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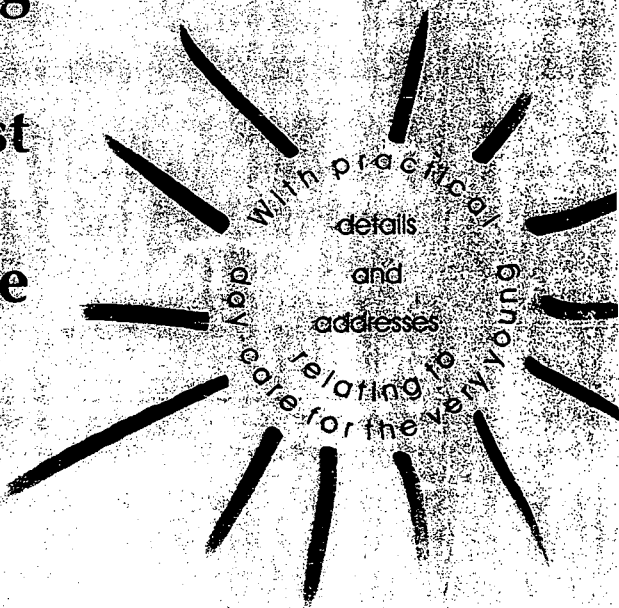


Michaela Glöckler (ed.)

The dignity of the young child



Care
and training
for the first
three years of life



Medical Section at the Goetheanum
International Waldorf Kindergarten Association (reg. charity)

A. G. A.

Persephone

The dignity of the young child

Care and training for the first three years of life



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In the pure rays of the light
Shines the divinity of the world.
In pure love to all creation
Radiates the divine nature of my soul.
I rest in the divinity of the world'
I shall find myself
In the divinity of the world.

Rudolf Steiner



Foreword to the German edition

About 500 experts in early intervention, the care and education of young children from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kirgisia, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand and the USA met at the Goetheanum on 9 – 13 October 1999.

The invitation had come from the International Group for Infant Care in collaboration with the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association and the Medical and Education Sections at the Goetheanum.

The Conference served three aims:

- Intensive sharing of experience in caring for and raising children in their first three years to such effect that health in body, soul and spirit will be strengthened for later life.
- Gathering study and empirical material for publication after the Conference so that it will be available for future work with young children.
- Creating an effective worldwide community that will also do spiritual work for the safeguarding of childhood and can support each individual in his or her efforts and daily work.

The mood at the Conference had a quality of being on the move and of pleasure in being able to share in an essential task for the present age. Conference members felt the wish to join with one another worldwide in good thoughts for the young child and his or her development. A verse of prayer and meditation was chosen which expresses the relationship between God, world and man. A relationship full of light and warmth, so that the new members of the human race may feel secure in it. This verse shall preface the Conference volume, with warmest thanks to the many authors and others who have helped that it proved possible to publish it so soon.

Medical Section at the Goetheanum
Whitsun 2000

Michaela Glöckler, MD

Instead of a preface

To take care!

Meeting a young child evokes quite specific feelings and inner responses in every person. The face of someone saying hello to an infant changes involuntarily, growing gentle, curious, and usually smiling. The countenance grows 'pure'. What does a young child call to life in us?

We may be parents or others who help to raise a child, but meeting a young child always gives us an opportunity to take a fresh look at the world. Suddenly we become aware again of the sounds, the constant noise level in the world around us. Indeed, all our senses are sharpened, for we are deeply touched and feel the desire to create a protective space around the young child. We want to do our best, we want to care for this small creature who is so dependent on us. The child accepts us the way we are, irrespective of what we do (to him or her). A great responsibility!

All parents have to take up this responsibility in the encounter with their child. It will rest on their shoulders for 24 hours a day until the child step by step takes the responsibility on his or her own shoulders. No one else can relieve the parents of this responsibility. And the experiences which parents share with their children have a significance and effect that extends far into the future.

Thinking about our destiny we can come to see that we chose our own parents, trials and challenges in life for ourselves out of the sequence of earlier lives on earth and to take our own development forward. We select specific situations, constellations, to develop specific abilities and go through learning processes. This fact is, however, not in our everyday awareness. It is therefore most important to develop understanding and respect for the relationship between parents and child. And it is necessary to be clear in our minds on the question as to whether it is in fact altogether possible for anyone other than the parents to care for the young child. Can I give professional care to the child of these parents? The family has an importance that must not be underestimated, though it often needs support in present times. Children who do not receive care and love will not thrive and in the worst case they will die. Is it possible for professionals to care for the very young and yet for the souls of those children suffer no lasting harm?

Questions like these touch on the essence of what we feel when we take a young child into our care.

Worldwide it has long ceased to be a question whether we should concern ourselves with the little children. Developments in modern society are only all too clear. Families are beginning to break up; women feel the desire to leave the home and go to work. The key question is: How do we set about it? How do we consciously take on this great responsibility, knowing about the child's development in body, mind and spirit? How do we do justice to the task as we face up to changed conditions of family life and changed social standards, with change continuing at a tremendous pace all around us? How do we take full account of the fact that in deciding to take up our profession we make ourselves part of the child's destiny sphere?

Our children are exposed to environmental influences and these leave their mark to a not inconsiderable degree. The children's needs are still the same as before, however. It takes time, a lot of time, to grow into this world. How can we manage to help the children without surrendering the country of childhood? Many children now spend more time away from home than at home. The day centre is the reliable, calm place where the fundamental activities in life are experienced—housework, preparing the day's meals, free social play.

How do we develop centres that are right for our time, meeting the needs of the children and their parents? How do we meet today's children with all the physiological and psychological peculiarities they bring with them? How can we train further and also develop ourselves further to be an ever better example, truthful and ready to serve and saying Yes to life and to the people we meet?

Those who care for the youngest of them all are often isolated and find themselves on their own with their task. Financial problems are the rule rather than an exception.

We, the International Group for Infant Care, are a group of about 10 women from different countries who came together within the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association in 1992. We have been meeting at least twice a year in different parts of Europe to work on the above themes. Our starting point is the care of the very young child, which is indeed our daily work. During these years we have made many contacts with other initiatives all over the world that are seriously concerned with these issues and working on them. From 1998 we have also been part of the Medical Section at the Goetheanum. This made it possible to develop interdisciplinary work and build bridges between education, medicine and social work.

There can, however, be no established models or formulas when working with young children. All initiatives are influenced by the cultural background of the country in question, the possibilities of the individual concerned, and the given conditions of life. The fundamental needs of children are always the same; but the way of meeting them varies in accord with the individuals involved and their possibilities. We have tried to create an international network where we share experiences, consider each other's problems and take further training. The work, with regular collegial consultation, is still in its beginnings; but we'll endeavour to develop it more and more.

This publication is the visible fruit of a Conference we organized in Dornach in cooperation with the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association and the Medical Section at the Goetheanum. We hope it provides material that will be a help and support for everyone who is working with young children. The Conference at the Goetheanum in October 1999 was held because we felt the need to consider the issues of away-from-home care for the very young, initiate interdisciplinary collaboration among all professional groups concerned with very young children, and to present the work to the world.

We hope the readers of this book will get enthusiastic about our aims, so that our impulse will be supported and shared by many people in the world and the work can be deepened and taken further in the future.

Easter 2000

Gabriele Claus
Helle Heckmann
Hanne Looij
Zilla Mörch Pedersen

Michaela Glöckler
Angelika Knabe
Ina von Mackensen
Petra Thal

Written by Helle Heckmann in Danish and translated into German by C. Nielsen.

Introduction

Reverence for the child

*Helmut von Kügelgen**

Why paint an ideal when reality shows a very different picture? Two- and three-year-olds are deprived of nest warmth – sometimes from necessity, sometimes under social and society pressures, or because adults rate their own needs and destinies more highly. And they are even torn from the protection of the maternal body and are not permitted to continue on into life, to connect their essential nature with the incarnation process. When and how are the decisions concerning conception and birth made? And those concerning one's own life style? Who wants to make the effort and set an example, to give a 'formative upbringing' – or make it possible? Can one buy this, or can it be paid for?

Who has the right to judge the private, personal decisions others make for themselves? It cannot be the role of nursery or Waldorf teachers to act as missionaries and take any convictions relating to this which they have gained as independently and personally as possible into the children's homes. We can give neither our blessing nor moral admonition to single parents; we must help them! From the beginning! In the very way the youngest children are raised, by creating social settings, by changing political, economic and social conditions. Perhaps the day will come when the world is seen in the light of children's demands, with adults behaving very differently once they know that children, once they are born, need our protection in three ways until they have wholly found themselves. It is in the first seven years of life that children need real protection for the incarnation process as they pass from the care of their angel to that of a 'reference person'.

Should we create places for two-year-olds, as in Moscow, Leningrad and Romania? So that even the very young have 'Waldorf provision' made for them? This would support the tendency to hand children over to other people whilst one follows one's own pursuits. On the other hand, would this help to avoid terminations? Children who are just 'looked after', should we not help them? Surely we only enter into dialogue with mothers and fathers when we care for their children? Would it not be possible for social service centres, crèches and so on to develop into cultural centres for the dissemination of ideas and very real social changes? Whatever form they may take, if only they were there to help children to incarnate in a healthy way, and adults to respect human dignity, with respect due not only to heroes, bosses and one's beloved, but also to every single child.

'Reverence for the child' was enjoined by Rudolf Steiner for raising the child in the first seven years during which the body is configured. Theoretically worked-out nursery opening times, programmes for the day, holiday arrangements or programmed breakfasts – none of these are necessary consequences of this reverence that creates the protective environment. Which doll, what colours, what toys – anything and everything is part of the teacher's approach which creates the conditions. It is a creative process. An 'art of education' must develop from the abilities and potential of the teacher, perception of the actual children who come from their particular environment, not something thought up in theory.

This art is anything but arbitrary. The science of man as endowed with spirit, soul and body is one's constant teacher and counsellor, a source of inspiration and creative fantasy, and so is love for and perception of the child. All the models and methods, which beginners will initially follow and which more experienced teachers must prevent from becoming routine, need to be reconsidered and examined from time to time. Thus if the older boys keep causing problems, I must change my method and not get rid of those boys nor 'suffer' them for ever. If I do not meet the needs of children, if they do not have what they need in some aspect of their life, play and being creative in kindergarten, it is me who is lacking in fantasy. Should I go earlier to the kindergarten to receive the children of

* Extract from an essay published in 9. Rundbrief der Internationalen Vereinigung der Waldorfkinderergärten in the spring of 1999.

early workers, and also leave later because a whole group still need a meal and their afternoon nap before the families are really ready to have them back – should I really? Well, it is evident that I have to make some changes. Opening times may be part of a programme, but Waldorf education, the art of education, is not a programme; it has to find different answers to social, society and human conditions. Now is the time to start a common search, genuine dialogue between kindergarten teacher, parents and governing body. Any one of them might have a quick solution, for instance that the kindergarten teacher should stay longer, according to the governors. The parents may say it needs another member of staff. Or should parents work less and give more time to their children ... No! Adding extra work for some person or other, making moral appeals or attaching blame – will not take us forward. Out of the situation itself we must find the power to sustain, a power that will lead to more money, more pleasure in work, changes in social conditions, etc., etc.

Money for additional staff or larger premises is not easily found. Charitable status is also coming to be more and more restricted, and legislation ties one's hands. The general conditions of life, professional situations, demands for a standard of life, brutal financial need, views as to what is really vital – all this is not easy to change; and we certainly do not only want the children of an elitist group who may be rich in financial terms or in convictions. Only one solution then remains, but this, too, will not do – that kindergarten teachers work extra hours and forego part of their salaries so that an additional room may be rented or the premises can be rebuilt.

It is a peculiar feature of the teaching profession, and also in other areas, that enormous energies are made available or consumed in one and the same place, and this in an area where human relationships are involved. Think of how much energy, life, fantasy arises in a warm-hearted relationship between teacher, children, parents and governors, with harmony among them. If coldness has crept in here and there, if the delight people take in one another has gone, if trust has become a problem, then the energy drains away like water from a bucket with a hole in it. There are difficult children, difficult governors, difficult parents and also difficult teachers. Nevertheless! One must share the other's burden; then energies arise, fantasy develops to find new forms. In every area – money, personal energies, the attitude to giving help – solutions can be found, or at least begin to emerge if people work together.

We see how answers to the issues of our time are sought in different ways in different places. We can all of us learn from them for our own situations, however different. The tasks faced by the whole kindergarten community – parents, children, teachers, governors – must find their inner reflection in every individual; only then will it be possible for individual initiative to be fired up, with the powers of the individual bearing fruit in the community:

Benefit only comes
if the whole community comes alive
in the mirror of the individual soul
and the power of the individual
works for the good of the community.

Rudolf Steiner

In a time of change, with the century and the millennium coming to an end, we should not shy away from questioning old habits, asking ourselves what is needed today. Things proven and tested need the power of new resolve; things that need to be new need reflection before they are decided on and brought to realization. We need not only love for the children, but also love to the teaching work itself, with all the effort it demands. We need not only pleasure in having a kindergarten but also an eagerness to consider social issues, the evolution and nature of future forms and ideas. We need not only money but also love for the ways in which new channels are created along which money is ready to come to us.

The inexhaustible source of strength is the common effort, ready to accept the initiative of the individual, conversation among two, three or more people in the knowledge that He may be among us whom we have taken into our hearts with reverence and love also as the infant born to us at Christmas.

Medical and Education Sections at the Goetheanum
In collaboration with the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association

International Specialist Conference

for

carers of infants and young children, people working in parent, child and play groups, physicians, midwives, paediatric nurses, remedial gymnasts, eurythmy therapists, people working in early intervention, educational advisors, people working in infant care centres, integrated kindergartens or nurseries, and play groups

9 – 13 October 1999

Theme: The dignity of the young child. Care and training for the first three years of life

Saturday 9 October 1999	Sunday 10 October 1999	Monday 11 October 1999	Tuesday 12 October 1999	Wednesday 13 October 1999
<p>11.30 a.m. Arrival</p> <p>3 – 4 p.m. Conducted visits to windows in main auditorium, <i>Representative of Man</i> sculpture, and other</p>	<p>9 – 10.45 a.m. Singing Introduction to conference theme and discussion <i>Michaela Glöckler</i></p>			<p>10.45 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. Concluding thoughts Retrospect and prospect</p>
	<p>11.30 a.m. – 12.45 p.m. Workshops</p> <p>Midday break</p> <p>3 – 5 p.m. Workshops</p>			
<p>5.30 p.m. Meeting of workshop leaders</p>	<p>5.30 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. Plenum discussion on the day's work Moderation <i>Aert van der Stel</i></p> <p>Evening break</p>			
<p>8 p.m. Welcome</p>	<p>8.15 p.m. Eurythmy performance by Järna Eurythmy Stage Group <i>Allan Petterson's Concerto No. 1</i> For string orchestra <i>Antonio Vivaldi's Four Seasons</i> Swedish poems Estonian State Philharmonia</p>	<p>8 p.m. Reports and demonstrations from the work of anthroposophical day centres for children all over the world</p>		

A. Inaugural address

Transformative education and the right to an inviolate childhood

Christopher Clouder

Dostoevsky's earliest memory reaches back to when he was three years old. He was brought into a room by his governess and asked, in the presence of some guests, to say his evening prayers. Kneeling before the icon he began 'Dear Mother of God, all my hope is in thee – give me shelter under thy wing.' This prayer he never forgot. He taught it to his own children and repeated it throughout his life.¹

This event from the early decades of the last century is far removed from the experience of most children of today. A deep-seated attitude of reverence, nurtured and developed in the very early years, is for nearly all the world's children a thing of the past. The tensions and turbulence of our times leave little space for such attitudes to be fostered. Hence the growing debate about values and spirituality in education and the bringing up of children that has become an important aspect of current concerns. Louis MacNeice's poem *Prayer Before Birth* is more in tune with the tenor of our times.

I am not yet born; console me.
I fear that the human race may with tall walls wall me,
With strong drugs dope me, with wise lies lure me,
On black racks rack me, in blood baths roll me.

I am not yet born; forgive me.
For the sins that in me the world shall commit, the words
When they speak me, my thoughts when they think me,
My treason engendered by traitors beyond me,
My life when they murder by means of my
hands, my death when they live me.

I am not yet born. O fill me
With strength against those who would freeze my
Humanity, would dragoon me into a lethal automaton,
Would make me a cog in a machine, a thing with
One face, a thing, and against all those
Who would dissipate my entirety, would
Blow me like thistledown hither and
Thither or hither and thither
Like water held in the
Hands would spill me.²

When we speak of the right to an inviolate childhood it becomes a truism. No right thinking adult is against it, yet many children do face a world that contains threats to their healthy and happy development, as outlined in this poem. And MacNeice's conclusion is a stark one:

Let them not make me a stone and let them not spill me.
Otherwise kill me.

This is the antithesis of the hope and joy that each child brings into life at birth. Rembrandt's paintings of Christ's birth in a stable at Bethlehem, where the light streaming from the child shines into the surrounding darkness and embraces even the most humble of creatures in the normal, dismal areas of the structure, are a depiction of a universal truth. A newborn baby brings light and love with it that can illuminate all the recesses of the human heart. As adults we participate in an intuitive wonder that draws us towards it:

It is of extraordinary significance that we, in our descent into earthly life, draw together forces from the universal ether, and thus take with us, in our ether body, a kind of image of the cosmos. If one could extract the human ether body at the moment when the human being is uniting himself with the physical body, we should have a sphere which is far more beautiful than any formed by mechanical means – a sphere containing stars, zodiac, sun and moon.³

A child is born into a social context. 'And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger.' The binding of an infant to prevent movement, as though still enwrapped and protected by the womb, is still practised in some cultures. In others it is seen as detrimental to children's need to exercise their limbs and move freely, thereby stimulating the senses. Our social and cultural differences manifest themselves from the first breath onwards and are part of the child's learning process in becoming a social being. Steiner suggests that in earlier cultures children were born with innate social capacities but in our times these abilities have to be learnt. This underlines our need to understand – and to work with greater insight – the evolution of consciousness and cultures if we are to serve the needs of young children in a healthy and desirable manner.

