

‘Montessori’ – providing meaning and purpose in dementia care

Shannon Azzopardi
Diversional Therapy Coordinator
Garrawarra Centre

Co-contributors – Madeline Bronar & Jill Williams

Garrawarra Centre

- NSW Health Residential Aged Care Facility for people living with dementia who exhibit behavioural and psychological symptoms
- Montessori programs were introduced to improve resident engagement through leisure and occupational activities



Montessori Approach

*“Everything you do
for me, you take
from me”*
Maria Montessori

- Dr Maria Montessori
 - 19th Century
 - Educational method of rehabilitation for children with intellectual disabilities
- Dr Cameron Camp
 - Adapted the Montessori method for people with Alzheimer's disease to engage the senses and promote positive emotions

The Montessori Philosophy

- **Person Centred** – focuses on a person’s capabilities and interests
- **Inclusive** social program
- Promotes independence and **engagement**
- Activities are designed to work with a person’s implicit and procedural memory skills
- Montessori Activities include – sensory, social, cognitive and activities of daily living

Montessori Principles

1. The activity should have a sense of purpose and capture the person's interests
2. Always invite the person to participate
3. Offer choice
4. Talk less, demonstrate more
5. Physical Skills: focus on what the person can do
6. Match your speed with the person you are caring for. Slow down!

Montessori Principles

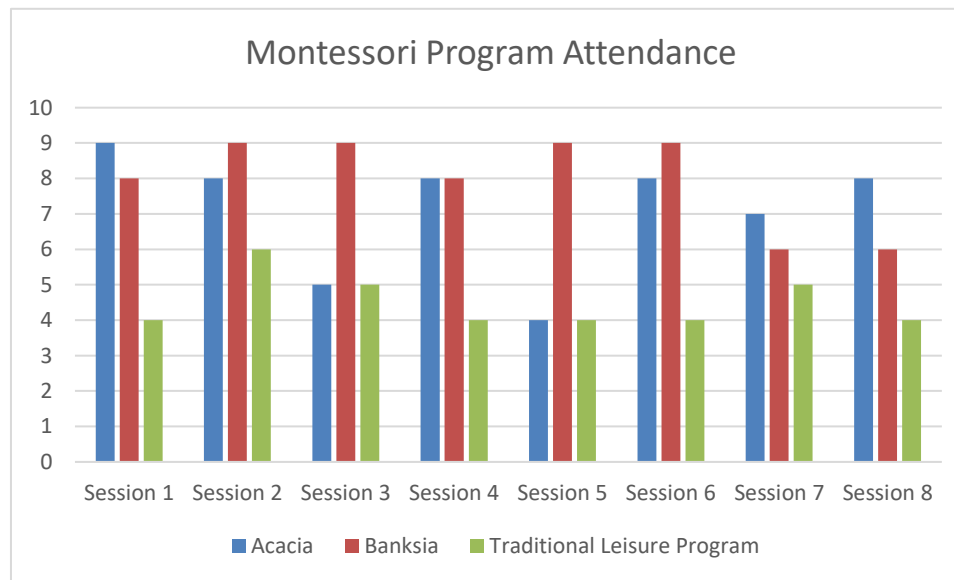
7. Use visual hints, cues or templates
8. Give the person something to hold
9. Go from simple tasks to complex ones
10. Break a task down into steps to make it easier to follow
11. To end, ask “did you enjoy doing this?” and “would you like to do this again?”
12. There is **no right or wrong**. Think engagement.

