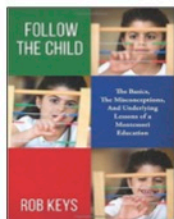


# Parents Learning and Loving Montessori Education

By Dane L. Peters



*FOLLOW THE CHILD: THE BASICS, MISCONCEPTIONS, AND UNDERLYING LESSONS OF A MONTESSORI EDUCATION*

By Rob Keys

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

Paperback, \$7.95

“Follow the child” is a beautiful concept, and now it is the title of an excellent book about Montessori education. Written by Rob Keys, who has 30 years of experience in Montessori teacher education and school admissions, it is a book well suited for parents looking for the best learning environment for their child, as well as for parents who are struggling with keeping their child in a Montessori school beyond kindergarten or Lower Elementary.

When I first began my journey in Montessori education, I was told to read *Montessori Today: A Comprehensive Approach to Education from Birth to Adulthood*, by Paula Polk Lillard. The book’s basic approach and thoughtful guidance were the perfect introduction to my work as head of a Montessori school, especially since I had no prior Montessori experience. As I immersed myself into this new, beautiful world of education, I quickly realized there would be an ongoing need for parent education on Montessori and the Montessori method. While the Lillard book was comprehensive, I knew that parents might not have the time or inclination to read it from start to finish. So I wrote an overview of Montessori education for *Independent School* magazine.

*Follow the Child* falls right in between *Montessori Today* and my article; that is, it is concise, accessible to readers, and, at the same time, provides ample amounts of in-depth Montessori philosophy, practices, history, and understanding. It also presents a thorough and sensitive approach to how Montessori education supports the child over the first three planes of development. This integration of the developmental planes, materials, and the essential aspects of Montessori education, all presented in easy-to-understand language, is what makes the book such a great tool for parent education. Keys captures the essence of a Montessori education, making a convincing argument for why parents should entrust their child to a Montessori school. In a comment he made to me when I interviewed him about the book, he stated, “Montessori schools have long relied on the success of their graduates and word-of-mouth to validate their programs. Results are self-evident in the happiness, well-being, and learning success of the children.”

The book’s cover is beautiful, but there is no imagery inside the book. I feel this was a missed opportunity to show the compelling Montessori materials and classroom environments with children engaged in work. Visual representations of how to follow the child would have done a lot to capture the eloquence and power of Montessori. Similarly, while the author makes references to outside resources, the book does not have a refer-

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ence section. Notes, an index, and a bibliography would have been helpful, both to lend validity to the book’s content and so readers could follow up on items of particular interest.

In the end, educators who are drawn to the dictum “follow the child” will bolster their understanding of how children learn best by reading this book. And we Montessorians would do well to pass *Follow the Child* on to parents and prospective teachers, so they too can further their understanding of the power of a Montessori education.