Firstly, a child should be welcome. How that welcome is expressed can vary according to the age and the social fabric around the child. A report from the Swedish Aid Commission touches elements that confront us as citizens of the affluent minority world.

Basic to a good society is that children are welcome, are given a good environment during childhood and are the concern of the whole society. Children have a right to secure living conditions that enhance their development. Pre-school has an important function in children's lives. It offers a comprehensive programme and is the source of stimulation in the children's development. It gives them a chance to meet other children and adults and to be part of an experience of fellowship and friendship. It is a complement to the upbringing a child gets at home.⁴

For many children, Ellen Key's concept of the Century of Childhood has brought countless benefits, though it is salutary to remember that children in the majority world have not yet been enabled to share these welcome changes to the same extent. At the beginning of the century, the infant mortality rate for most European countries was in the range of 100 to 250 deaths per 1000 live births. By the 1950s this had fallen to between 25 and 50, by 1995 only three European countries had rates of above 20, and only one, Albania, above 30. In Western European countries it is now well below 10.⁵ We have moved from a time when the death of a baby was a tragic – but also expected – family event, one which parents were rarely able to avoid, to a time when we can assume that our children will reach adulthood. This is completely new in the history of childhood and is of great significance for our attitude to parenting. There are fewer siblings in a family and children are not so greatly separated by age. They grow up differently.

Ellen Key, the Swedish educational reformer and feminist, published her influential book The Century of the Child in 1900:

'The next century will be the century of the child just as much as the last century has been the woman's century. When the child gets his rights, morality will be perfect.' The role of a woman was to devote herself 'to the care of children, hygiene and sick nursing'.

Kindergartens and crèches were only second best, and schools should strive to make themselves redundant. Success in child rearing lay in becoming 'as a child oneself'.

The simplicity of the child's character will be kept as adults. So the old social order will renew itself.⁶

The history of the last hundred years has taught us to view such fervent certainty about a better world with scepticism, and Key's basic expectations of gender roles and the unimportance of educational institutions are no longer applicable. However, she was pleading the cause of the child.

in a new way at a time when the prevalent view was that the child was an important asset to the state. Childhood was assumed to be naturally akin to 'a garden of delight' and, by being excluded from the world in general, a child should be able to develop 'the habit of happiness' as a matter of course. The reality that most children did not have this opportunity was considered inconsequential. This was the world of implicit belief in the findings of science and much advice was given on the avoidance of spontaneity, emotion and individualism in the rearing of children. A distance was prescribed between parents and their offspring.

'The rule that parents should not play with their baby may seem hard, but it is a safe one' (United States Children's Bureau 1914) or: 'There is one sensible way of treating children. Treat them as though they were young adults. Never hug and kiss them, never let them onto your lap' (John Watson, *The Psychological Care of Infant and Child* 1928).

The child was to be inculcated with the virtues of self-control, obedience and respect for authority. A science-centred morality was superseding the deity-centred morality of the previous century. Similarly, 'formula' milk was promulgated as being preferable to breast-feeding because of its scientific reliability. Looking back on the formulations of that age, we can also see how revolutionary Steiner was in his approach.

How is it, then, that at the end of the century our concern is, to use Postman's term, *The Disappearance of Childhood*? And why has the authoritative and confident tone, however lamentable the advice might seem to us now, given way to anxiety and doubts about our roles as parents, carers and educators?

One cause is the greater awareness of the importance of childhood that has steadily manifested itself more and more strongly since the Romantic era at the beginning of the 18th century. Since the Second World War, the joy of parenting has been accompanied by a deep desire to get it right. For this, parents need experts who advise them, even if this expert advice fluctuates and contradicts itself over time. In 1914 there were 175 paediatricians in the USA, by 1955 there were 6,547, and this number had doubled by 1966. We need expertise to help us with an ever more complex and demanding task and we set great value on our children's wellbeing.

Shari L. Thurer's describes this transformation in her wonderfully readable and knowledgeable book The Myths of Motherhood. How Culture Reinvents the Good Mother. She states that our hyper-empathetic ideal of parenting is partly a reaction to the loss of value accorded to human life in the 20th century as a result of genocidal events such as the holocaust and partly a greater awareness of child poverty and deprivation. In bringing up children, one idea supersedes another with bewildering speed, so that we always seem to be getting our awesome responsibility wrong.

Few women could read about their formidable power to harm their children without a pang of conscience. What mother hasn't momentarily failed to stimulate or pay attention or delight in all baby's accomplishments? Who hasn't been provoked by her children ... screaming or even, dare I suggest, slapped them ... only to undergo a black period of agonising guilt and self-recrimination? According to child experts, even unconscious hostility could plant the seeds of neurosis in her offspring ... A deficient mother (you!) could be exposed by the very symptoms of your child's pathology. Crankiness in a baby, withdrawal, uncontrollable crying, school phobia, surliness – all betrayed mother's ineptness.⁷

It is calculated that it costs £100,000 in the UK to bring up a child. Yet even in a society where such affluence exists, many children are undernourished, abused and deprived. On one side there is excessive consumerism. As the title of an article in the *New York Times* once memorably put it: 'It's a boy! It's a girl! It's time to shop!' In the USA, one in eight children go hungry, and recorded abuse has increased by 40% since 1980. In the UK, child poverty has increased threefold since 1979; 350,000 children under 12 are left daily in unsupervised homes and 20% of children suffer from psychological problems, of which more than half are anxiety disorders.⁸ These two countries are not exceptional in the western world, as the problems are acknowledged to be widespread. There are resistance factors that enable children to become what Norwegian researchers call 'dandelion

children', enabling them to cope with such disadvantages. These factors have been found to be good communication skills, a sense of religious faith, an ability to reflect and a strong attachment to parents in the first years. Yet many of our contemporary cultural trends tend to deny many children the possibility of developing these very abilities.

In all historical cultures there have been acceptable means whereby children could be transferred from biological parents to non-biological parents. For the ancient Celtic tribes of Britain, this transfer often took place when the child was seven years old, so that they would not become too circumscribed in one family setting and would develop skills of mobility and flexibility at a young age. In the last century, it was a method of family economic management whereby a family with too many mouths to feed could transfer a child to a family that needed an extra child as another pair of working hands. Now it has become axiomatic that adults have the right to have a child as a source of their own emotional completeness. Society feels it is correct that childless couples are given this opportunity as a right to personal fulfilment. However, this attitude lands us with another tension on the question of bringing up children, where the area of human rights becomes entangled and self-contradictory.

As we have seen at the beginning of the century, the essential vision of childhood was one of powerlessness and dependence, and good parenting prolonged this state. A hundred years later, the authority of parents has significantly declined and children demand and receive early access to the adult world. This is stressful for all concerned, and this tension works right down into the early years, as it affects the way we perceive our children. This signal is one to which they are acutely sensitive. A child is a person with rights and autonomy and yet also has the right to be a child. These two principles can be contradictory and therefore give rise to problems for us all. This right to be a child is often expressed by its absence:

Boredom!!! Shooting!!! Shelling!!! People being killed!!! Despair!!! Hunger!!! Misery!!! Fear!!! That's my life! The life of an innocent eleven-year old schoolgirl!!! A schoolgirl without a school, without the fun and excitement of school. A child without games, without friends, without sun, without birds, without nature, without fruit, without chocolate or sweets, with just a little powdered milk. In short, a child without childhood.⁹

As so often, what is absent becomes the definition of what an inviolate childhood should be.

Marie Winn, in her seminal book *Children Without Childhood*, looked at the radical changes taking place in the way adults were treating children and how this affected their behaviour. Her concern was that parents were finding their traditional role as protectors of childhood more and more difficult to fulfil.

...as today's children impress adults with their sophisticated ways, adults begin to change their idea about children and their needs; that is, they form new ideas about childhood. ... as adults act less protectively...and as they expose children to the underside of their lives – adult sexuality, suffering, fear of death – these former innocents grow tougher perforce, less playful and trusting, more sceptical – in short, more like adults.¹⁰

Winn sees this tendency as a regression to the Middle Ages, when there was no concept of protecting children from the exigencies of adult life. Following this came several centuries when childhood was seen as an estate clearly differentiated from adulthood. In Winn's view, it becomes vital, in an increasingly complex and turbulent society, to restore 'real childhood', that the period of nurture and protection is not shortened, and that this needs adults to be encouraged to take an authoritative – but not authoritarian – role in family life.

However, it is not surprising that some parents, faced with a plethora of demands they feel ill-equipped to handle, and looking for simplicity in a confusing and contradictory task, find a more authoritarian approach attractive. An example of this would be the Growing Families' International organization, which has rapidly become a multimillion dollar business. Their publications recommend babies as young as eight months should be drilled in high-chair manners, to sit up straight with their arms by their sides, and pinned in this position until they obey. At 18 months, babies should be smacked with a plastic spatula 'to inflict pain, but not break bones or damage skin tissue.' In a return to turn-of-the-century views, 'Teach the child to obey according to the character of true obedience,

immediately, completely, without challenge and without complaint.¹¹ This flies in the face of the contemporary appreciation of each child as an individual and verges on child abuse, yet many parents are resorting to such ideas out of despair and not knowing where to turn.

Paradoxically, this advice appears at the same time as another view suggesting that the parents have little influence on a child and that the most potent agents of child socialization are peer groups. Judith Rich Harris' paper,¹² which first appeared in *Psychological Review* in 1995, and her subsequent book *The Nurture Assumption*, have aroused much interest and her propositions have reverberated ever since. Like much else in this field, ideas generated in the USA wing their way across the Atlantic and become areas of debate and practice in Europe as well. Her convincing and well-written paper claims that, in the many hundreds of studies undertaken into parental influence on children, almost no evidence has come to light that proves this influence exists at all. Even evidence as to how children react to extreme experiences such as divorce, abuse and adoption are elusive because children react so differently. She points out that higher primates can be raised successfully by their peers when they have lost their mother and asks whether this could not also be the case with humans.

We swing, on one hand, from the omnipotent demanding parent to, on the other, the powerless parent who can point to genetic traits, social pressures, consumerism, peer pressure and birth order as being far more determinative of their child's development than they can be. Howard Gardner's effective critique of Harris' view, although he shows respect for her sincerity and scholarship, shows that the peers a child has are basically a question of the society and circumstances the parents themselves create. There is a tremendous differentiation between cultures here. What applies in one setting need not apply to another, and the paucity of evidence for parental influence might be more a matter of a weakness in the scientific process, as there are certain elements of human life it does not take into account.

In the absence of credible parents and other adults, most children would not be able to deal effectively with life. ... Whether on the scene or behind the scenes, parents have jointly created the institutions that train and inspire children: apprenticeships, schools, works of art and literature, religious classes, playing fields, and even forms of resistance and rebellion. These institutions, and the adults who run them, sustain civilization and provide the disciplines – however fragile they may seem – that keep societies from reverting to barbarism.¹³

In other words, children are born into a culture and this culture, with all its assumptions, history and aspirations, will have a profound effect on how they experience their childhood and indeed their adult lives. Human cultures vary enormously in their approaches to the rearing of children and one culture cannot claim to be the template of good practice for all.

Yet there is the factor of our common humanity and something that can be recognized as universal childhood. In our international work on behalf of the young child we should strive to understand this, as well as deepening our perception and knowledge of our own culture and others. In this roller-coaster-like plethora of advice, research and increasing polarization of views we must look for deeper aspects of childhood so that as parents, carers and educators we do not also become restricted to a particular one-sided approach. The young child expects us to be social beings as well and will absorb from us our attitudes to each other:

How quality in early childhood education and care is defined and evaluated will be a concern not only for politicians, experts, administrators and professionals, but will also be a matter for a broader citizenry ... it becomes important to create forums or arenas for discussion and reflection where people can engage with devotion and vision. ... Within these arenas a lively dialogue can take place in which early childhood education and care are placed within larger societal context and where questions concerning children's position are made vivid.¹⁴

If we wish to help our children develop 'devotion and vision', we have to strive for them ourselves, as in our world they are no longer just a given fact of life. On this basis we can work for an international forum along the above lines and work in alliance with others who have goodwill towards the infant for the benefit of children world-wide.

Universal childhood consists of basic elements that are a definition of being human and which appear in all our earliest years – the capacities for walking, talking and thinking. It is claimed that 90% of our learning takes place in the first three years of life, so how we learn these things is of fundamental importance to us all. Walking, for which we are biologically equipped, is nevertheless a cultural activity. The wolf children of Sri Lanka and the gazelle boy of the Sahara did not learn this skill because they were brought up by animals who adopted them as their own. Nor is it just a practical matter of locomotion, as these children who learnt to run on all fours could be as swift as their animal associates.

Underlying learning to walk there is an inner adjustment. An orientation of the young child. The equilibrium of the organism, with all its possibilities for movement, becomes related to the equilibrium and all the possibilities for the movement of the whole universe, because the child stands within it. While learning to walk, children are seeking to relate their equilibrium to that of the entire cosmos ... to meet the forces of statics and dynamics both in body and soul and to relate these experiences to the whole cosmos – this is what walking is all about.¹⁵

That these first steps are an enlightenment is vividly depicted on the child's countenance when it takes them. The child has found its place and beams up at us its joy at joining our community. In the ancient culture of Egypt, where these mysteries were experienced more directly and less cognitively, uprightness was divine. The backbone was venerated as the manifestation of the father god of the afterlife, Osiris. Mummy cases were made to stand upright for the passage through death, and uprightness was petrified and made immortal in the obelisk. One of the greatest yearly festivals was when a Djed column, the symbol of the backbone, was hoisted from a recumbent position to a vertical one. This was celebrated as a deed of resurrection. The child too experiences standing and walking for the first occasion as a unique and special event, towards which it has patiently struggled for some time.

Speech is likewise the accomplishment of the whole human being. For the last hundred years it was thought that the ability to produce speech was a function of particular areas of the brain. Recently, however, research has shown that there is widely spread, multi-centred language system that extends through the whole brain, including areas that were previously thought to have nothing to do with it. It is therefore not just an additional skill that has been added in the course of evolution, but something that permeates all our acts of thinking, feeling and remembering. Language flows out on the current of breath and provides a basis for our thoughts. An inviolate childhood is one where these capacities are allowed to develop in such a way that they can be transformed and renewed later in life, not just as bodily functions but also as soul ones. A child must be allowed to breathe, in all the metaphoric and natural connotations of the word.

Martin Luther King stated: 'We are challenged to rise above the narrow confines of our individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity ... through our scientific genius we have made a neighbourhood of our world; now through our moral and spiritual genius we must make of it a brotherhood.' These are latent powers of childhood and in respecting the early forms of these gifts in our caring and upbringing we can help our children realize their potential later. What we learn, we learn so that we can transform it. We do not learn so that later we can be held in learning's thrall. Our first breath is an expression of our potential, just as our first cry is an expression of our rights on earth. For the Egyptians, breath was the manifestation of the goddess Isis. Unlike her consort, she remained on earth so as to accompany humankind in its destiny. Her wings were laid across the chests and lungs of the dead as they returned to the realm from which they had originally come. She lived in the air which we all share and united humanity by entering us all without exception or preference. She was wise beyond all measure because she alone knew the secret name of the sun god. In Egyptian art she is often portrayed holding the new child, the offspring of her marriage to Osiris, on her lap and giving him her breast. Steiner spoke of the need to find the new Isis, because we have lost her and because she is that which expresses our common humanity. In our new realm of work with the earliest years of childhood we can find that the wisdom of childhood informs and inspires us. We can work with the combination of Isis and Osiris and the incarnation of the child that is expressed by the *Sistine Madonna* in all its majesty.

To this end it must really be so among us that one helps the other in love, so that a real community of souls arises in which envy and all such things disappear, and in which we do not look each at our own particular goal, but face together, united in love, the great goal we all have in common.¹⁶

This is the gift the infant brings to us all, and in coming to a better understanding of this gift and by giving it the time and space to unfold we are endeavouring also to transform ourselves.

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B. Three lectures on the conference theme

Michaela Glöckler

Lecture 1

In the pure rays of the light
the godly nature of the world shines out.
In pure love for all creation
The divine nature of my soul shines out.
I rest in the godhead of the world;
I shall find myself in the
godly nature of the world.

Rudolf Steiner

Infants and young children are international creatures

Before we begin our work, I think it would be good for us to be aware of one another. People have come from more than 30 countries to give thought with us to day nurseries or crèches, and you have all brought your charges with you, as it were. We have a wide range of cultural backgrounds into which the children are born – from Japan, Korea and Poland all the way to America. And the situation in Central Europe is very different from that in South America or in Eastern countries. The traditions and the history of a country also make the relationship to the child, the child's position within the family, different in each case. What we have to do now is to work together to find an international way of receiving and caring for young children; for infants are international creatures, still entirely open to cultural and social influences. If I were to bring a baby here from Japan, he'd speak Swiss German and adapt wholly to conditions here. And if I were to take a Swiss infant from the Emmental valley to Tokyo, he'd come to speak Japanese and I'd not understand a word. This cannot be in any other way. For it is not only the brain which is capable of developing and taking shape and form, as people doing brain research tell us today, but also the whole body of the infant or young child. If we want to change something for humanity, in our culture, if we want developments to take a different turn, e.g. in the direction of a more human approach, we can only achieve this by showing international solidarity, making it our aim that all children, from Japan to the USA, have the same opportunities to gain freedom and self determination in their development. Crèches offer a unique opportunity for this. I am saying this quite deliberately, for parents give up their children of their own free will, releasing them, as it were, from the narrow confines of their culture and family into a free space for education. We are thus able to play a role in changing humanity from the roots. I hope that in the evenings in particular examples will be brought from many different countries to show how it can be done, but that we'll also hear about problems and what is lacking. It would make all the difference if the many infants and young children you have in your hearts and minds were really to benefit from the fact that we are meeting here.

