



The Peace Rebellion Pushback Toolkit

A Members-Only Resource

For Montessori leaders, educators, and allies speaking truth in difficult spaces

Guiding Principles

- **Peace is not passive.** Montessori called peace “a practical approach to daily living,” not silence in the face of harm.
- **Neutrality protects the status quo.** Silence in moments of injustice sides with oppression, not children.
- **Clarity over comfort.** Our work is not to soothe power, but to center dignity and justice.
- **Children first.** Every stance returns to the core Montessori belief: *all children are sacred.*

Common Pushback & Ready Responses

1. “This is too political.”

Response:

“Education is already political. School funding, testing mandates, discipline policies—all of these are political choices. Montessori taught that education is the work of peace. Peace cannot exist without justice. Speaking the truth about injustice is not politics—it is pedagogy.”



2. “Montessori should stay neutral.”

Response:

“Neutrality is not peace. Dr. Montessori herself resisted fascism and refused to let her method be co-opted by authoritarian systems. Neutrality in the face of oppression protects the oppressor, not the child. Montessori leadership demands moral clarity, not avoidance.”

3. “You’re being divisive.”

Response:

“What divides us most is silence about injustice. Division already exists when marginalized staff are tokenized, when children of color are disciplined disproportionately, when certain griefs are ignored. Naming the truth doesn’t create division—it creates the conditions for authentic unity.”

4. “Talking about Palestine is hate.”

Response:

“Mourning Palestinian children and naming state violence is not hate. Grief and solidarity are not attacks. To say otherwise erases both the humanity of Palestinians and the integrity of those across the world who also call for peace and justice. Montessori calls us to see every child as sacred. That means every child, without exception.”

5. “You’ll scare parents/funders away.”

Response:

“Some will be uncomfortable, yes. But sustainability rooted in silence is fragile. The families and funders who stay when we speak truth are the ones who will help us build schools of integrity, not just image. We’re not trying to attract everyone—we’re building for those who share our values.”



6. “This isn’t Montessori—it’s activism.”

Response:

“Montessori is activism. Dr. Montessori saw education as the path to peace and liberation. She worked against fascism, against colonial education models, and for the rights of children worldwide. To follow Montessori is to resist oppression in all its forms.”

Montessori Anchors You Can Quote

- “Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war.” – *Maria Montessori*
- “Preventing conflicts is the work of politics; establishing peace is the work of education.” – *Maria Montessori*
- “If we are among the men of good will who yearn for peace, we must lay the foundation for peace ourselves, through education. We must build it day by day in the minds of men.” – *Maria Montessori*
- “An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking; it involves the spiritual development of man, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to understand the times in which they live.” – *Maria Montessori*



Practice Moves for Leaders

- **Always name children.** Anchor every stance in the dignity and protection of children.
- **Reframe discomfort as growth.** “If this feels uncomfortable, it’s because we’re stretching beyond what we’ve normalized.”
- **Move from critique to action.** Offer staff workshops, equity audits, or dialogues as next steps.
- **Stay calm, stay clear.** Avoid defensiveness; repeat core values. The repetition is what builds credibility.

Closing Line to Carry With You

“We refuse to confuse compliance with peace. Montessori leadership is stewardship: to name harm, to disrupt silence, and to build environments where dignity is not decorative—it is structural.”