

Building on a history of friendship

30 October 2017

Dear friends,



I feel inspired and uplifted as I write this. I've just returned from a ECD summit at the Sunnyside Park Hotel organised by Gauteng government officials – at which Premier David Makhura spoke of his encounters with the Reggio philosophy and his visit to the city as nothing short of life-changing. I'll report on the summit more fully when I've had more opportunity to reflect, but it included presentations by Paola Strozzi from Reggio Children, as well as Mathapelo Mathibela from Mother Goose Corner Daycare in Germiston, Ekurhuleni. The ECD summit was timed to coincide with Oliver Tambo commemorations (27 October 2017

marked 100 years since Tambo's birth) and the [South Africa-Italy summit](#), an annual happening when delegates from various Italian industries and local and national government visit South Africa to discuss areas of connection and collaboration. Given Tambo's close relationship with Reggio and former councillor Giuseppe Soncini, and the city's desire to build on this history of friendship, representatives from Reggio Emilia were notable guests at all three occasions.

- If you're interested in learning more about Reggio's history with Tambo and various resistance movements in Southern Africa (and if you have a working understanding of Italian), visit www.comune.re.it/reggioafrica. Or you can look at [photos documenting the relationship](#).

Tiziana's visit

Tiziana Filippini visited South Africa in August/September for a week of mentoring and professional development. In case you couldn't participate in some way, we've curated a selection of insights she shared during her time – a document Tiziana is in the process of editing. As soon as it's ready, we'll send it out over email and make it available on our website. In the meantime, you can [read a short report of Tiziana's visit](#) – covering what brought her here, who she saw, and feedback from her visit.

Possible pilot project in Gauteng

During her visit to South Africa, Tiziana spent a morning with representatives of the Gauteng departments of education, health and social development – prompted by Gauteng Premier David Makhura's desire to develop a close working relationship between AREA, Reggio Children, the Reggio Emilia municipality, and Gauteng government structures. At the province's request, AREA and Reggio Children are in the process of exploring the possibility of a proposal for how the Reggio approach might be piloted in one or two government-run ECD centres in the province. We'll keep you posted as we have more information.

Cross-country connections

- **Workshop in Port Elizabeth:** On 2 October, Pinkie Motlanyane of Lesedi la Krete Anglican Primary School in Orange Farm and I joined Trica Daniel and Hannah Bayley from Blue Umbrellas in Port Elizabeth for a day-long workshop at NMMU with local educators from Port Elizabeth and the Manyano Community Schools Network.
- **Cape Town cluster:** A group of Reggio-inspired educators in and around Cape Town have started gathering for professional inspiration and mutual edification. For more information and to be part of the next gathering, contact June O'Neill on junoneill61@gmail.com.
- **Durban learning circle:** Educators in KwaZulu-Natal gathered on 13 September to connect with local colleagues inspired by the Reggio philosophy and dialogue about areas of interest and need – and are hoping to gather again in November. Interested to know more? [Read notes from their learning circle](#). If you'd like to get involved, contact Rachel Bowyer at rachel.bowyer@soulaction.co.za.

Join the 2018 international study tour

Join like-minded educators from South Africa and around the world for an international study tour to Reggio Emilia from 14-21 April 2018.

- For more information on the proposed programme and outline of costs, download the [information brochure](#)
- If you're keen to join this tour, download and complete the [registration form](#)

Write for our website

We're in the process of updating our website, and would like to start publishing profiles on how the Reggio philosophy is being translated in local practice and contexts. We're specifically looking for personal reflections from teachers and teams of teachers – accounts of your path as a Reggio-inspired practitioner, whether you're at the beginning of your journey, somewhere in the middle, or what feels like the end (but turns out to be the beginning of a different kind of journey). If you're interested, [download this more comprehensive brief](#).

- **Please note:** This is not a marketing opportunity, but an occasion to reflect on the specific challenges, considerations and possibilities of implementing a Reggio-inspired approach in a South African context.

Call for photos

As part of our website update, we're looking to refresh our photo library. If you have photos or drawings you – and your children and parents – would be happy to share, please mail me directly at tessa@reggio.co.za. I'd like to ensure that we credit and caption these images appropriately, so please also send any contextual details – what is happening in the image, who is in it (if you feel comfortable disclosing names), who took the image (if appropriate).

Joyfully yours,
Tessa