Everyone has their own concerns – lack of money, poor pay, inadequate premises, difficult, frustrated parents, colleagues who are sick or not easy to work with. Perhaps we may look beyond these problems and above all ask ourselves what we ourselves can do, how we become imaginative and start to develop a global network for truly international education in true humanity. The sooner we join forces on behalf of the children, the better. We are all equal before God and before the young child with his infinite capacity for development and his readiness to do so. We adults, often a little bit resigned already when it comes to the issue of development, can in fact learn a great deal from the children. Let us create a climate among us where the child's readiness to develop can live. Such a climate will give us the best ideas.

Dr Glöckler then individually welcomed conference members from the different countries – Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kirghisia, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, USA.

Dealing with guilt feelings and a bad conscience

This morning, I'd like to consider some of the basic themes which I believe will come up in your group work and in our conversations. The first theme I would like to mention is that of guilt, guilt feelings and a bad conscience. Parents with sound maternal and paternal instincts feel guilty about handing over their children. And people working in crèches who have sensitive moral instincts feel guilty because they think they are not doing enough for the children, for all kinds of reasons – because the premises are inadequate and the groups too large, because they do not have pentatonic harps, perhaps, because the food is not of the best possible quality, and perhaps also the water is bad and the parents do not have the money to buy good-quality spring or drinking water, and so on. Another factor is that many of the people working in crèches would have liked to have children themselves and are therefore a little bit envious. Guilt feelings may also arise when one feels that by being with the child all week one has drawn him away a little from the parents, or when one secretly feels pleased that the child loves the crèche worker or day mother more than his own. For I know, of course, that basically I have to work in such a way that the child will be happy to go back to his mother in the evening and does not cry because he has to leave me.

This whole complex of guilt and bad conscience is closely bound up with the purpose, the guiding principle of crèche education. Clearly the purpose cannot be merely to keep the children as safe as possible, so that nothing will happen to them and they more or less get what they need, and then to hand them back again. Our purpose is quite clear when we observe how the computer industry seeks to get hold of this, the greatest of all markets, the 'young child' market. In the USA, software has already been produced for 3-month-old babies; computer training thus starts at the age when the eye learns to focus on objects. The computer-use process has grown so powerful that we must make gigantic efforts to keep childhood protected from machines and computers, or even to create such a childhood. In some homes the process simply cannot be stopped, and we must therefore use the previous hours during which the children are with us to give them the things that will later on help them to make constructive use of the technological world.

We must therefore have a clear picture of our ideal for crèche work, clear answers to these questions: What do we want? What should be our greatest aim? Is there an international standard? I said before that what matters most of all is to work towards true humanity. But the question is of course: What can be done to achieve this aim? How do we let the ideal become practice? I would like to consider some aspects of this.

What should be our guiding principle in crèche work?

We know from the anthroposophical science of the spirit that every spirit preparing to incarnate has good reason for doing so, whilst at the same time there is a feeling that life on earth is not exactly a bed of roses but also brings stress and trouble. The question is, why can we not stay and develop in the world of the spirit, seeing that according to the religions it is a world of beauty and peace? It is said that we can only fall into error on earth, and then need to be educated again to correct this in the world of the spirit. But if we can be educated in the world of the spirit, why do we have to come to earth at all? The situation looks different, however, if we consider the matter more closely. In the world of the spirit we can be cleansed of all the impurities we have gathered on earth; but we do not have the possibility there for further development of the self awareness we have brought with us from the earth. For in the world of the spirit we are social. Each lives in the other, spirit related directly to spirit, we cannot set boundaries for ourselves, awakening to one another and achieving self development in this way.

This basic social attitude of being given up to and trusting the world is something every child brings with him from the world he lived in before birth. From the earthly point of view he therefore seems helpless, exposed, at the mercy of the world around him. Shot out of the birth canal with the last of the bearing-down pains, he would fall on the floor, on solid ground, if someone weren't there to catch him. In the world of the spirit, on the other hand, we are integrated, supported, and know as much of ourselves as we have gained in self awareness on earth. Freedom, emancipation, self development, self awareness – all these we learn in the world of the senses, where we look at things from the outside and are able to set our boundaries. 20th-century people have woken up to the fact that they are responsible for their own development. This is new, that we can no longer refer to the family, the government, the Church or other authorities. For the first time in human evolution, awareness grows in the individual that it all depends on him. This is how humanity and with it the individual progresses in evolution and development. At their death, therefore, human beings take increasingly more self awareness with them across the threshold and do no longer merely sleep into the divine world. In the past, dying meant to go to sleep as one went into the divine world, and human beings would only emerge again from that sleep at their next birth; they knew practically nothing of the world of the spirit. Only highly developed individuals who had been initiated on earth were able to maintain conscious awareness beyond death. This is the reason why Christian prophesy, above all the Book of Revelation but also other religious documents, speak of how hard it is to die a second death. What does this mean? It means nothing else but that something happens which has always happened in the past. We lose consciousness after death and do not awaken to life eternal. It is wrong to think one is killed off, as it were, or did no longer exist. You are still very much there in that case, but you know nothing of yourself.

At the new stage of human evolution we need to develop a self awareness on earth that will endure after death. Someone who gives his mind only to things that have validity on this earth, which is common in our materialistic age, and does not manage to develop a notion of the eternal, spiritual human being, which alone can be the basis for true self awareness, preparing for that second death in full conscious awareness. This is why the science of the spirit has come to provide a counter balance to materialism. Scientifically determined materialism is currently hard at work to erode the religious systems of earlier times and make them look ridiculous. The science of the spirit, anthroposophy, faces a difficult task. On the one hand it has to help make it possible that religious systems are understood again and religion can be followed in an honest way; wherever there is religious endeavour, among Hindus and Buddhists as much as with the different Christian confessions, anthroposophy aims to help build a bridge from religion to science and in this way bring the deity back again to modern, scientifically inclined minds. On the other hand it is the mission of this science of the spirit to find the spiritual counterpart to every materialistic thought about the natural world.

If you turn on the light somewhere, the fact that the room lights up may be seen in a purely materialistic way as an electromagnetic phenomenon. But how do I experience light? What is the essential nature of light? When a light shines out somewhere, the objects of this world immediately show themselves to be in a context. And when I close my eyes, light grows inside me because my thinking has light nature. A thought is light; 'light dawns' when we understand something. And so the verse we heard this morning really has meaning for us. If I look at something in the light of day with loving interest, I experience the divine nature of my soul; my humanity, the higher principle, shines out in me. Inner and outer light come together. Please do not think that it is immaterial for the children in your care how you feel about light when you use the light switch in the morning. It matters if you think of nothing at all, or of electrons or electric wires, or if you know, in mind, soul and body, what you are doing when you turn on the light in a room. And you are wholly true only if you let light arise in yourself at the same time as you turn on the light in the world outside. It will also depend on how we perceive the truth about light whether we truly bring up the children to know truth, beauty and goodness.

What is the truth of water? This is a question that should come alive in us when we bathe a child. In outer terms water is H₂O, as you know, an interesting chemical substance capable of dissolving incredibly many substances and mediating between them. But what does water do in terms of the soul, in moral terms? Why does it say in the gospel that when the angel moves the water it gains the

power to heal? What does the water have to do with the angel? Why is water essential to life? Let me give you an example. The amoeba is a highly intelligent unicellular creature, with a thin cuticle. What does the creature do when the puddle in which it is feeding, or the flower vase in which it has developed, dries up? It turns to 'dust'. It creates a firm outer casing for itself to protect its nucleus. In the end the casing is so solid that no more water can evaporate and the last bit of water is preserved. The amoeba then waits for better times. It may be swept up and get caught up by the wind, for instance, and be wafted to the Sahara by the wind – they are truly international, these amoebas – or it may jet around the world in a plane, until one day rain takes it down to the ground again. As soon as there is enough water, the creature swells up again and lives on, though in between it had been as if dead, with practically no vital processes taking place inside; it had only been preserved to the highest degree possible. And so you may have everything else – a genetic programme, enzymes, substances, even nutrients – but if water, the vital element, is missing, water that allows exchange to take place, life cannot develop. If you ever consider everything you know about water you'll realize that it is the be-all and end-all of 'service'. The moral quality of always being available, wherever one is needed, is really only found in such a comprehensive way with water. It is therefore ultimate selflessness, and we can understand why angels have so much to do with water.

For angels are like water. They go with us through births and deaths, are always there for us, selflessly, and do not interfere with our freedom. So if we know what we are doing when we bathe an infant, if we are honest and truthful and the truth of water lives in us, then we bathe the child in angel substance. He will then experience in his physical body what his guardian angel is in the spirit – purity, delicacy, transparency, clarity, cleanliness, morality, regeneration, healing, comfort, refreshment.

It is not immaterial if as crèche workers we seek to live the inner truth of outer material processes in every detail of our everyday life. We need to take this challenging demand seriously, for only then shall we understand why Rudolf Steiner said that you may easily have young academics to teach the young people in the upper school, but the people who educate children in kindergartens and even more so at the crèche age should really be older individuals with life experience who are morally developed. Now we all know that it is especially young people who feel drawn to take up the work of day care or a kindergarten teacher; it is definitely a profession for young people. It is therefore particularly important that we work thoroughly with these young people on the qualities and insights that come with the wisdom of age. We have to 'vaccinate' the young people a bit, as it were, with goodness, with love, with childlike truthfulness. This is of course something that does all of us good. And so it is good that it is the way it is. The guiding principle would therefore be to help the human being to develop in mind and spirit, in soul and body.

Developing a culture of love – a great challenge

Everything said so far seems extremely demanding and practically impossible to achieve. A crèche worker or a young mother will soon find that they cannot meet this high ideal. If they are unable to cope with the tension of this, they will feel guilt, depression or even, and this is worse, assume a don't-care attitude. All kinds of excuses are brought forward to avoid the effort. But there is one capacity that can make up for all our imperfections, and that is love.

Nature has arranged things in such a way that a mother will instinctively love her child. God knew how difficult everything else was going to be, and so he made love something natural. Love has a wonderfully natural side to it, and this we have in our blood, it makes us attractive to one another even if we are quite stupid and immoral. This kind of love comes into play as soon as one even sees a baby. You'd have to be a very hard case not to smile, at least a little bit. We have a natural readiness to love young children, the other sex, and increasingly also more and more our own. This too is not a bad thing. This natural love takes a highly individual form, and up to a point we can rely on it. When it fails, our human instincts fail. We are then close to criminality, abuse, inhumanity; and at that point we are already in need of treatment.

Our natural capacity for love must, however, develop further and become an inner love culture that is independent of its natural foundation. I need such a bit of inner culture if I want to bring up someone else's child as though he were my own. At the level of the spirit, finally, love is identical with truth and wisdom. There we speak of understanding in our hearts. In the soul, love overcomes

antipathy, and also sympathy. It conquers envy, jealousy, hatred, but also fanatical sympathy. It dissolves the emotions, as it were, harmonizing them and creating an honest, objective human relationship. At the level of the body it is instinct, drive, inclination, sentience, making it possible for us to have direct access to one another, independent of how far we have developed in soul and spirit. The three main questions that face the student of love are: How do we cultivate our body-bound life of instincts and drive? How do we work with our sympathies and antipathies in such a way that love can grow? How do we work on our truthfulness, that is, our ability to love in the spirit, in the understanding of the heart?

The question as to the purpose of our work has taken us as far as truth and love. The question as to the self awareness we can only develop on earth, has been in the background. I'd now like to take this further.

Working to develop health self awareness

Self awareness does, of course, mean that I know something about myself. Today everybody is more or less involved in working on his 'image'. This awareness of self in outer terms is highly sensitive, however, and so is the one based on 'the latest scientific knowledge'. Let me just mention the magic world 'brain research'. anything 'established' in brain research will immediately be quoted and turned into maxims for education. People gain higher self esteem from being 'in the know'. But people often don't give it any further thought and do not ask themselves if those educational maxims really serve a purpose. People simply no longer use their sound common sense – though this, too has suffered greatly in recent years. This kind of self awareness which depends on the physical world is neither lasting nor genuine, and so we cannot take it with us into the world of the spirit.

There are, however, two further levels of self awareness. Not only do we need to develop these in ourselves but we must also create the basis for them in our young children. These levels are learning about ourselves at the soul level and learning about ourselves at the spiritual level. How can we actually learn about ourselves at the spiritual level? Only by thinking. In Basle they have an exhibition on 'body worlds' at the moment. You can look at every detail of the human organism there, physically, from the outside. But everything you see, including every preparation that is on exhibition, has resulted from a great deal of thinking. This holds true for everything we are able to know about the outside world, and for the whole of science when it only concerns itself with material things. We do not give this much thought. It is only when we think about thinking itself that we realize what it is – a bright, indestructible, winged, light, non-material system of forces.

If someone has been in prison or had to suffer torture, the thoughts he had during this torture will also play a role in whether he suffers psychological damage for the rest of his life. There are people who have survived torture and not needed psychotherapy afterwards. Why? Because like the amoeba they contracted to their invulnerable nucleus or core, able to take the indestructible idea of their self and being connected with God through the abyss. When the situation changed, their essential being was able to expand again and work through the traumas, so that life could unfold again.

We can only bear this spiritual core substance in the part of our human nature that is as eternal and indestructible as a thought. And we are also only able to maintain a connection with the dead in thoughts and feelings, powers that belong wholly to the soul and spirit, seeing before us in images what no longer exists physically. The Christ is able to reveal himself in thoughts, in feelings, for he says, 'I am love, I am truth; if you think something true, I am with you.' The good spirits are able to embody in good thoughts and feelings, whilst our ugly thoughts and feelings attract devils and daemons and these then attack us with fear, pangs of conscience and guilt feelings. We must learn to see that we are creatures filled with spirit, that is, with thoughts, that we are creatures filled with soul, with feelings, and that the powers of thought which are present everywhere in the body are marvellous laws of nature. If the manifold wisdom available to my thinking, making it possible for me to investigate and analyse everything, fills my body, it shows itself in form of the laws by which nature functions.

We are thus able to say – and this is an important outcome of Rudolf Steiner's investigations – that the body develops according to the laws that also live in my thinking. In other words, vital functions, growth, bodily development are identical with thought activity, spiritual growth, spiritual development of my nature. As an adult, half of me is physically incarnated in earth conditions, and

the other half has its spiritual roots in the life of thought, the nature of thought in the universe. If as adults we realize that in thinking we ground our self awareness in the eternal and can therefore take it with us into the world of the spirit after death, if we let our thoughts and feelings be such that something indestructible shines out in them, we create an atmosphere that will make it easy for the infant and young child to take in these thoughts into the process of developing his physical body; we create in him the foundation for sound self understanding as a human being and a sound self awareness. Above all, if I think like that I will also know what to do with the children. I will then also realize why there is nothing more important than to nurture the senses in the early years of life, and above all in the first year. Why is that so? Because every sensory experience holds a complete experience of self in it. The child cannot yet have self experience at the level of thought; only adults can have this. The child can only gain living experience of himself with what he learns through the senses.

We live in an age, and one cannot be too dramatic in bringing this to mind, when most people's self awareness or self esteem has been injured and weakened. This shows itself, for instance, in their being unable to bear criticism. They will fight to the last against what they feel is an attack on them, trying to prove by every possible means how good they really are, how much they are in the right. Someone with sound self awareness is able to listen to criticism with 'scientific' interest, as it were, and will ask himself how far it is justified, and he'll be grateful for this, or not justified, in which case he will not let it touch him, realizing that the problem clearly lies not with him but with the person offering the criticism.

Another symptom of low self esteem is that one depends on the recognition of others. The individual concerned will do everything possible to appear loveable, not to hurt anyone, always be on his guard, and his feeling of self esteem is seriously upset when someone does not respond to this.

I could go on and say much more about the symptoms of weak and injured self esteem and self awareness. Most of the familiar social problems come from this, and the main causes go back to the first and second years of life. There are of course also many other causes. For we each have our destiny; and someone who was weak in his previous life won't be instantly as strong as an ox this time. But even if that is the case, there are important ways of strengthening self esteem, especially in the early years. When the kids run away from mum for the first time, the foundation for a healthy self experience must already have been established. Two years on, and self awareness has developed in their thinking. From then on one can only optimize and make repairs, but no longer make any real changes. A process begins which will be with us to the end of our lives; it is the process of doing further work on our self awareness and self confidence which may be greater or less.

If we use all our energies to help the children to develop a healthy experience of themselves in their first and second years of life, we have done much work for them which they would otherwise have to do themselves later on. Such individuals can then make the whole of their energies available to others and help to solve their problems. Rudolf Steiner once put it succinctly: 'People able to stand on their own feet can be available.' This means that someone who has worked to gain a reasonably sound self awareness can help, can work, without having to be afraid all the time of getting lost himself. People get burn-out because their self awareness is weak. Help is then needed, for instance psychotherapy.

I hope I have been sufficiently provocative to make you want to raise objections and have lots to talk about. Nevertheless, I think this is the key issue if we want to make deliberate efforts to develop a good crèche education that will provide the basis for a truly human culture. The words we focus on would then be: 'The purpose of development is to work and develop a self awareness that serves the spirit, the soul and the outside world.' I must then of course also consider the state of my own self awareness and work on this; and I have to consider strategies that will help the child to develop sound self awareness even if my own is perhaps not of the best. For the good thing is that we are sometimes able to give something to others which we ourselves do not have, simply by doing the right thing. And the 'right thing', the essential basis, is nurturing the senses, cultivating the senses.

I would like to conclude this morning's talk with a request that you may take with you through the day, through your group work, through conversations over lunch and with others. Let each of you ask himself or herself the following questions: What do I experience as my real self in soul and spirit? What, in fact, is self awareness? Can I bring the experiences I have in mind and soul to

awareness in my thinking, so that they will stay with me? And if I gain understanding of it also in my heart, will it then not have become part of my whole nature? So what do I experience when I use my twelve senses? Why is it that in early intervention we speak above all about two senses, the sense of balance and that of touch, evidently key senses in infancy? With the sense of balance we catch hold of the whole 'human being' system, the whole of our self at the centre; it effects the integration of all potential movement. The sense of touch, on the other hand, with both superficial and depth sensitivity, is the key sense for self perception from the very inside. For I only discover that it is I myself, in my earthly body, when I bump into something somewhere. The regions of deep sensitivity are important because there the organs in the body perceive each other and learn to attune themselves to one another. Superficial sensitivity on the other hand conveys awareness of the me being complete in myself and a single whole compared to the multiplicity of organs of functions.

