

8th Assembly of Educateurs sans Frontières
Missoula, Montana, the United States
22 July – 2 August, 2020

There is no description, no image in any book that is capable of replacing the sight of real trees, and all the life to be found around them in a real forest. Something emanates from those trees which speaks to the soul, something no book, no museum is capable of giving ... The myriad of lives around the trees, the majesty, the variety are things one must hunt for, and which no one can bring into the school. How often is the soul of man, especially that of the child, deprived because one does not put him in contact with nature.

Maria Montessori, *From Childhood to Adolescence*

The 8th Educateurs sans Frontières (EsF) Assembly will be held at the Montana University Center, in the mountain town of Missoula, Montana. The EsF Assembly will bring together a group of maximum 100 people to explore how Montessori programmes can serve diverse communities around the world. The first days we will focus on supporting human development, where Montessori fundamental principles will be explored alongside indigenous cultures and language and different ways of learning. During the second part of the Assembly, we will concentrate on how to walk the path together, linking Montessori principles together with indigenous cultures and knowledge on preservation of culture and the environment, in order to forward theories and practices of respect and sustainability.

The Educateurs sans Frontières Assembly is a unique gathering for an international group of people who support children and families to flourish in all kinds of communities, by applying Montessori principles both within formal education and within the community. Montessori's profound contribution to the understanding of the child's development and her commitment to champion the rights, education and welfare of children and families worldwide provides the foundation of the Assembly. Eminent speakers will present their work with an aim to deepen individual and collective understanding of essential Montessori principles through reflection and exchange. Participants will learn from one another and revisit Montessori principles and practices, which will include discussions on Montessori-based initiatives as well as other social reform initiatives.

We aim to welcome a wide diversity of participants in terms of geographical representation, experience, interests and backgrounds. The group will be limited to 100 people maximum in order to facilitate deep and meaningful discussion, interaction and reflection. To optimize the EsF experience, participation will only be possible for people able to sign up for the full two-week Assembly. The intensive programme will include presentations, workshops, readings and discussions, while building in sufficient time for personal contributions and reflection.

The purpose of the Educateurs sans Frontières Assemblies is three-fold:

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING: To deepen individual and collective understanding of essential Montessori principles. This is achieved through the collective study of Maria Montessori's writings in a reflective atmosphere and suitably designed prepared environment.

PREPARATION: To support participants through a process of self-examination and self-awareness covering the many deep issues involved in the work of an educateur, thereby empowering those who take part to go out into the world ready to sow the seeds of Montessori thought and practice, as well as a close examination of Montessori's own inspirations and work. Outside speakers from a variety of fields support this element.

APPLICABLE PRACTICE: To develop and encourage individual and collective knowledge of the innumerable possibilities, openings and opportunities for Montessori work in the world, and to acknowledge the power of one person to make a difference.

EDUCATEURS SANS FRONTIÈRES

Educateurs sans Frontières, a division of the Association Montessori Internationale, was created in 1999 by Renilde Montessori to revisit, within the twenty-first century context, key social reform aspects of Montessori's pioneering educational principles first introduced in 1907. Previous EsF Assemblies have been held in Italy (1999), Spain (2004), the United States (2011), Thailand (2015), India (2016), South Africa (2018) and Mexico (2019).

The mission of Educateurs sans Frontières is to work with individuals, families, communities, organisations and governments to further the rights, education, and welfare of children worldwide. EsF is committed to transcending borders in order to serve children through innovative educational initiatives using Montessori principles and practices. EsF functions as a social movement that strives to promote the rights of the child throughout the world, irrespective of race, religion, political and social beliefs, in cooperation with other bodies and organisations that further the development of education, human rights, and peace.

The vision of EsF is to support educational initiatives through mentorship and resources, guiding them towards sustainability, expansion, and replication. When Montessori principles are applied in the wider context of society, their possibilities are vast and all encompassing. EsF prepares individuals to carry out the broader social mission of the Montessori movement, deepening their understanding of the needs of humanity and the imperatives of development by revisiting Montessori principles and practices from the perspective of society at large. EsF builds capacity by connecting Montessori teachers, advocates, students, schools and organisations within communities, local officials, policy makers and funders, to improve the visibility and credibility of Montessori education and consequently increase its availability and access.

Visit the website for more information.