, MSCA held its inaugural GRASSROOTS Conference, which was one of the first in-person events since the global pandemic. Held at the Adelaide Hills Conference Centre in South Australia, the GRASSROOTS Conference attracted 100+ participants from across the nation. The program was insightful and inspiring: With international speakers including Finnish educator and academic, Pasi Sahlberg, to our own Australian superstars; Vanessa Aikins, who shared how innovative school development has seen Montessori expand into Harvey Norman, and Tim Moore, who spoke about First Nations partnerships, AITSL Standards, and our commitment as Montessorians to provide education for the betterment of humankind.

TO FACILITATE sustainable Montessori networks.

In 2022, MSCA continued to deliver a strong online program, including webinars and online networking opportunities via our Hub Groups for educators, new Montessori principals, deputies, and business managers. The Meeting in the Middle Forum for Adolescent Educators was hosted by The Montessori School Kingsley in WA and the Head to Head Forum for Montessori principals was held online.

We look forward to another wonderful year ahead supporting our Montessori community and all of our members throughout Asia-Pacific region.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Chair: Bill Conway

*Members: Vanessa Aikins, Sylvia Arotin,
Fiona Campbell, Alice Champion,
Dierdre O'Reilly, Gay Wales.*



BILL CONWAY
Education Chair

Meeting monthly throughout 2022, the Education Committee works closely with the MarComms Committee and the Events Committee. We are fortunate that some members serve simultaneously on multiple committees, complementing each group's work.

Our work in 2022 focused on achieving progress in the Education and Learning pillar of MSCA's Strategic Plan.

TO IMPROVE and maintain Montessori skills by supporting training, professional development, and mentorship.

- Liaised with, and promoted training courses offered by Sydney Montessori Training Centre (SMTTC) and Montessori Institute (MI) to the community.
- Supported and liaised with Dr Scott Eacott (UNSW researcher) on his report on Montessori Education in Australia
- Made recommendations to the Events Committee about relevant professional development topics.
- Investigated the possibility of NESA accreditation for PD offered by MSCA.
- Further clarified MSCA's relationship with AMI as the Affiliated Society for Australia, with SMTTC's relationship as an AMI training centre.

TO SUPPORT authentic practice through the Genuine Montessori Pathway.

- Developed a working program for schools and centres to further develop their genuine Montessori practices
- Piloted the Genuine Montessori Pathway in four schools and centres.
- Further refined the program in preparation for its launch in 2023.
- Developed a clear application process and pricing structure for the GMP.
- Designed and defined the use of the GMP logos.
- Shared the contents of the program with AMI to review and provide comments.
- Developed resource ideas, including possible mentors to offer schools and centres.

TO FACILITATE the creation and full accessibility to curriculum documents, mapping structures, and other curriculum resources for the Montessori community.

- Clarified MSCA's position on the Montessori National Curriculum with AMI and requested their assistance in resolving the differences.
- Requested and received updates to the curriculum prepared for the 12-18 level.
- Curriculum mapping has been done in WA.
- Supported the publication of Amelia Cobb's curriculum handbook, Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in the Montessori Classroom. This excellent resource is now published and available through MSCA.
- Liaised with state-based government education sectors on curriculum, such as SCSA in WA and NESA in NSW.
- Supported ACECQA review of EYLF (as per work done by Rachael Stevens).
- Updates received on the work to incorporate a Montessori Masters course at the University of the Sunshine Coast.





COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

Chair: Gay Wales

*Members: Sylvia Arotin, Renee Bilston,
Alice Champion, Bill Conway*

The Marketing & Communications (MarComms) Committee works in partnership with other MSCA committees to implement a range of activities to support the Representation and Promotion pillar of MSCA's Strategic Plan.

TO GROW unprompted awareness of genuine Montessori.

The Parent Guide for ages 3–6 was published in early 2022 as a resource to support Montessori schools and centres to educate their current and prospective parent communities. Permission to update and rebrand this Guide for an Australian audience was generously granted by Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand (MANZ; the New Zealand AMI Affiliated Society). This spirit of collaboration and support between the two national Montessori organisations indicates the values embedded within our Montessori community. Work on the Parent Guides for ages 6–12 and 12–18 continued in 2022 and will be published in 2023.

TO BUILD the reputation of MSCA.

Some of our main tasks throughout 2022 were related to MSCA's publications and in-person events. It was important that there was consistency across our marketing, and that the designs and formats chosen upheld our brand and values. Our Grassroots conference entailed the design of banners, tablecloths, name tags (on seeded paper), conference bags, and an online mobile event app. It was also the first time we established relationships with event sponsors and promoted our organisation as a professional, democratic, representative peak body.



GAY WALES

*MSCA Deputy Chair
MarComms Committee Chair*

TO INCREASE engagement with Montessori and MSCA.

We continued to advertise MSCA's events, products and services via multiple channels comprising email, social media, website, and print. Our members received A3 posters for their noticeboards, which highlighted an inspirational quote and listed upcoming MSCA events. Members also received a flyer about the Parent Guides and a sample of the Guide for ages 3–6.

Alice Champion was joined by Lottie Hazel for a few months, which substantially helped us promote MSCA more directly. In particular, Lottie began the huge task of ringing members to confirm their contact details, ensuring our emails were being sent to the correct personnel within the organisation. Lottie was also able to promote our first national conference and other events and assist with updates to MSCA's website.

TO REPRESENT Montessori on the national stage.

The committee identified a need to encourage participation in non-Montessori events such as conferences, workshops, exhibitions and government consultations. This helps to increase understanding and visibility of Montessori beyond our own community and remains a focus for the years ahead.

The most significant communications for MSCA last year were with AMI representatives regarding an Australian Affiliated Society. Many meetings were held online, with documents and emails shared over a series of months. After three years of advocating for MSCA's affiliation, we were grateful to be awarded this significant role and be able to build MSCA's reputation and also represent Montessori within Australia, and overseas.



The purpose of education must be to elevate the individual; otherwise education would be of no use. This must be the goal of education. We must wish to love humanity, instead of merely wanting to apply a preconceived plan.

The 1946 London Lectures

— Maria Montessori



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