You see, health and sickness depend on these key senses, as do the qualities of self perception. They are, however, merely representative of the other senses. If all twelve senses are not daily given the best stimuli in the first 18 months, and above all the first year, no foundation is laid for healthy experience of self both on and in the body.

In conclusion, let me put the question once more in a different way: Which of the senses gives which quality of self experience?

Lecture 2

In the pure rays of the light
the godly nature of the world shines out.
In pure love for all creation
the divine nature of my soul shines out.
I rest in the godhead of the world;
I shall find myself in the
godly nature of the world.

Thank you for the many questions put to me relating to the morning lectures. Three subject areas emerge which we'll have to consider today and tomorrow. One lady expressed her problem as follows: 'Surely it is asking a lot to ignore pre-school education for twenty years, and then to recognize its importance and ask for a new human culture to be created? If this is wrongly understood – fortunately we understand it rightly – it gives the impression that we know exactly how to do it. But what about our responsibility? Are we actually up to it? Where does the change in approach come from? We try hard to get our colleagues to see that we must think about provision for young children, but in the lecture you were actually speaking of provision made in the first year of life!' According to this, 'young children' are aged 2 or 2½ and over, and it is considered revolutionary to speak of the first year.

This one note, and I could read out others as well, shows that quite different aspects come together that have to do firstly with the way we see ourselves as anthroposophical teachers, secondly with the problems of our time, and thirdly with our own abilities and inabilities.

A second subject area concerns the teacher's self education and the question as to how we can support the child's potential for self awareness and a powerful inner identity experience. The questions in this area went in two directions: What can I do in real terms to create a basis for self awareness for the child? And: What can I do to strengthen my own, the teacher's, self awareness which may be inadequate.

A third subject area has to do with the child, the focus of all our workshops and group work. How can I arrange the day and activities in such a way in practice that it will give the best possible result for the child and his parents?

Including the parents

When we talk of care provision for children in the first three years of life, which is after all our conference theme, we should not even think of the children without including the parents. It would be an insult to forget all about the parents once they have handed over their infants and young children at the door. This would not be fair to the children. This is a very different kind of education than the kind that is given later, when the children have got older. In those early years, the child is still completely open to his surroundings; he experiences himself as part of the whole. The more we have the whole of this in mind, the more will the child feel at ease.

It does, of course, need time and practice before we learn to keep not only the infants but also the parents in mind. The night-time review of the day is a help here, for one can briefly consider each child in his wholeness. We then take this with us through the night, and it will create a 'homely' atmosphere rich in relationships for the next day.

Of course it takes time, effort and struggle before we are more or less able to create an image at night of the child and everything we have learned about his home and family. Of course you can't consider each family home in detail when you're dog tired at night; and this is not what is meant. What is important is that you let an image arise before you of the people who are most closely connected with this child – mother, father, neighbour, grandmother – people who may have brought the child to the crèche instead of the parents. And when you do something with the child, it is important that you above all have the image of the mother before you in the way she has shown

herself at her best, being as far as possible herself. This will help the child to feel protected, to feel a wholeness.

This is also the golden rule given to divorced parents. We tell the mother: Your child will miss his father less the less you forget everything to do with why you married him, making this more important than all the hateful things and difficulties that came later. A child needs the love between his parents for his physical and earthly origin; if he was born as a result of rape, love was still there at his beginning, for his mother decided to have him and love him. If this acceptance cannot be achieved, the child's ether body will be damaged; for this body of creative powers, which is also our thought body and thus identical with our thought life, is always a whole. If we ignore sectors of it by forgetting or neglecting something we lived through, perhaps hating it because we dislike it – in the present case therefore the act that led to the child being born – the whole is damaged, and the child never feels fully accepted. We have to consider this as something that is very real.

Being a mother or day mother in the 21st century

I'll now endeavour to say something on the three subject areas we mentioned.

Like everything else, the subject of how we see ourselves has a historical background. The 20th century was the century of emancipation. Just consider, it was not until 1908 that a woman was admitted to take the final exams at Berlin University. In Germany, a highly civilized country, academic education for women was still taboo at the beginning of the 20th century, and scientific papers were written as to whether women were actually capable of taking higher education and on the effect their presence in lecture theatres would have on the moral attitudes students had to their work. (In the light of this we can admire Ita Wegman who decided to take up medicine in 1905 and went to Zurich University; thanks to this she was then able to inaugurate the medical work at the Goetheanum together with Rudolf Steiner.)

After the First World War this emancipation of women progressed apace, also thanks to experiences gained during the War. It became evident that whilst women still differ from men in some respects in body, soul and spirit, the differences do not exist when it comes to intelligence, social competence and the spectrum of most professions and occupations. After the Second World War there was no more holding back. And last but not least the pill also played its part in female self determination, though I do not mean to say that I would recommend this form of contraception.

Let me briefly refer to some phenomena that emerged more strongly in the 20th century. They may show us how we may move forward in a constructive way.

1 Facing up to evil is something we can no longer evade. Anyone who closes their eyes and does not study a phenomenon such as Hitler shares the guilt. Times have passed when people could assume the government or the Church were well-intentioned and that leading scientists always knew best. Even the best of authorities cannot take away our obligation to consider the major issues in public, scientific and cultural life and struggle to form our own opinion. Certain things can of course only be found and done by experts. But it behoves every individual to judge the effect on human and social life, just as lay people learn as a matter of course to judge works of art and assess their value.

2 Facing up to evil is not only horrific, terrible, an abyss. It is also an opportunity to awaken to the good and to personal responsibility, and to set one's foot on the road to freedom. Without this confrontation of evil the 20th century would not have become the century of emancipation to the extent it has done so.

The political chaos we see in Germany at present is indeed terrible, because important work is not being done, but on the other hand it is a blessing; for when it comes to the authorities, Germans are unbelievably easy-going. So we can only congratulate them on now having a government that will make them wake up. Perhaps even the Germans will be more political now, which means they will think public issues through more and take responsibility, not merely depending on the relevant authorities. Reading the election slogans, anyone who still has some common sense must feel embarrassed to see how from election to election it is more and more the emotions that are addressed and people no longer come to grips with ideas. The Germans may be a nation of writers and philosophers, but until now they have lacked all political sense. It is high time for them to catch up

on this. They were the first to pervert the leader and authority principle in their Third Reich. It is because of such sleepiness in the sphere of politics that such a highly civilized nation did fall so low. Now there would be an opportunity to cure that weakness. – It is thus the mission of evil to wake us up to the good.

3 Emancipation has made it possible for women to determine their own lives for the first time in human history; but it is still difficult, even today, to bring this to realization. This is probably one of the reasons why alcoholism is greatly on the increase among women. In the past, only about 5 or 10 per cent of alcoholics were women; according to the latest figures they now make up 30 per cent. This dramatic increase has many reasons, and we cannot go into these now. But we must know that when mothers hand their children over to us, there may be serious problems somewhere in the background. It is important, therefore, that we feel solidarity with these women, especially if we ourselves have found our way to emancipation and become a day mother, for instance.

Is motherhood a natural function of women, or a job, or both? This is a subject of endless dispute. I myself think it is both. It is a job, meaning that there are mothers for whom it is not a job and who really want to do something else. My mother saw it as her job, and I am grateful to her for this to this day. But she also had to forgo many things and was not always happy with her destiny. Her children were aware of this at times. And this is why certain questions arose for me at an early age, questions that have been with me all my life. Thus I cannot agree with the view that a woman who is a good anthroposophist will always accept her gender-bound role, taking it to be her vocation, though she would be allowed to think of herself now and then once the children have left home.

Blind adherence to principles helps neither the children nor other people today. The age of principles comes to an end the moment individual freedom develops and with it personal responsibility. Marriages based on principles are doomed to failure. The only principle one should take with one in marriage is to have no principles. Then there is a good chance of managing well in the long run. The question is, why are principles no longer right for our age? Because they make us unable to form our own opinions. If I have principles I know immediately what is right and what is wrong. I need not look at the issue and consider if the principle actually applies in the given situation or if an exception should be made, or indeed something quite different would meet the case. Thus 'a mother should stay at home for the first three years of a child's life'. This principle is indeed right for the child and the best one to use, but it does not take account of the realities of life. And if I follow a principle with gritted teeth, this certainly does not make me a good mother. Or conversely, having someone else look after one's child does not automatically make one a bad mother.

Rudolf Steiner dealt firmly with the issue of sticking to principles in his work *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* which he wrote at the end of the 19th century. Later, in anthroposophy, he added the distinction between ahrimanic and luciferic as a spiritual criterion, referring to modern civilization as the civilization of the spiritual soul. A culture of either-or, of black and white, good and evil, yes and no, was profoundly justified in history, but that was in the previous period of civilization, the age of the intellectual or mind soul. Why? Because the dialectic of yes and no, right and wrong, trains one's thinking, and people who need it are given clear guidelines and rules of behaviour. One person would set up a thesis, another would say the opposite. They would then enter into dispute, that is, fight verbally, until the truth finally emerged and they knew what was 'right'. This is also why people who had the 'wrong' thoughts according to that scholasticism would still be burned on the stake in those days. Anything wrong or evil had to be eliminated.

The age of the spiritual soul then brought a completely new way of thinking and therefore also a new kind of dialectics. The philosopher Hegel developed it as follows. He said that all thinking is in opposites, and I do not understand anything in the world unless I think in opposites. We can test this easily. Trying to think 'small', for instance, we cannot do it unless we also have 'large' for comparison. We cannot think anything at all unless we think of the opposite at the same time. That is not the whole process, however. Hegel considered the opposite nature of 'existence' and 'nothingness'. There he discovered – and this is entirely spiritual soul quality – the 'both ... and', a third element, 'passing away', that mediates between existence and nothingness, and conversely the 'process of becoming' which mediates between nothingness and existence. And now we come to the crucial idea: *coming into being and passing away are the true realities. You do not find*

existence and *nothingness* anywhere in the visible world; everything in the visible world is either in the process of becoming or it is passing away, and thus always has something in it of 'existence' and of 'nothingness'. This is also why the first exercise Rudolf Steiner gave in his *How to Know Higher Worlds?* is to meditate on coming into being and passing away. They are the gateway to our living and dying. And we do not understand anything in life unless we always consider both. Spiritual soul culture or civilization thus calls for awareness of the true reality of life.

To understand this and cope with it needs a degree of human maturity and indeed a strong self awareness. It is difficult to cope with the fact that there is no pure truth and pure falsehood anywhere in life. We feel self assured when we think we have them; if we have to forgo them we grow uncertain and exposed to the risk of error. Nor do we realize in the case that, as Hegel once put it, 'this fear of error is actually the error itself'.

Don't feel sad, however, because nothing is perfect in life. It has to be like that, otherwise we'd have no need for further development. Someone who wants everything to be perfect is well on the way to fanaticism and unreality. On the other hand it is not right either to see always only the contradictions and cast all principles overboard, saying, 'it's all relative anyway'. Contradiction is immanent in life, but if one focuses only on this, one finally sees only hopeless chaos and feels unable to understand anything. You are Ahriman's prisoner then, as it were, having fallen prey to arbitrariness, instability, resignation and finally cold indifference. Lucifer on the other hand is the spirit who makes himself the judge and arbiter of life; he is the super moralist who always knows what is right. In the Book of Revelation, these two opposite powers are called the Devil (Lucifer) and Satan (Ahriman).

The seventh stage in the Rosicrucian way of inner training is that the disciple puts everything he has learned and experienced at the service of life. For all anthroposophical inner training addresses itself to life; everything we do is intended to serve this wondrous thing. If we say, and this happens so often nowadays: 'There are no ideals, all things are relative!' we fall back again into the attitude that belongs to intellectual soul culture. Yes, there are ideals, and yesterday we saw that they can be something lasting, eternal, to take us through difficult situations in life. But – and Hegel realized this – we only find them in their pure form when we have died and are in the world of the spirit, where pure, ideal reality is free from all matter.

Out of that world of the spirit we bring our thoughts with us into earthly existence in form of etheric powers that hold the ideal of our humanity. Without this light of ideals our lives would be dark, a nightmare. These ideals never become full reality, however, and because of this they can be powerful impulses for our development. They are the perfect development aid workers, but they do not do the work for us. Instead they give us strength, stability and orientation for the quite individual reality that arises for us in real life.

Perhaps a mother, seeing how beautifully we work with her child in the crèche and how meaningful and satisfying it is, will say to the crèche worker one day: 'I have learned from you how good it is to be a mother; I'll take the little one home now and from tomorrow I'll look after him myself.' We should feel pleased at this.

It may also be, however, that the anthroposophist from next door who has always been looking down on the mothers who brought their children to our crèche, will bring her own child along one day, asking us to accept him because she has come to realize that it can be an act of selflessness to put your child into professional hands if you are looking for something else in your life vocationally. Again we should feel pleased and do what we can to care for the child in a way that best meets his mother's ideas.

Then there's a third kind of mother – I've often met them in my paediatric practice – who really do 'everything right', yet somehow do not really cope with their destiny of having a child. They are bothered by conflicts of conscience, guilt feelings and even depression, because they had been hoping for different prospects in life. They did want a child – but not yet! Here anthroposophy shows a marvellous trait. On the one hand we can say that it would be ideal for the child to be at home with his mother for the first three years, for that is where he will feel most at ease; on the other hand anthroposophy also allows us to offer a profound consolation to these often desperate mothers by telling them: 'It is more important for your infant to have a contented, happy, much involved though perhaps somewhat stressed mother for the mornings and evenings, at weekends and during holidays

than a housewife who wants to have everything perfect whilst she is at odds with herself and her destiny all day and ultimately dissatisfied. For if one cannot create a happy, loving home atmosphere with a positive attitude to life, where people smile often at the child, it will be much better to take him to a crèche where he can have motivated professional care.

As regards the comment that we have done nothing for early education for 20 years, I have to say that this is not exactly true. What we have been doing is to develop education in earliest childhood in the family home. For what is a good Waldorf kindergarten? Nothing but an imitation of a large family home. I have had personal experience of what happens in the home – in my own family and with the neighbours' children. We learned all the singing and rhyming games from the slightly older children in the street. Today people have to work to learn those games in their nursery teacher's training. We would play outside for hours, making two long lines holding hands, and people walking past would hear the one line of children sing the first two lines of the song as they went forward and back. Then the other line would do the same, singing the next two lines. And so they would alternately move forward and back. The lyrics and melodies were the greatest fun, and no one ever asked if it was pentatonic. Things being as they were, my mother did not take us to a kindergarten, for we had everything we needed. We would also feel our mother's eye on us now and then from the kitchen or living room window, and that would be enough for the whole morning. Today this is no longer possible. We also had the other cultural elements at home that are so important – stories, poems, prayers, songs for the festivals of the seasons, excursions, wonderful programmes of work and activities.

The more individually and optimally anthroposophy becomes life practice and family culture, the better for both family and crèche. We should be pleased if it is possible to have training for parents as well, where mothers who want to make motherhood their profession can be trained, whilst mothers who have decided on a different career can have a clear conscience because they have given their children into our care. We can say to these mothers: 'We are happy to do this work. But we would ask you to continue with some good ideas and habits for the weekend, so that your child has a degree of continuity and feels secure also on the days when he is not with us.' You always tell them as much at a time as they are able to take in and use, not too much and not too little, and as tactfully but also as honestly as possible.

This, then, is what the 'both and', the golden rule for the spiritual soul, might look like in a real situation. If we stick to this rule to the best of our ability, I think we shall do justice to life, to the children and their parents, and also our own self education.

Aids in developing healthy self awareness

Concerning the second area, the question of self awareness or self esteem, I ended with the question yesterday as to what qualities you gain from different sensory experiences. Let me mention just a few key words that may help you to work on the subject independently.

On the one hand we have the senses that are body-orientated – touch, life, movement and balance – and on the other those orientated towards the mind and spirit – hearing, language or word, thought, and self or I. Between them lie the senses that relate to the soul sphere – smell, taste, sight and temperature. All these senses do not function on their own but are interrelated; this applies particularly to connections between senses relating to the body and those relating to the mind and spirit. Thus hearing and balance are closely connected. If you are inwardly out of equilibrium you find it hard to listen, for you are wholly caught up in your own concerns. We need equilibrium for inner calm if we are to be wholly open.

The ability to develop inner calm and open up is something we owe to experiences gained through the sense of balance. This means – and this is crucial – our I, our self, has living experience of itself in the sensory activity. It is the purpose, and indeed the meaning of life on earth that the spirit, the I, experiences itself as individual in coming up against the physical world. This experience of self is possible because all the twelve senses I mentioned are God's creation, just as we are God-willed as whole human beings.

Sense of movement and word/language sense are connected in so far as every movement the child learns to perceive reflects a sense, word and speech situation. Every gesture, every physiognomic

expression is speech, every movement expresses something. Later experience of word and sense is thus decisively determined as movement develops in the early years.

We owe our sense of freedom to the sense of movement. The more free a person feels, the more freely is he also able to handle speech and language. People who are unfree cannot express themselves. We can actually recognize an unfree individual from the fact that he keeps thinking what he should say when and where, that he is unsure of himself in this sphere and subject to all kinds of compulsions. Unfree people also do not accept risks, they like to be sure of things. Freedom of movement thus becomes freedom of expression. Freedom of movement teaches us that as human beings we have the potential for freedom. And it is only through the sense of movement that freedom can become experience of self.

The situation is similar with vital processes and thinking. A healthy diet, a good rhythm in life and looking after the vital energies are the best way of promoting intelligence, the best way of learning to perceive the thoughts and vital processes of others.