Montessori at Garrawarra Centre



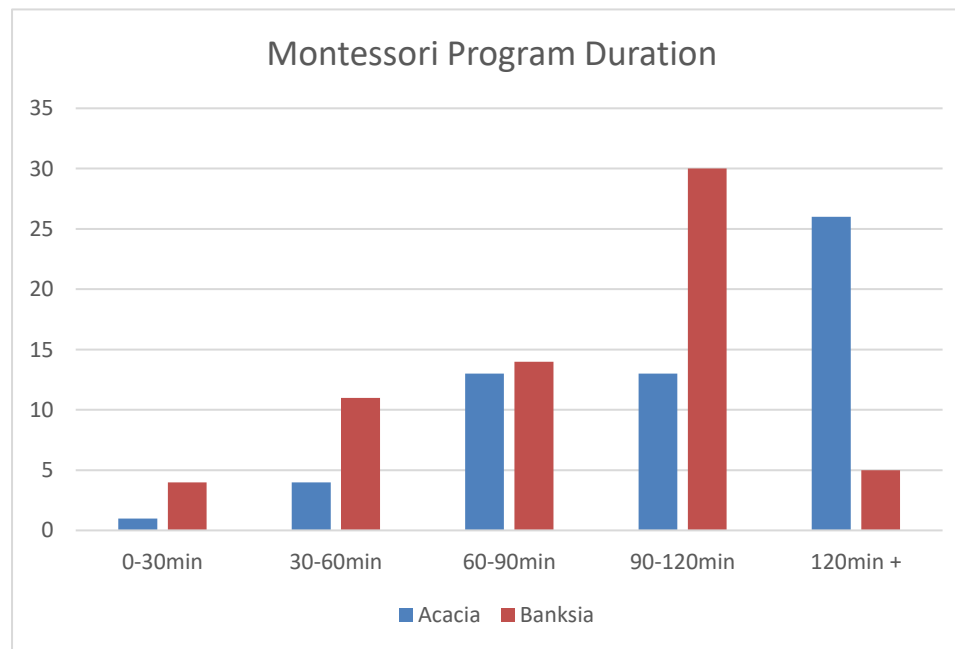
Outcomes

- The average number of participants in Montessori Programs was higher compared to traditional leisure programs



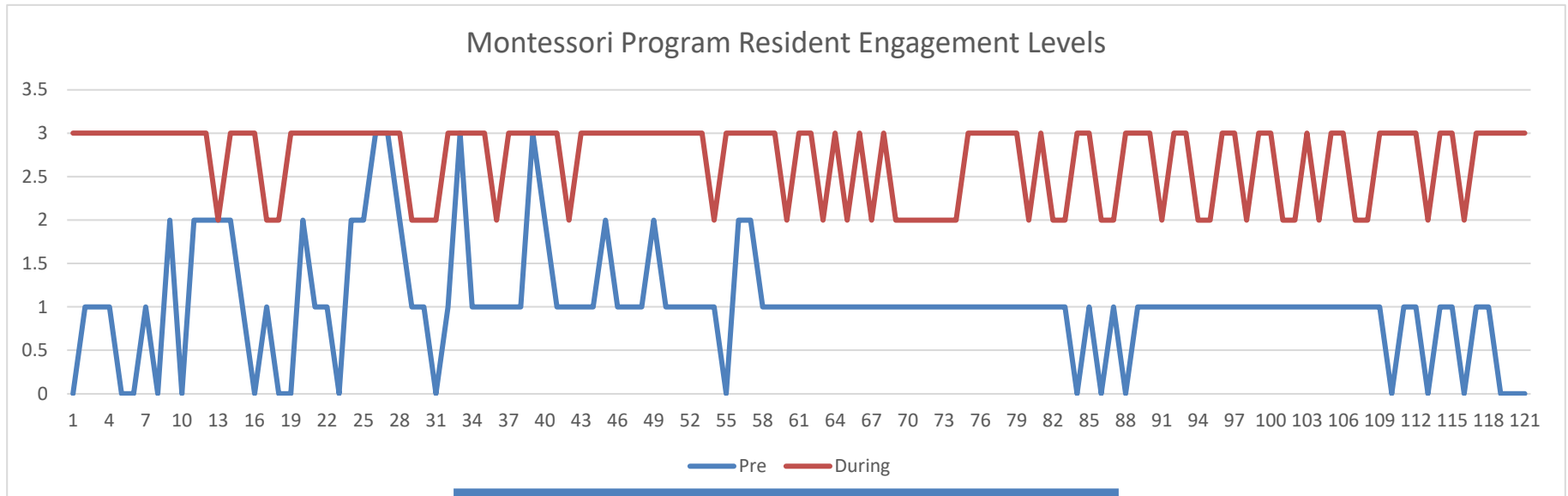
Outcomes

- The average length of time residents were engaged in Montessori activities was 85 minutes



Outcomes

- On average resident engagement levels improved by 42% as a result of Montessori interventions



Behavioural Rating Scale Descriptions	
0	Dozing
1	Physically Inactive
2	Passive Participation
3	Physically & Verbally Engaged



Questions

Further Information

Diversional Therapy

Garrawarra Centre

SESLHD-Garrawarra-DiversionalTherapy@health.nsw.gov.au