The sense of life creates harmony with myself for me, for it will tell me if something is lacking by making me feel hunger, thirst or discomfort. Once the need has been met I am content, in harmony with myself. Using the sense of thought to enter into harmony with the environment by thinking—this is something we are given through the sense of life. People who have never known a degree of self satisfaction, being in harmony so that this experience could become a constitutional habit, also feel no need to create harmony around them. They simply do not see disharmony as a problem, for they are so used to it. People like this may sometimes be utterly tactless, without realizing that they are having a serious effect on the atmosphere, disrupting something. Sense of life and sense of thought are truly important social senses. There is, of course, the other, equally problematical extreme of wanting nothing but harmony and being hypersensitive. All in all we can say, however, that the ability to experience ourselves as an integral entity in need of and capable of harmony comes from these two senses, both individually and socially.

Finally sense of touch and sense of I. The infant's most important self experience comes from deep-down and surface sensitivity. In feeling its boundaries the child gains the 'I am' experience, though this is still at a dim and unconscious level. We owe the experience of our existence to the sense of touch, and this is the basis for healthy self awareness not eroded by any doubt in one's own reality. If I am convinced that I exist, I can also develop a sense for the perception of others. People unable to perceive themselves also cannot perceive others. And the sense of I, perception of the other I, must develop in an undisturbed way if social competence is to be achieved later on.

The child must first gain living experience of himself, and this is why the body-orientated senses – touch, life, movement and balance – are wholly to the fore in the first year. The social senses – self, thought, word and hearing – are still closely bound up with the body-orientated senses in young children. Rudolf Steiner's comment was that something that lies hidden in the sense of touch later shows itself in the sense of I, and correspondingly it is the same for the other pairs of senses. A young child getting the feel of his mother or day mother or some other person will at the same time also get the feel of their I, their inmost nature. These children still experience thought and word the way they come to expression in harmonious or inharmonious life situations and in the gestures and movements the children perceive around them.

Then there are the middle senses, as they are called. We are able to perceive temperature, light, sound, colours, darkness, tastes and smells. The sense of smell enables us to unite wholly with another creature, for in smelling it we take it completely into ourselves. The sense of taste makes it possible to get the 'taste' not only of foods but also of ourselves or a situation; it is the experience basis for the inner tact that develops later. All these senses develop rapidly. If their development is subject to disorder in the first year of life, when all the organs, especially those of the nervous system, are most strongly influenced, the process of awakening in the body in a healthy way is more or less impaired from the beginning.

One comment made yesterday was that I stayed for too long with the physical side of self awareness and the question was put how the situation was with the soul and spiritual side. I'll try and answer this.

In the infant and young child, body, soul and spirit are still one inside the other. Experiences gained in spirit, soul and body are all one. The older we get, the more do spiritual, soul and bodily



experiences separate into different spheres, getting independent of one another. This makes it possible to cope even with severe inner tension without losing one's appetite or sleep. It has to be like this, for when the body becomes less resilient in the second half of life and develops defects, this should not affect our self awareness or esteem. At the beginning of life, the spiritual principle does however have to awaken in the body and through the body, and the body has to support this and make it possible. Once the spiritual principle has been absorbed into thinking and soul qualities such as trust in existence, need for harmony, experience of harmony, of freedom, and calm, warmth, light and so on, and have become part of the inner life and thus available, the body may sometimes have its problems but we will nevertheless remain stable in mind and spirit.

Powers of soul and inner training

The critical element is the soul. I can grasp the ideals of my self most beautifully in my thoughts. But it is often extraordinarily difficult to live inwardly between ideal and reality. We thus have to find something that will mediate, doing justice to life, so that I do not reject the ideals and let myself go, but continue to work and develop the self awareness the foundations for which were more or less well laid in my childhood. I can then also trust that affirmation, love and consideration from people around me will come to my aid. It is indeed the inner life of the soul which faces us with the need for training. That is the way it is. The best education will be of no help unless it later on becomes self education. And the consequences of the worst education can be made up for if a strong individual nature takes up the reins or if new ways open up with therapy.

What does such training look like? I'd like to mention just one motif, the one I consider most important especially in our profession, where we are dealing with young children. And that is love.

Our life of feelings, our inner life, moves in the field of tension between sympathy and antipathy. There's no room for love in this field. Initially it simply does not exist there as a feeling, as an inner reality. It is something everyone must gain for himself. Anyone who confuses sympathy with love does not know love and will come to realize this one day, a painful experience that comes when sympathy changes into antipathy. For love can never change into antipathy.

Love mediates between sympathy and antipathy which are straight opposites. We simply have these two and can be glad we are able to respond to everything that comes towards us with sympathy or antipathy. We also have the ability, however, and the need, to develop love. Love makes antipathy more and more objective and differentiated, to the point where you see from the nature of your antipathy how far your love has progressed. Once it has developed to a certain degree, your antipathy will be progressively limited to the things that are truly evil, destructive and problematical. Your

sympathies will also change more and more and will then tell you what is true, beautiful and good. Love grows the more, the greater the intensity of our efforts to let sympathies and antipathies no longer be mere self assertion strategies of an instinctive kind but become organs through which we perceive life. To develop love thus means to work on our sympathies and antipathies to such effect that they become objective and we are able to handle them freely. That is the middle way of training. It is the method of choice for teachers working with young children. Why? Because a lot of natural, instinctive emotions are involved when we work with young children, and also as we deal with their parents – guilt feelings, envy, anger, suspicion and much else. We'll only gain order in this chaos if we work to make our own inner life more pure and objective. This will then enable us to develop healthy self awareness and esteem, so that we may admire someone without envy, or say someone is wrong without being unkind about it. For the other person can only accept our opinion if he feels that we do not hate or despise him. Social competence and the possibility of working to really good effect in the social sphere exist or fail according to the way in which we thus educate our feelings.

A word on the practical side

Continuity is an essential part of education to develop healthy self awareness. For as long as children do not yet have the capacity for abstract memory and therefore immediately forget everything they've seen, the child's self awareness depends entirely on the sensory impressions he has at the moment. He must all the time renew himself in his sensory impressions. This will only change when thinking gradually begins to maintain self awareness. This is why it is so important that every child has his corner, his things, his cot as something that is his own, where he can find himself again and again. The child may miss his mother terribly and suffer because of this, for instance if he's still having a breast feed in the mornings and is still very much in the protective sphere this creates. In that case it definitely helps to put a nursing pad from the mother's bra next to the child's pillow. It will still have the smell of his mother's breast, and the child thus continues to perceive his mother's smell. It has been found that from the first days of life, infants just able to raise their heads a little when lying on their tummies will immediately turn their faces to the side where such maternal 'smell objects' are placed, whilst they show no reaction at all if the objects come from another woman. The sense of smell is thus entirely focused on the mother. Some mothers take account of this fact quite instinctively. The children may then take mum's cardigan with them when they start to sleep in a room on their own. This is a well-proven aid to ensure good sleep.

We also need to understand in terms of the science of man why repeating the same things will strengthen and deepen self esteem, why familiar surroundings, the same beloved face, the same laughing eyes, the same warm hand, the same smell, the same taste give such a feeling of security. (Infant food is boring, with little 'variety', always tasting the same; but that is exactly what the children need.) We adults do not longer need that; we like to have something different every day. But the infant's senses call for repetition, because the I can only develop its own activity and gradually connect with the body through sensory perception.

Hence also these wonderful fifth intervals. They wholly address the sense of life and inspire the I to find itself. The fifth is the sound of life, and every breath moves the lungs in a ration of 2 : 3, the ratio of the fifth, because we have three lobes on the right and two on the left. The fifth is the interval where one experiences oneself in the whole of one's body harmoniously at the border between outer environment and melancholy inner life; it is cheerful, healthy self awareness.

The third is melancholy; there we are already a little bit on the way to enjoyable depression. And with the sixth and seventh one is already a little bit on the point of taking off. When we play fifths again and again, for example on a lyre, in the first, second and third years of life, also bringing in stories and little songs we invent ourselves, this strengthens the children's self-awareness, their deep-down experience of self. And it is at the same time an objective inner exercise for you, so that your sympathies and antipathies become organs of perception for what the child likes and needs in the core of his being. For you must not think that something you yourself think is the most beautiful is also the most beautiful to the child. It may indeed be the same, but it need not.

Lecture 3

In the pure rays of the light
the godly nature of the world shines out.
In pure love for all creation
the divine nature of my soul shines out.
I rest in the godhead of the world;
I shall find myself in the
godly nature of the world.

Looking for a verse in preparing for this conference, a verse that might be a guiding principle for our work, we finally agreed on the words we have just been hearing. They say something that is wholly independent of any religious confession. They refer to the divine nature of the world, of pure love for all that exists, and therefore the ideal which is that man should enter into a loving relationship with everything there is around him. This is something which young children need as just as much as they need mother's milk. Rudolf Steiner used the words 'The world is good' for the result that will come when we love all that is. And if something is done out of the best powers of the heart, in inmost honesty and greatest love we can be sure that it will be good.

Once, when someone asked Rudolf Steiner how we should imagine an angel to be, what an angel was really like, he said: Meditate it the way you can conceive of it for the time being. Maybe the way an angel appears in an old icon – a strong, upright form but light, with wings, to show that this is an etheric form that has no weight. It is light-winged like a thought. And then the eyes! Feel that the angel is looking at you. Simply start with the way you see the angel in paintings, and let this come to mind. The angel itself will then help you to develop more and more the right idea. For the angel is a reality; the angel will help us to be able to think it more and more the way it is in his true nature.

And that is how it is with reality altogether. When we do something for a child, for parents, for our colleagues, and do it with love, it might even be the wrong thing but it can nevertheless take us forward. For reality takes a hand. And so we hope that this verse by Rudolf Steiner can be something of a companion for us when we leave this place to go home again. A companion who'll help us to develop the right attitude to the child all over the world. Such an attitude can only become effective if a group of people keep it alive and take it forward.

You'll have read in our conference brochure that this conference serves three aims:

- 1 sharing personal experience,
- 2 to review the literature needed in our own work and also for communication with the world at large,
- 3 to create the seed for a community that will be active world-wide and can also work spiritually to help protect children.

I want to say something on each of these three points.

We'll share our personal experiences most intensively in the workshops. We need to know what we can do and cannot yet do, the gradient between these two, and what we must learn in addition, so that when we are at home again we can help ourselves and put the right things in place, giving our work more and more of a solid foundation. One aspect of this is also that we know to whom we may turn to ask for advice.

Alliance for Childhood

The second aim relates to the materials available to us. We need three kinds of literature: 1) Literature to inform us all the time about the latest research findings relating to young children, i.e. the normal scientific literature of our time in form of books and papers in journals. It would be important to find two or three people – they don't need to live in the same place, but would need to be in constant touch – who are prepared to collect such publications and send the list of titles to the community or perhaps the Medical Section for further distribution once or twice a year. This kind of organization

would help us become a community that communicates and works together world-wide. So that would be one kind of bibliography.

The second kind – and we are still quite at the beginning with this – is one that builds bridges between anthroposophy, the science of man in body, soul and spirit, and conventional science which essentially concentrates on the body or considers the child from the point of view of quite specific psychological or psychotherapeutic theories, with no reference made to the spirit.

Basically we can say that everything that is said about the body and soul of the children is only half true; the images are always distorted because the spiritual point of view is lacking. The theories are usually based on the view that early childhood experiences have specific effects which determine the rest of life; only one life on earth is considered. Most hypnotic regression techniques also remain at the purely psychological level, with no spiritual scientific awareness to monitor them. Talking to people who have gone through such regressions, or reading books on rebirthing, one soon finds that certain themes keep coming up, above all specific situations in which the individual was the victim – holocaust, torture, rape, running the gauntlet, being burned at the stake, and so on, all of them extreme situations for humanity. Now this may indeed be the case in some instances. We know from the science of the spirit that human beings lay aside their ether body and astral body after death. What does this mean, however? We take the thoughts relating to self awareness, self experience and our essential being with us; thoughts of what is not of the essence, of evil, of things that go against nature and belong to the abyss, are left behind, for they are not part of us, even if we have known them and suffered through them. They are not true and beautiful and good. We leave them behind in the sublunar sphere between earth and moon. They remain in the earth's ether aura and are the element of pain in it. Daemonic elements and evil are at home in this sphere, evil thoughts and feelings, impulses of hatred. When human souls come close to the earth on their way to a new incarnation, they perceive many of the horrors and cruelties that have happened on earth. These impressions are taken up into the developing ether body and may later come to conscious awareness like something the individual has lived through himself. But it is not one's own karma one sees in that case, but – as one would almost like to put it – the connection with the karma of humanity, with the trespasses of humanity, and one is then also prepared to help work on these in the new life.

What I want to say is this. Unless we make an intensive study of the science of the spirit and consider the phenomena of being a child and of childhood development in the light of that science, we shall not gain a view that is in accord with human nature, with the truth, including all aspects. We should also know, however, what psychological and conventional scientific research have shown about the child. For many questions come up in this area. A question I was asked, for instance, was: 'What should we do if a test-tube baby is brought to our day-care centre? Are they actually real human beings? Does a real I incarnate in such a baby?' You see, this also concerns the question as to what is normal. As a paediatrician I would say: Everyone is as normal as he can be; and I must work with the normality which is there. For each human being sets his own norm, of course; each is his own standard. And it would of course be quite wrong to call someone else abnormal because he's different.

None of us is like anyone else, not even in infancy. This matter of normal values is altogether a problem. The idea of a 'norm' comes from scientific medicine. It is only at the level of natural science that we can make comparisons, set standards and determine deviations from the normal – standards for people's weight, body, collar and hat size, length of skirt, also the blood sugar level in the mornings and evenings, body temperature and so on. But there's always a certain range, and in medicine we do not speak of normal levels but normal ranges. The haemoglobin level in the blood should be between 12.6 and 16.5, for instance, but varies according to age. The norms are different if I have a cold than if I do not, and different at age 30 than at age 6. This means that norms always need to relate to the given situation. Each is a world, a norm, for himself.

This has its consequences. When we are working for childhood development in the right way we receive children who are as normal as they are and want to make them more and more normal, i.e. increasingly more in accord with their own norm, their own destiny configuration and potential. We must, of course, consult a physician if a child fails to grow; but if he is growing a bit more slowly than others we can take an interest in this, saying: 'He's decided to be slow but sure.' We need not feel any concern.

There are also normal ranges for the mind and spirit. We must nurture these as our inner moral standards, consolidating them day by day. We spoke of how important it is in inner training to be more and more full of character, honest, truthful, loving, free and trusting, to stabilize our normal range in mind and spirit more and more. In other words, to grow more normal. This can only be done individually. One person may say: 'I've been really nice today. For me the niceness I've shown today is a real achievement. You should have seen me ten years ago! Someone else may consider it absolutely immoral because he's reached such a high level that I'm not anywhere near it.' We need to develop a real feeling for such individual reference points.

This also applies to the issue of the parents, which we discussed yesterday. If we base ourselves on individual norms, then there will only be perfectly normal parents. For it is the most normal thing for parents to produce a child. And in our day it is an achievement for people to allow themselves to bear the child and care for it. All other questions connected with this – if I bring up my child myself, or if by handing the child over I encourage a new profession to develop, that of day mother or crèche worker – concern my way of finding the best method of being a mother in the interest of the child. More and more mothers ask themselves today if they are up to the highly qualified work of bringing up a child. And a mother is simply honest if she says she prefers to hand her child over to professionals and is going to look for the best possible day care. And if six months later she decides to look after the child herself, having gained in confidence in the meantime and given up her other job, that, too, is normal. The next child on the waiting list can then have the cot that has become free or a place in the corner where the crawlers are safe.

We must be investigators of normality, making a careful study of motherhood and fatherhood in our time, and treating every adult as someone who is as normal and good as he actually is. If we help each other in this way, a mood may arise that is truly sustained by the science of the spirit, by genuine understanding of the individual human being. For if we have fixed notions of what a mother should be like, how she should think, feel and act, we are no different from conventional medical practitioners who base themselves on norms and not on the individual. This would mean clever talk, judgmental, opinionated, luciferic, something that is of no use to us for it does not truly relate to life and to reality.

On the other hand we must have ideas of the highest standard of truth, beauty and goodness, ideas of the best possible baby care. This will enable us to make the best possible connection in the individual situation. We need this second kind of literature for this, by authors who are all the time working to broaden knowledge of the young child with the science of the spirit. Again we need ways of sharing the information, and the question has been asked if we should not have a kind of early intervention or day-care centre letter to share information on the most important things, including conferences and colloquia in the different countries. Or is there an existing journal that might be persuaded to give us a page, so that our work can receive continuous nourishment?

Thirdly we need the kind of literature that will help our work with parents, authorities and the world around us. I am thinking of simple leaflets, a folded A4 page that can be popped into any envelope; two sides, with nice pictures, a bedtime prayer, description of two or three rituals, a little bit of bibliography and a nice joke to finish up with ... That is the kind of thing we should give parents to take home and publish on the internet.

Or does something of this kind already exist? In some regions they already have schools for parents. Perhaps you could send us your leaflet, so that we may copy it. To get an alliance going for the protection of childhood, the dignity of the child, and for human dignity altogether, we need such things as the internet, or flyers, which one may also sometimes 'leave by accident' in a tram or train or at the station. One could also leave some flyers in a grocery shop or at a chemist's next to the Pampers, even if it says on the flyers that cotton nappies are a good thing. Sometimes it is also good to have Pampers, for instance if rather than be stressed out by having to smooth the cotton nappies out in the evening and fold them up, one would like still to be fresh enough to sing one's child an evening song.

All these activities go in the direction of an ideal global alliance. A group of people working with young children, kindergarten teachers and friends have been working on this for the last three years. They have produced a small brochure entitled *Alliance for Childhood*. Let us use this name – or any other – to play an active role everywhere in our culture and help to develop a world-wide movement for the right to be a child, for human dignity.

Continuing the work together

The third point I mentioned at the beginning has to do with getting to know one another and continuing to work together. The aim is to create an effective, world-wide community that can also make a spiritual contribution to protecting childhood, and will help every individual effort. This thought also played a role in choosing our morning verse, which we hope will generate ideas and bring gratitude to our hearts. Perhaps some of you will take it home – or look for something similar – saying to yourselves: 'I think this good thought not just for myself, so that I'll start my day in a better way, but I also think it for all children, all parents. I want to help with my good thought so that the earth's thought sphere may inspire humanity, this marvellous ether aura in which the Christ lives, in which the divine nature of the world lives and the angels are present, with the highest hierarchies reaching down into it and the elemental spirits doing their bit. I want to strengthen the earth's ether sphere with good thoughts, so that these good thoughts will "come to mind" more easily for everyone.

Species are becoming extinct everywhere, the woods are dying, genetic engineering weakens the genes, the powers of the etheric. This needs to be balanced out by inner effort. The work we do in mind and spirit can then shine out also to others, encouraging them to resist the destructive tendencies, for instance by not buying or selling GM foods.

We know that good thoughts provide the greatest stability in personal life and in love between human beings. If we think well of and feel good about one another, we create an invisible spiritual human power in us. Connecting with the ideal of this crèche work in our thoughts, feelings and actions, and thinking about one another, about the faces we have seen here, and wishing others well – like when you write 'All the best, yours, Paul' to a friend – we bring something to this world which is lacking today. Of course, one can't prescribe such things. Anything which happens in mind and spirit, in the inner life and in our physical actions must be the free decision of each individual. This alone will make it good. Otherwise it would have been better not to have mentioned it.

This marks the end of my introduction and we still have time to consider some of your specific questions.

Ideal images for child development

I have been thinking – are there ideal images for child development that can help us to answer some of the practical questions more easily? And it came to me – nice if more could be added or if corrections could be made by you – that the *Sistine Madonna* clearly continues to be a first ideal image. She is a kind of archetypal Madonna, as only Raphael could have painted her, the painter who in earlier incarnations had been the prophet Elijah and then John the Baptist. Later he incarnated as Novalis, who proclaimed the Christ in positively jubilant words in one of his poems: 'I now tell everyone that he lives and is risen ...'. We have an individual spirit there that is wholly imbued with God, a God-seeker through all incarnations. As the *Sistine Madonna* is a world archetype, we like to hang reproductions of the painting in our kindergartens and also in the labour rooms in our clinics.

She is white, but that does not mean she is not also the archetype for a black Madonna. I would always suggest having a coloured Madonna in coloured kindergartens and this special Raphael *Madonna* as well. This will avoid misunderstandings, as if a white Madonna were more 'normal' than a black one. In the language of spiritual science, the colour white means 'close to God', the colour black 'disembodied, purely spiritual existence in the world of the spirit.' White means close to God on earth; black is the esoteric colour of death, of spirituality. White is the ideal of cleansing the soul on earth, black the image of eternity. Human skin colours range between these two poles of incarnated and excarnated spirituality. Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* is an archetype in the esoteric sense because her infant is neither white nor black but flesh-tint (*inkarnat* in German), a colour produced by adding some black and some red to white. Spirituality is still there in the black and the red, whilst the white indicates a readiness to turn to the earth, to incarnate. This is also the colour of all the children's heads in the painting. This *Madonna* is esoteric because every colour, every form, is exactly right from a spiritual point of view, and the way the child sits on his mother's arm is as if he has emerged from the host of unborn souls that are ready to incarnate. This is something which surrounds every young child as an aura – many other children, many other destinies are there around the child.

A newborn infant is infinitely rich in echoes from the world of the spirit, etheric bonds, hierarchic thoughts, and also karma, destiny relationships. This is shown most beautifully, for apart from the Madonna and the Child, the painting also shows angels and a male figure. It is the archetype, so to say, of the incarnation moment composed esoterically and exoterically. If we take this image with us into our day centres, we can find there the right attitude and the strength we need to guide the child in a good way on his way down to earth.

It is said again and again that people sometimes stop in their tracks as if shocked and grow still when they see the original of the *Sistine Madonna* in Dresden. The story even goes that a noisy troop of soldiers forgot their laughter and bad jokes before this painting. The Sistine Madonna has great power, educative in the best sense of the word, and making us come upright, giving stability.

Now another 'image' – a 3-month-old child. We know from developmental psychology and also from personal experience that the child's eyes begin to focus in the second or third month. It means that infants are only really able to see objects from this time onwards. It will, however, be 6 - 8 years before the power of sight is fully matured and colour nuances can be perceived. Work on this continues day by day in the physiological process of vision. But it is especially at this time, in the second or third month, that the child is able to perceive us more and more directly and definitely, and seeks to connect with us through the eyes. The child's look may go right through us; he does not turn away either, and we can look into his open, clear eyes at leisure, intently and for a long time. This reflects a spiritual power of love that is wholly objective, trusting and yet also personal. The only thing we know that compares with this is the look in the eye of a lover.

What is happening there? An etheric penetration, an etheric communion. Our eyes reach out and touch; we notice this when we are aware that someone is looking at us, even when this touch has unclean feelings in it and it is a bad situation. Think on the other hand of how much a kind look, with pure feelings behind it, can cheer us up, heal, comfort, bring light. The ether body is quite loose in the eye. It can go outside, taking in all forms and recreating them. We have eye muscles so that the eye may always follow as we look; essentially it is like an etheric camera. And since we also think with the ether body, we can also immediately have an idea of what we see, and recall it when we close our eyes.

The child's eye can remind us how important it is to have a pure, honest karmic relationship. For when a child gives us this serious, trustful look, he is testing us, asking: 'Will you support me? Will you give me what I need? Can I genuinely trust you? Will you be with me for part of the way?'

At this point I'd like to refer to something that is of tremendous importance. It has been established in recent years that apart from hereditary traits and environment, which are the two developmental drives we've known of for a long time, there is a 'third factor' which influences a child's development most of all and above all makes it individual. There is actually statistical evidence that people would have to be much more alike if heredity and environment were the only factors. Investigators explored the question why widely different characters may develop in a single family with the same environment, school, religion, daily programme, and so on, even including 'black sheep'. Siblings may differ more from each other than people do who are not related at all and have grown up in completely different environments. Why is that so?

In view of this fact the idea arose that there must be a third factor – the quality of relationship between people, for this differs in every instance. Some mothers insist they treat all their children the same; but they don't actually do so, and are in fact unable to do so. If they did, the children would experience the treatment they received differently. Parents sometime come to me and say they are equally strict with all their children. I always tell them: 'I am sure that is unfair. You apply the same standard to the children, but Fred is so sensitive that he'll be deeply hurt if you tell him off even just a little bit, whilst Lisa can cope with the occasional smack on the bottom. Children differ so much, you can't treat them all the same.' If I wanted everyone to be at the breakfast table by 8 in the morning, for example, I'd have to approach each child individually to achieve this. I can't do it by treating them all the same.

These things need practice, of course. They are the know-how we need every day, for instance if a vertical group of children includes four infants, three toddlers, crawlers and young children, and then also some 'seniors', i.e. 5-year-olds. If quality relationships are sacred to us – and they must be – we must always ask ourselves: How do I make the relationship to each child so individual that he feels accepted as he is and experiences both strictness and loving fairness? How do I perhaps also

make an exception at the right moment, with a smile, for example, so that a free space is created and this particular child is able to catch his breath again. For all education must be mercurial, flexible, always going to and fro between meeting half-way and setting boundaries, giving space and making demands. We can only develop this ability if we love the children just as they are.

This also touches on the karma question, which can be a real comforter, especially in working with parents. If you have some knowledge of anthroposophy you'll know that there are three destiny levels. At the personal level things lie spread out before you, as it were, and you know they are part of you and you cannot escape them. Then there is the level where individuals cope with their own karma fairly quickly and still have energies left over so that they can freely take on the destiny of other people. Finally, at the third level, the individual feels karmically co-responsible for everything that happens in the world today, where children are neglected because of the human condition. There are different problems relating to a time or place – areas where 80% of people are out of work, large cities where 30% of people are criminals – and it needs people who from an inner vocation, in inner freedom, are ready to take on specific tasks and missions. This may also mean 'gathering up' children living in impossible conditions and providing loving care for them. This is to balance out the karma of the age. Not to judge, nor to bewail, but to help. Asking the Perceval question: What ails you? What do you need? And then of course dealing with the wholly personal destiny.

We have all this in our mind's eye when our eyes meet the solemn, questioning, trusting eyes of the infant. We then see our task, which is to be as capable of making relationships again as we once were in our infancy, and we learn to shape karma consciously, in freedom and love. Michael Bauer, author and teacher in Nuremberg in Rudolf Steiner's day, said: 'The idea of reincarnation is a postulate for love; anyone who truly wants to help will not tire of it in just one life on earth.' We can bring this to mind when we have to struggle with burn-out symptoms. For we may ask ourselves: What is making me so tired? Where does this lack of love and interest come from? How can I awaken delight in development again, and love? Tired parents may, of course, also come to us for help on occasion.

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true*

Now another image – the child coming upright. We have talked about the tremendous achievement of progressing from the lying-down position to turning over, rolling, actively bending and stretching and crawling movements and finally find the upright. The image we have before us is that the child himself is working on this body, taking hold of it, making it come upright and move. And this is an image we must bring very much to life in us today, for many things, also in medicine and early intervention, are such that they intervene in the child's freedom of will and of movement from the outside. I am not speaking of walkers and rockers that let children walk in a wholly inappropriate, pathological way before they have gained the upright position. This gives the child a space in which to move which he has not gained for himself, and that does not help. It will rather weaken the child's self experience, for if we are moved from the outside rather than move ourselves we are determined by outside influences.

In anthroposophical early intervention, efforts are being made to transform the gymnastic techniques and methods of treatment people have learned in their training to such effect that they support the child's own movements to the greatest possible extent. For some people working in the field, the empathy this needs comes quite naturally. Those who do not have the instinct will need to develop those skills with the help of anthroposophy, lest they use force on the children. They need to get away from purely mechanistic neurophysiological reflex and facilitation patterns and instead enter into dialogue with the child's I, his self, so that this I will be prepared to take hold of the body. And they will of course avoid all medical procedures that are not absolutely necessary, giving preference to methods that support natural development.

I have seen the blessings that such an approach can bring with my own eyes. Friends of mine adopted two children – the infant of a drug-dependent mother, who came to them immediately after birth, and another child who was some months old already. The children had eurythmy therapy from the beginning, every morning and every evening, mainly vowels. What are vowels? They are the incarnation movements of the child in his first year. The first individual movement, when the infant lies on his stomach immediately after birth and raises his head, extending the muscles of the neck – that is I [German sound, = ee]. Sometimes the head is so heavy that it wobbles a great deal when thus raised for the first time. As the weeks and months go by, the muscles gradually develop

tone – I. We ourselves start in eurythmy by first of all relaxing completely and then slowly coming upright, until we have freed the head completely from gravity. This decisive gesture, which we do last of all, comes first with the infant. He takes active hold of his body first of all in the head region. This is something children like to do again and again later on, this raising of the head to say: 'Me!' It is the very first thing they have learnt.

— When the eyes begin to focus on objects, the next sound is achieved. When the visual paths cross, infants also begin to play with their fingers, touching themselves; taking hold deliberately, that is E [like the first part of the 'a' in 'late']. Play begins between E and I, with the I becoming more purposeful. Gradually the arms, too, will open and close; but it will be a while before they can be opened and given definite direction – A [ah]. First, however, the O comes after the E, e.g. when hugging a doll. And finally the U [oo] is achieved as the legs are held parallel. This extension of the legs is fully developed at six months, though it will take another six months until a free-standing U is possible.

The vowels are incarnation helpers par excellence. For it is through them that we make ourselves into 'selves', and an adult with poor self esteem can strengthen this by doing eurythmy with vowels. You benefit the children and also yourselves with the vowels; they bring well-being to the body. And consonants improve memory if done standing up, and altogether the structure, modelling and forming of the body. You can use consonants to resolve maldevelopment or malformations in children, putting the right forms in their place.

Eurythmy with vowels and consonants is an unbelievably helpful instrument if one works with it daily. I have seen the two adopted children I mentioned develop healthily, in spite of their problematical background history. It is so good to see this and hear about it. I consider it due to the children's individual spirit, also to that of their parents, and to the nature of eurythmy, which is to use the ether body consciously and actively. This offers something to the child that gives health and healing. It is also the reason why we sometimes do eurythmy in an infants' room, so that the power of these etheric, archetypal movements of taking hold of the body may have an effect on the infants, who are ready to imitate.

We need to know about such effects. Eurythmy comes from joy in movement, from the wholeness of the I, the inner nature of the sounds – admiration and veneration in A, reverence in E, self assertion in I, loving embrace and wholeness in O, 'I seek myself in the spirit' in U. These qualities call the child's original spirit into the living body, delighting the soul in movement.

Joy and cheerfulness create the atmosphere in which a child finds it easiest to incarnate. In his *The Education of the Child* (from GA 34, Anthroposophic Press 1996), Rudolf Steiner wrote: 'Among the powers that help to develop the physical organs is also delight in and with the surroundings. Cheerful teacher's faces and above all genuine love, nothing forced. Such love, filling the physical surroundings with warmth, as it were, will hatch out the forms of the physical organs in the true sense of the word. If the opportunity is given to imitate healthy examples in such an atmosphere of love, the child will be in his element. Great care must be taken to see that nothing happens around the child which he should not imitate. One should never do anything that makes it necessary to say to the child: "You mustn't do that!"'

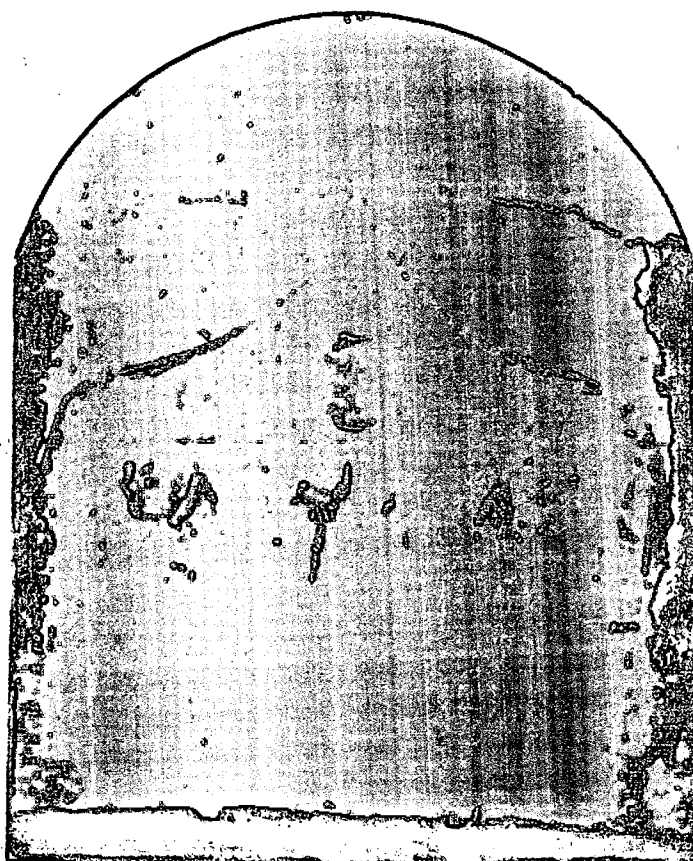
C. Reports from workshops

Entering into life on earth. From pre-birth to pregnancy and birth and into the first weeks of life

Anna Wilde

The group first met at the violet glass windows in the Goetheanum, to gain a first impression of the motifs which extend from after death to before birth. We normally look out into the world of nature through our windows, with light revealing the events out there. With the coloured windows we take the opposite route and are guided towards an inner space.

We then talked about what we had found. After death, the human spirit and soul leaves the physical body behind on earth and experiences a review of the past life. In kama-loka (time of letting go of habits, of purification) the essential human being works back through his whole earth life in reverse, a process governed by specific laws. This makes it possible for the soul element to separate from the spirit, which is then able to enter into the purely spiritual world (devachan). The fruits of earth life are taken up into the cosmos and preserved for a future incarnation. Things that still need to be balanced out arouse a growing desire in us to prepare for a new incarnation. This descent of the human spirit is supported by sublime spirits, and the fruits of past incarnations also come into it. The approaching individual spirit has a part in shaping the hereditary line into which it wants to be born, so that it may have the most suitable hereditary basis possible for its missions in life. Shortly before conception the approaching individual spirit has a preview of what will be possible in life – this may be similar to the way in which the last life was reviewed shortly after death.



Piero della Francesca: Madonna del Parto. Fresko.

Pregnancy

Beginning to think about pregnancy, we looked at Piero della Francesca's fresco *Madonna del Parto* (Madonna giving birth). We saw the blue, enveloping dress, the curtain held by two angels, the inward look, the protective gesture pointing to what is in the process of becoming, the Madonna's listening look. We then tried to approach this state at various levels in our conversation.

Entering into the new state of pregnancy is a process which can hardly be understood from the outside. It involves all kinds of phenomena, which are familiar to us all – mental or physical hypersensitivity or intolerance, lack of balance and even extreme reactions (e.g. hyperemesis). Loving desire to understand shown by others, perhaps also with humour, and a readiness to be at her side, especially on the part of the father-to-be, will help the woman and the life that is developing inside her to find increasing harmony. It is far from unimportant how a mother-to-be deals with her inner powers of thinking, feeling and will intent at this time.

We went to visit the labour/family wards at the Ita Wegman Clinic and talked about the practical aspects of obstetrics – working with the parents, prenatal classes, care during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

Birth

Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* was our guide when talking about the birth process (the original is in the Zwinger gallery in Dresden). Why did we choose this painting and why does it also hang in one of the labour rooms at the Ita Wegman Clinic? On the one hand because Rudolf Steiner spoke of the harmonizing and healing powers of the painting, and on the other because it shows the complex, mysterious changes and processes of birth in a beautifully clear and loving way. This painting can be a help to the mother as she is giving birth. We have taken some of the statements made about this work of art and related them to the birth process.

- The Madonna is looking out into the world, but on the other hand also inwards – she is turning an ear to the child.
- The heart of the painting shows a characteristic aspect of birth. The left side is directly connected with the sphere of light, the child no longer protected by the maternal womb. The right side, on the other hand is secure in the mother's arm and her veil.
- The image of the *Sistine Madonna* can only be seen because the artist opens the green curtain to some degree and lets us look 'behind' it. Do we not get a glimpse of this sphere of light for just moments during every birth?
- Like the Madonna in the picture, every woman giving birth is on the threshold between these worlds. The host of unborn souls follows this step with loving interest.
- At every birth, past, present and future come together and condense into a question for the child: Where do you come from? Who are you? Where are you going?
- A major subject relating to birth is pain – labour pains, birth pangs. Perhaps also the child's incarnation pain? We have come a long way in dealing with the mother's pain. But does it perhaps also have a deeper meaning with regard to receiving the child into this world? Is there perhaps also pain for the child in getting born, a kind of 'condensation pain'? Could we imagine that by 'going through with it', experiencing the pain and working with it, the mother goes out to meet the child who is on his way? Can we imagine that every contraction wakes the child up a little to this earth? Many questions! How do we work with labour pain? The four elements earth, water, air and fire come to our help. Some examples are these:
 - Earth.* Massage using the hands, and provide counter pressure in the area of maximum pain.
 - Water.* A warm bath or foot bath resolves and relaxes.
 - Air.* Giving birth is like a large exhalation; the airy element is also addressed in the producing of sounds, for instance.
 - Fire.* External warmth is important. But also to feel at ease, protected, looked after; being allowed to relax, let go – an atmosphere of 'inner warmth'.
- The different movements and positions play a major role in labour. The father-to-be can be a great help and support the mother who is giving birth.

Childbed

The next big chapter very much has its own signature. In the widest sense it is a time for getting to know one another, and of learning together. This is not only so with the first child, for with every new addition positions within the family change, everyone is 'dethroned', they must all find their new places. It is a highly vulnerable, sensitive, open time, sometimes also bringing instability. It needs protection, and really takes not one but (in the wider sense) six weeks.

The only thing that really matters to the newborn in these early days is that he feels as much at ease as possible in this, his earthly house, so that he truly wants to enter into it more and more and be at home.

For the mother, the childbed period is, according to Dr Norbert Glas, 'a time of turning inwards'. During pregnancy she was pushed out of her own bodily life, as it were. She now needs time and peace to find herself again.

Breastfeeding is a dominant element in the early days and weeks. It is now generally known and scientifically proven that mother's milk is the best early nourishment for the child. According to R. Steiner, breastfeeding should be seen as the first unconscious training of the will for the child's developing soul – 'awakening' the sleeping spirit. Elsewhere he made the comprehensive statement: 'The whole mother lives in the mother's milk.'

It is important to show loving understanding for mother and child in these early weeks and to support them.

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Information

A small international group of midwives meets 2 or 3 times a year, working among other things on the theme 'obstetrics from the anthroposophical point of view'. The group has been affiliated to the Medical Section at the Goetheanum since September 1996.

An extended open weekend on the subject of Childbed (final formulation still outstanding) will be held at the Ita Wegman Clinic in Arlesheim, Switzerland, on 2 - 4 March 2001.

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The role of warmth, speech and attention in infant care

Rosa Barocio

What is warmth in terms of physical matter and also in soul and spirit? Touching the head of an infant we feel warmth coming from it. Where does it come from? If we put a pan of water on the stove we can see what heat does. It transforms water into steam; buoyancy arises.

Working with children, one feels this lightness; it delights. It immediately makes us feel we want to embrace and protect the child. That is our first impulse. We cannot but look at these creatures, who are both perfect and imperfect, with interest. Rudolf Steiner said that interest is a form of warmth.

The child is born out of the macrocosm as a microcosm. Like the sun, he gives out warmth, and we feel an immediate need to envelop and protect him. Warmth is the vehicle for the I which gives our organs their human form. It is important that this process goes the right way and actively so. For a weak organism is an obstacle to achieving our tasks and aims in life. Motivation and intentionality need warmth if we are to fulfil our destiny.

Heat first arose on ancient Saturn, where the potential for the physical human being was created. The element of air was added on the ancient Sun. We are unable to speak unless we can breathe.

Love and will must come together if wisdom is to assume form. Does the child sense it if we remember the stars as we look at him? If we assure him: 'Yes, you come from the stars and you bring a star'?

Warmth and breathing are vital processes. The word borne on the breath is a gift from the Father; it is the Son.

The child chooses the time of his incarnation, and the guardian angel helps. The way to one's own time, in one's own nation, goes from the archetypal image to the individual human being.

The hierarchies are also involved. The archai guide time. They influence our awareness of time, giving new impulses all over the world. The archangels live in the individual nations; anything individuals make of their language – positively as well as negatively – will reach them. And the angels have to do with individual people and their destinies.

Saturn	Sun	Moon
Continuous motion and heat	Pulsation	Narrowing and letting go Purposiveness

Babies are stimulated into activity through interaction with other human beings. Experiments have shown that they can differentiate clearly between a human being and objects. If you give a cylindrical object to a young child, he'll take hold and let go again. If you give him your finger, however, he'll hold on. If you show him a piece of paper on which a human face has been painted he'll first look at it with interest, but soon turn his eyes away, which is different from his response to a real person. With a living human being the baby shows 'eternal interest'. The warmth coming from a person activates the ether. Love is the most powerful form of warmth. If I let this stream of love flow without hindrance and speak into it, the baby will focus, grow attentive and listen.

I observe the world of nature and form images of it. My gesture fits into the astral images as if in a glove. I therefore must first create the images.

If we could perceive the seeing eye clairvoyantly, we would see the 'limbs' of the eye reach out into the world. Speech is consciously placed in this stream of movement.

The more aware we are, the more warmth do we produce and the more is the child drawn to us. The I must be brought closer to the child, so that it may create warmth and attention. Adults must do this to exercise the child's power of attention.

We need to consider the aim behind the effort. /

Human talent develops, and at the same time something is sacrificed.

From sensory perception to concept.

Smells create inner images. Listening and seeing should not be separated.

Lack of attention in the adult causes the ether body to harden. This affects glandular functions which not infrequently need medical treatment.

If I can change the parents' attentiveness, we can change the child's attentiveness.

Studying and observing young children

Observing a child calls for sensitivity and the warmth that can only come from an individual – compared to the 'coldness' of antipathy which is also needed, e.g. in a medical examination.

What might a child-study look like with a newborn? It also covers the pregnancy, the inseparability of mother and child, the 'story' of how the parents met and got married. The family story is a story of warmth.

We need to develop the ability to see if the newborn is doing well. Too much sympathy clouds our vision. Coolness is needed for observation.

What should we concentrate on?

- The child's ability to occupy himself
- His reactions to the behaviour of people around him
- Rhythms (feeding, bath, nappy changes, etc.) and how the polarities develop (head - body; periphery – inner aspects; active – inactive)

With the newborn, special attention must be paid to

- sleeping rhythm
- noticeable smell of faeces, urine and vomit
- metabolic rhythms
- activity level
- tendency to spasm – the astral doesn't let go, the child is tensed and cold
- colics (more common with boys); adults can cope with pain, the infant is at its mercy, being unable to distance himself from the pain.

The vision of infants matures at 9 months. They can clearly differentiate between light and dark. Black and white in the surroundings helps the infant to focus his vision.

The child comes down through the dense ether between moon and earth. The effect of this is that he needs more protection. This we must provide.

Rhythms in man and cosmos. Examples of maintaining rhythms for the day, week and month. Notes on strengthening the will and self assurance

Angelika Knabe

The elementary feeling for rhythm was largely lost 150 years ago. Today we must consciously study rhythms if we are to be able to use them in education – often as a therapeutic element.

Much has been written and said about the importance and effect of rhythm. In the workshop, my aim was to take up these magnificent ideas on the way rhythm heals, gives energy and strengthens the will and show how they can be applied in practice in some areas.



Human development is a thoroughly rhythmical process. Thus the genesis of the human body depends on the menstrual cycle and the maturation of the ovum which is part of it. Cell division in the fertilized ovum also follows a rhythm.

More generally speaking, development always means alternation of evolution and involution, rest and movement, going inwards to condense, and dissolving to shoot out. Other rhythms we may observe are

- life in the physical, sense-perceptible world and life in the world of the spirit
- the influence of the great cosmic rhythms; these affect the organs and their functions (breathing, cardiac rhythm, nutrition, elimination, etc.)
- The different bodies of man also have their rhythms. The I-organization has the shortest rhythm, day and night, waking and sleeping. The astral body has a 7-day rhythm, and the ether body one of 4 times 7 days, or approximately a month. Finally we have an annual rhythm for the physical body.

The rhythms of the bodies give us a good starting point for providing rhythm in bringing up young children. They show the importance of regular repetition. Rhythm might be found in every part of the daily routine, in every activity, to help incarnation and provide energy. As teachers we should never tire, therefore, of checking if our actions are sufficiently rhythmical in the widest sense. Do we hold ourselves back at the right moment, and then again become more active? Do we give the child sufficient opportunity to experience himself in the world and the world in himself? If a child has this free space, he can develop abilities for himself that will give him healthy self assurance in later adult life.



We worked out some things for the daily rhythm. How do I organize the day, for instance, so that the child will be able to sleep well? More and more children suffer from acute sleeping disorders. It is not just that they are unable

to go to sleep, but they also do not sleep through. If we consider that the child gains his powers of growth and regeneration almost exclusively from deep and sufficient sleep, we can see how important it is to tackle this problem. Some of the points made are the following.

- Creating a firm rhythm which the child may follow (definite meal times, bedtimes, times for play or work)
- Making sure the child has sufficient exercise, both indoors and outdoors.
- Adults giving understanding and love to detail, letting the child have opportunity and peace to observe with interest, and without disruption, and then to imitate. There should be no 'undigested' residues for the child.
- Provide sufficient physical and soul warmth around the child. The I is able to be present and active where there is warmth.
- No excessive stimulation with electronic media and toys.

I'd like to give an example also of maintaining the annual rhythm, since being able to follow the rhythm of the seasons has an influence on the child's bodily development. If one wants to have an annual festival for the children, one soon finds that a young child likes to share in everything that lives in the adult. All meaningful preparations for the festival in which the child is able to participate strengthen his will development. After all, the actual event of the festival takes place not in the sense-perceptible sphere but within us. The child will take in our mood and our thoughts with great intensity. Their influence even affects the development of his organs, and thus his future health or a disposition to disease. A child will, of course, delight in a nicely set table, a

burning candle, a special dish. But the key element for him is our inner attitude to the festival, just as our inner attitude to all events or processes in life is the most important thing for the child.

Another criterion in working with the seasons is the following. Self assurance and security in life can only mature in later life if the children have experienced the annual return of particular customs that have become dear to them in celebrating the festivals. Discovering the process of coming into being and passing away in the course of the year will support this.

Creating such good habits in the course of the day, the week, the month or the year is therefore most important. Children easily grow restless, unsure and anxious in the fast pace of life today. Good habits, especially if the adult's religious thoughts – reverence, devotion, contentment – also live in these, strengthen the human bodies, especially the life body.

In conclusion we agreed that the hardest thing for us in maintaining rhythm in education is to find, shape and live our own rhythm. The rhythmic element would, however, give us strength in our work.

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Understanding and treating sleep disorders in young children

Margarethe S. Kölmel

About 30 people attended the workshop which was run by Wolfgang Goebel, until 1995 paediatrician at Herdecke Community Hospital in Germany.

We started by considering the levels of awakesness in the first months of life. This is easily observed from the child's eyes. A newborn 'searches' his mother with his opening eyes, the lids open and close at brief intervals, as though tired, and yet seeking a perception that is quite new. Something that 'shines' is added to the familiar voice, and the child will seek it out again and again.

After some weeks the parents find the child will stay awake after a breastfeed, looking calmly upwards, maintaining the direction with attention and interest; they themselves see nothing but an area of the ceiling or wall lacking in contour. If you push your own head into the line of vision at this point, the child will seconds later show irritation in his breathing, posture and facial expression. He'll then make eye contact and you feel you are being looked at, but definitely slightly above your eyes or to the side, in the hair margin. The eyes are calm again, more or less as before, attentive and interested. If the adult's head moves slowly sideways, the eyes will go with it, following the marginal area which they are looking at. If a curious investigator turns the child's head aside instead, the eyes will keep connection with the point of observation. One often sees the child reacting to the other person with facial expressions – if this is an inexperienced or still uncertain or hasty individual, one may see a slight degree of tension in the face, a one-sided 'pout' or even crying, and this long before one may speak of shyness with strangers. For this will never happen in contact with parents, experienced grandmothers, nurses or physicians.

At 6 to 8 weeks you get the moment of the first 'conscious' smile, directly linked to a straight look into the familiar eyes of his mother or other reference person. Piaget wrote, for instance, that the child's nurse would be given that first look on one occasion. This mutual recognition becomes the basis for finding, acknowledging, sustaining and helping one another for the whole period of development and to the end of life.

No object, except for a source of light, or something red or glittering that moves, can capture the child's eye as much as do the eyes of a friendly person.

It is evident that perception of objects only comes after perception of soul. The child does, however, also find the spiritual element in the other person and in everything else that shines. In sleep, the child develops his body with all might, according to its inner laws but also profoundly connected with all his sensory perceptions. To us adults, on the other hand, sleep, during which conscious awareness is interrupted, gives certain awareness of the fact that we endure. Memory arises when conscious awareness returns as we wake up.

We then collected the questions of the group and after a short pause started to work on them in our conversation, continuing with this on the second day.

The wide range of experience offered by teachers, parents, physicians and nurses gave rise to questions and possible solutions for going to sleep and sleep situations with infants, young children and children. Some who were present kindly noted down everything worth passing on. The questions came under the following headings:

- 1 individual sleep behaviour, constitution of the child
- 2 effect of daytime influences (sensory perceptions) on the night
- 3 maternal/parental concern about going to sleep
- 4 waking up for specific reasons (habit)
- 5 waking crying, screaming from sleep – for no apparent reason; influence of birth process
- 6 fear
- 7 clothing – furnishings – sleeping companions
- 8 'paternal success'
- 9 the secret of infant sleep

1 Individual sleep behaviour, constitution of the child

It is quite normal for children to wake up during the night; essentially this is not a sleep disorder. Children with good sleep behaviour will go back to sleep and perhaps not even remember the interruption of their sleep when they wake in the morning. (Reference may also be made to REM phases.)

Children's sleeping and going-to-sleep patterns are highly individual. Some will pull their blanket over their head or clutch their doll and go off to sleep as soon as they are put down. Others need to be given a transition to sleep. Then there are children who wake up several times a night, and others who may wake up once or not at all during the night.

The behaviour must be judged from the child's nature and constitution and not according to a putative standard for good sleep.

2 Effect of daytime influences on the night

We are living in an age when immeasurably many impressions are made on us and many parents no doubt are also no longer able to be as calm and collected in relation to their children as used to be the case.

Everyone will have known occasions when a day had been filled with so many impressions that the children find it hard to go to sleep, or wake several times during the night and are restless.

If you suspect that problems going to sleep and poor sleep, with frequent, restless waking up, may be due to the many different impressions gained in the day, all you can do is advise limiting the impressions to a level the child is able to tolerate, e.g. regularly collect the child earlier from the crèche, day mother or kindergarten, and maintain a regular pattern to the days.

One observation reported was that children found it almost impossible to go to sleep after a day of intense exposure to the sun. Not everyone had noted this, but it is of course perfectly possible that when a child has lived so much in the periphery on a beautiful summer's day he'll find it difficult to come to himself again, that is, to rest.

Head coverings can also play a role. Hats should be of cotton or straw, not too tight-fitting and with a rim to protect the eyes and face from strong sunlight. Hats with a piece of cloth at the back to protect the nape of the neck are also most suitable; one sees them mainly in New Zealand. Strong light for an extended period is another kind of over stimulation.

3 Maternal/parental concern about going to sleep

For many parents, everything pivots on getting the children to sleep. (This is of course less likely to be a problem in day-care centres.) The question is, what makes it difficult to go to sleep and above all how to deal with this.

Too much exposure to sensory impressions during the day has already been mentioned. Adults will start to feel ill at ease as bedtime approaches, especially if the problem has persisted for some time. It will then be important to calm oneself down as well as calming the child. The first thing to aim for, especially if the problem has existed for some time, is confidence that it will be all right again and that the child will learn to go to sleep quietly again.

Dr Goebel spoke of the following situation and possible solution. If the child is screaming as he lies in his cradle or cot, the problem will not be solved by bending over him, feeling unsure and ill at ease, and patting him. One way of dealing with it is to sit down quietly next to the cot, not looking at the child, and breathe in and out calmly. After a while one may then hum a fifth (or something else, but no catchy tunes) when breathing out, during a lull in the screaming. It is important to maintain one's own breathing rhythm. This will help in most cases. A restless child may perhaps also be 'weighed down' by placing a hand on his trunk. One may also 'donate' a hand to the cradle, if such nearness is needed.

If one feels after a while (e.g. ten minutes) that the situation will not change if one goes on like this, it may be appropriate to leave the room, stopping outside the door, of course, to follow developments. Some children will settle down within a few minutes. If not, the mother (or, of course, the father) needs to go in again and, using as much fantasy and empathy as possible, try and find a solution, for instance sit and read in the half-light, without paying further attention to the child.

Children of about 18 months can be real little tyrants with their inability to go to sleep. But they are then also old enough to accept what follows. At the first cry after the evening ritual, mother (or father) will say in a quiet, firm voice: 'Nice and quiet now, so that I can leave the door open.' This won't prove effective as a rule, so one says: 'I am going to close the door now, and if you are quiet it will open again.' Reactions to this vary greatly – two minutes of ear-splitting screams, then silence; the door opens quietly and a kind word acknowledges peace. If the screaming goes on for more than 5 minutes, you open the door a little bit and say: 'Be quiet, and I can leave the door open.' If this does not prove successful, you'll have to let the screaming go on. The third time, you go into the room, close the door behind you and remain standing still, without a word. This will often surprise the child so much that he'll forget to scream. There follows the word that offers peace: 'Good', and the door stays open. If it does not work, whatever has been said must be adhered to. If the children are already able to climb out bed, the door must be held shut from outside.

The more children realize that their parent's words count for little, the longer will it take until they 'grasp' what is meant in this case. The mood should never be unloving, cross or indeed malicious.

The child learns something from this, and shows it in increased alertness and attention the next day: My parents can want something. If the parents fail, the child feels an unconscious disappointment that they have yielded to 'blackmail'. To lie down in the bed with the child, to push it around in a pram, turn on a music box and similar measures are 'dishonest'. The best confirmation that 'all's well' is for the child to hear the sounds made or words spoken by his parents through the open door. It is important to remember that hearing is the last function to remain before going to sleep.

When a young infant is unable to go to sleep one must, of course, consider if the last meal was adequate, or if he might be suffering from wind. It is important to get to know the different cries really well. If a 4-month-old cries in his sad way, one would take him into one's own bed, for example, or donate a hand to the cradle which is next to one's bed.

The question as to whether a child should sleep in the same room, sometimes even the same bed as the parents (or parent), or in a separate room, must be considered individually. Several people recommended putting the child into his own room. Generally speaking it has to be said, however, that this must be a family decision, taking account of the needs of both child and parents.

If one parent is a good sleeper and the child likes to be close, it is of course all right to sleep in the same bed. Many parents will, however, feel the need for having their own sleeping space, and in that case the child may be in his own cot in the parent's bedroom or his own, possibly with other siblings. It all depends on what is right for the particular family.

The rule may be that at 18 months a child can certainly sleep in a separate room, though it helps if there is a connecting door to the parent's room. If there are problems with the change, the child's room may be enhanced in value by having an adult sleep in it on a mattress for some weeks.

Several people had noted that sleep – including the afternoon nap in crèches – is quieter if the child has sleeping companions.

4 *Waking up for specific reasons or from habit*

A number of situations were described. One child would regularly wake up when his father came home late at night, for example. Another always woke at 11.11 p.m. It took the parents weeks to discover that a plane was always flying over the house at this time; they themselves had hardly heard it.

These are waking-up situations for evident or non-evident reasons. In the first case, the father had come in quietly; so we cannot say the child woke because of noise. One might consider if the father is perhaps too much 'absent' altogether, taking little part in family life. It may also be that the child won't wake when his father makes more of a noise, being used to this. The second situation described will stop of its own accord if one does not pay too much attention to it.

The problem will often follow an infectious condition. The parents' frequent attendance during the night has become a habit the child likes. Demands for a bottle at night are another common problem.

These two situations need consistency. Concerning the bottle, parents may ask themselves if the bottle should no longer be given during the night, or if the child is to be weaned, or if one should put

the bottle within the child's reach so that he may help himself. It should of course only contain unsweetened herb tea in that case, or water.

5 *Coming out of sleep crying or screaming for no apparent reason; influence of birth process*

If the child is restless at night, perhaps even waking up screaming or crying, this may have many different causes, most of them not apparent. Major daytime causes might be

- flatulence because of problems digesting unsuitable foods such as coarse wholemeal bread or coarse rolled oats,
- lactose intolerance
- physical or mental discomfort due to overstimulation of the senses, e.g. from the media
- irregular pattern to the day proving too demanding, problems with 'mental' digestion.

The child may also have been restless in his sleep, uncovered himself and now feel cold. The resulting discomfort may also be expressed in crying or screaming. Such a child might be put to sleep in a knitted woollen sleeping bag, or a warm (woollen) sleepsuit.

When the child screams at night, perhaps sitting up in bed with a rigid look in his eye, and cannot be woken, this is pavor nocturnus (night terror). Dr Goebel suggested a treatment which must however be done in consultation with a paediatrician. For four weeks, apply a copper oil or copper ointment compress to the abdomen at night. Give Hyoscyamus Rh 6x, 10x or 15x by mouth in addition, the 6x or 10x more for younger children, with whom autonomic processes are dominant (metabolism), and 15x for schoolchildren, with whom psychological problems are more to the fore.

If the treatment proves effective, it may possibly be repeated after an interval. It may sometimes even be continued for 3 months.

It should also be mentioned that some medicaments (e.g. for asthma) may cause restless nights.

Generally speaking, a protective environment should be created for the child. It is of course very good to have a veil for the cot, which will also protect the child's head from draughts. (Draughts can be quite a problem to the child, and it is important to pay attention to and investigate such external factors.)

Some people, mainly from the Netherlands and Australia (where they have government centres for treating childhood sleeping disorders), reported good results with wrapping the children up. In the Netherlands the method is even used for older children (up to about age 10) with enuresis. The child is wrapped in cotton cloth - sheets are good for the purpose - including the head. The arms may be included or left free. If the child is not enthusiastic about this at first, one can use a playful approach, initially wrapping dolly up with him or her. This has to be handled individually. If the child wants the arms left free, for instance, this will of course be done. Care must be taken with hip development in the first six months of life. Do not wrap the child with the legs in a position where the hips are extended.

Sometimes a 'magic word' may help, e.g. 'good - hey, hey', which is only used in the bedtime ritual and then if necessary during the night.

Many children find it easier to go to sleep if the transition to going to bed is a slow one. For this, one needs to be aware for quite a while beforehand that the stillness of night is approaching, with 'the day soon done'.

Almost the whole of the second half of the workshop was devoted to a 5-month-old in Australia who suffers from a severe sleeping disorder, with long screaming periods every hour. For medical reasons, he had to be separated from his mother soon after birth and have an operation and an extended period in hospital. A lively discussion ensued, with many interpretations, some of them also conflicting, and suggestions:

- Having the mother or the father close by at night (but not two adults who really need their sleep both in the same room), so that the child's early trauma is overcome by protectiveness and attention. The parent must of course be able to cope with the screaming.
- Another interpretation was that the mother now had to learn to let go.
- The child will sleep more quietly if closely wrapped up.

- Oils, baths or massage may be used to resolve the trauma of the operation and early separation from the mother.
- The mother might call the traumatic events that triggered the problem to mind once more and then address a prayer to the child's angel.

6 Fear

A child may develop fear because there is chaos in his sensory perceptions. The parents' psychological situation also plays a major role. This is particularly the case if one of the parents has a mental condition. Etheric influences from the elemental world may also have an effect.

The case of a little girl was mentioned who would wake up crying every night for a time, being very anxious. It was found that her much loved grandmother had died six months earlier. The thought came up that perhaps the dead grandmother, too, had not yet been able to let go completely. The advice was to put copper ointment patches on the abdomen and also to include the grandmother in bedtime prayers.

In children who have been maltreated, the senses of touch and life are powerfully connected with the fear. The lower senses, and above all these two, need delicate, careful nurturing. One possibility is to rub rose balm into the child's feet.

7 Clothing – furnishings – sleeping companions

These aspects have already been considered in the preceding sections.

8 'Paternal success'

A familiar situation – the child makes trouble with his mother and seems unable to go to sleep. However, when dad for once takes over and puts him to bed, he goes off to sleep without a murmur. This situation, so frustrating for the mother and pleasing to the father, has nothing to do with the father being better at the job. The reason is simply that mum's words have been heard many times, but dad's have rarity value and therefore still power.

On the third day we tried to come closer to the essential nature of the etheric, which brought us to point 9.

9 The secret of infant sleep

As already hinted at in Dr Goebel's general introductory comments, the 'secret' of infant sleep has to do with the fact that the child must first learn to breathe and to sleep. We can help with this if as parents and teachers we take care that his body develops in such a way that the elements of spirit and soul can take hold of it. Special attention needs to be paid to the development of the lower senses.

A child cannot take the day's experiences into sleep and into the world of the spirit the way adults can (see first lecture in *Study of Man/Foundations of Human Experience*, GA 293). The mother or father can help him with a prayer, for instance. The prayer below has been taken from Rudolf Steiner's *Prayers for Parents and Children*.

May light stream into you that can take hold of you.
 I follow its rays with the warmth of my love.
 I think with my thinking's best thoughts of joy
 On the stirrings of your heart.
 May they strengthen you,
 May they carry you,
 May they cleanse you.

I want to gather my thoughts of joy
Before the steps of your life
That they unite with your will for life,
So that it finds itself with strength
In the world,
Ever more,
Through itself.

You think it quietly or say it softly when the child is on the point of going to sleep.

It can also be helpful if the mother sits quietly by the bedside, recalling the child's experiences as she reviews the day and then – metaphorically speaking – hands this on to the child's angel.

One member of the group said she often asked the parents if the child had been baptized. In the light of the above the question has meaning, for baptism addresses the incarnation process, strengthening the Christ principle in its activities.

We are well aware of the physical with its boundaries in space and of the soul element, for we are aware of our emotions. The etheric goes unobserved, however, although we would not be able to do anything in soul or body without these living powers, nor would anything come into existence in the world of nature without them. We take it as a matter of course that the etheric in us maintains the physical body even if we are not active and consciously present in heart and mind. To get a feel for the etheric, let us follow the stages of a child's speech development all the way to thinking in images.

- A quiet 'griij' close to the palate 'riding' on the breath when the infant enters into dialogue with his mother at 2 - 4 months.
- A trumpeting babble at 6 months, accompanied by symmetrical limb movements, a pure, joyful way of saying 'here I am'.
- The pointing index finger before the first words are said. These will be names for the things surrounding the child.
- The 'language of names' develops further by listening and trying out words in imitation.
- In play, gradually letting go of the names.
- Saying 'no' and 'I', and differentiating between things as thinking comes in.
- Fantasy beginning to develop, even story-telling. Inexhaustible powers of creating inner images, stimulated by the language of the fairy tales told; this goes through narrowing and widening out in the soul, and through many a moral vacuum and on to images for the greatest of human virtues.

Three universal human abilities are in preparation during the first three years.

- Human limbs are not highly specialized compared to those of animals, and because of this, and the process of coming upright, the human being becomes creative with his hands and independent in his feet.
- In the word we are able to express the whole of creation once more.
- In our thinking we are able to grasp the whole world perceived by the senses and the world of the spirit.

We can find the characteristically etheric element in all three abilities just as we do in physical growth, configuration and powers of renewal, but now it serves the human soul and spirit. Unconsciously ceaselessly active and alive in circulation, breathing, development and regeneration, this principle becomes image in the upright human form and creative power visible in the spirit in our thinking.

We then heard thoughts and suggestions from Rudolf Steiner were spoken so that they might make the day's theme of the hygiene and religion of sleep come alive in us.

In the chapter on the six conditions for occult training in *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds/How to Know Higher Worlds*, the second condition given is to 'feel part of the whole of life'. For a teacher this means to feel completely at one with the children and look for the causes of their inadequacies in oneself. In general it means to feel part of the whole of humanity to such an extent that one shares the responsibility for everything that happens.

In the chapter on sleep and death in *Occult Science*, we read how in sleep the astral body returns to the source of the images that give us our human form: 'The astral body returns to its home during sleep and when we awake it brings new, strengthened powers into our life.' This comes to outward expression in the feeling of refreshment we have after a healthy sleep. In his *Course for Young Doctors* (GA 316), Rudolf Steiner spoke of how our night-time encounters depend greatly on what we have taken in during the day and how we have reflected on it. If this was in tune with the world of the spirit, the astral body can convey it to the ether body in the morning as if it had been 'affirmed' by the other world, and so strengthen the ether body.

We also considered the question of the guardian angel or higher self. Christian Morgenstern spoke of this in a poem:

Wisdom of my higher self,
spreading your wing above me,
guiding me from my beginning
as it was best for me, –

though vexation would often come,
t'was but the vexation of a mere boy!
The man's mature eyes are able now
to rest on you in gratitude.

We also heard a prayer which Rudolf Steiner gave to a young mother. Many of us did not yet know it (see above; 'May light stream ...')

Finally we recalled Rudolf Steiner's words in the first lecture of *Study of Man/Foundations of Human Experience*, where he spoke of the teacher's task being to help the child to take the things he learns in the physical plane to the world of the spirit and bring the results of the work back again to the physical plane.

About breastfeeding

We had a talk about this, for the question was asked if a 4-hour rhythm should be maintained and how this could be done.

What matters most is that the child is actually breastfed. The rhythm is an individual thing, for mother and child to determine. It is of course good to have a rhythm, and a 4-hour one can be good. For some, 3½ hours will be closer to reality. Some children are able to adapt completely to the mother's individual rhythm; others will drink at regular times though not at even intervals (e.g. at 8 and 11 a.m., 3, 6 and 8 p.m.).

General comments

If a consultation is needed, it is important for the father to be present as well. One has to sense how much of what is said parents are ready to accept, and also what they are realistically able to do.

Parents must be made aware of the importance of honesty and consistency. The spoken word must mean something, and if need be, action must follow. Only 'additional offers' may however be withdrawn. If a mother has said what she is going to do and then left the room where she's been sleeping on a mattress because the screaming was keeping her awake, she should look in again after a few minutes, to give the child an opportunity to respond. It may thus be possible to change the situation. Only children over 18 months of age will, however, be able to understand such consistency.

Another important principle is that only one adult must be disturbed, and that does not automatically mean the mother. The father's place of work may sometimes be able to cope with a bit of a bad mood, whilst it is more of a problem if a mother has not had enough sleep and then has to be with the children all day.

Summary

A child's sleep differs from adult sleep, which has to do with the incarnation process (see first lecture in *Study of Man/Foundations of Human Experience*). Sleeping is something that has to be learned. Parents and teachers can help with this by caring for the senses.

Childhood sleep disorders may have many different causes – physical (draught, wind), psychological (over stimulation of the senses, stresses in the home or kindergarten), etheric.

Suggestions for solving the problems included

- creating a protective environment
- the right kind of clothing
- wrapping the child up
- bringing rhythm and 'calm' into everyday life
- consistency
- parents' help in soul and spirit (e.g. with prayers).

We hope the suggestions made by the group can encourage others to use empathy and powers of imagination in the individual situation where a child has a sleep disorder.

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Imitation – a challenge for parents and teachers

Petra Thal

What does imitation mean for a child? We might think children imitate everything they perceive around them, everything done by others. Working with children we find, however, that this is not the case. Just when I make great efforts so that the children may imitate me, when I really hope they will, with finger games, for example, or in a round dance, where they are supposed to join in – this is exactly when they won't. Instead they seem to imitate many actions and phrases which I'd rather 'turn off' in bringing them up, swearwords for instance. Why is this? Where do I have to revise my ideas about imitation so that I can come closer to the real imitation phenomenon?

Members of the group told us the following as they introduced themselves.

- Nowhere else do I meet myself more than when I am imitated by the children.
- I do too many things without thinking, though I can feel that this is not a good thing in a playgroup. I'd like to be a bit more of an 'I'.
- I would like to connect the 'world of having to get things done' with the 'world of the example', so that I'll be more with the children in my thinking and physically.
- I realized in working with the children that I know far too little about them. The responsibility is too much for me. I'd like to learn more about children first, especially about imitation.
- What about the situation where behaviour is also imitated which I can hardly accept in myself, considering it 'bad'? Yet I can't always be sweetness and light as a human being. How do I free myself from the 'guilt' which I thus experience?



Human relationships give the infant the vital impulses for developing into a human being. He takes them up directly into his body and uses them to build his bodily house. Within 7 years the stimuli and impulses taken in from the environment transform the inherited body, with which the child was born, into an individual bodily house.

The younger the child, the more is he dependent on taking the people and objects that surround him into his body by using all his senses. He then practises them to develop his own body substance and form, which alone will give him independence.

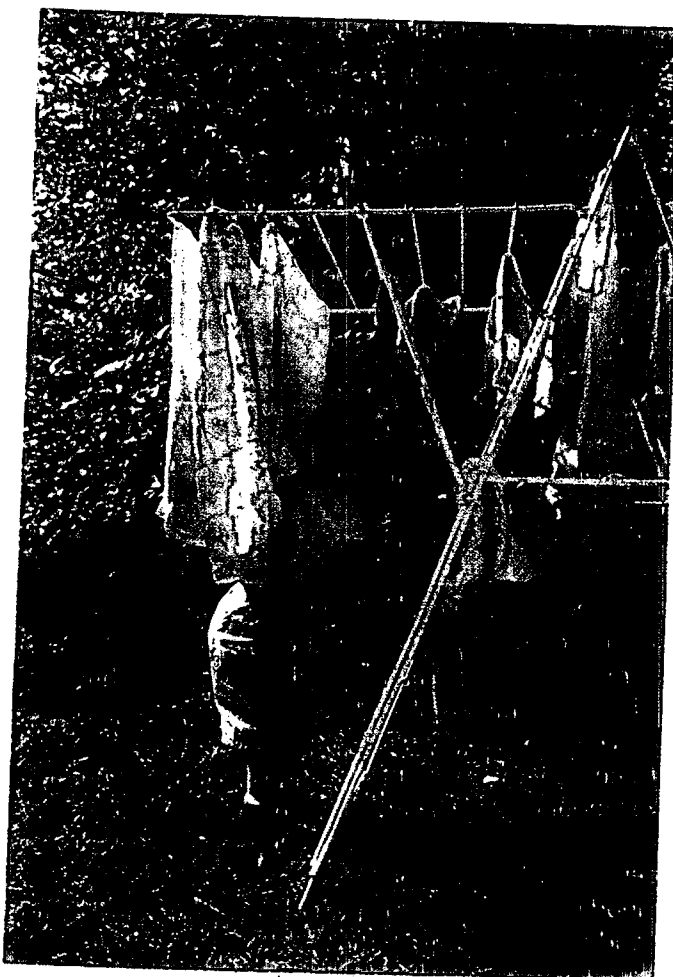
This comprehensive embracing of the environment is achieved by the infant being 'all there', at one with the people around him, going along with their movements, speech, thoughts, even the flow of saliva. Peter Lutzker's book *Der Sprachsinn* goes into every detail of this. In the first three years a child thus makes his body into a fitting instrument for the archetypal human faculties of

walking (being upright)

talking (functional competence of larynx)

thinking (convolutions of the brain).

In thus depending on the environment for his bodily development, the child has no centre of his own. He has no self awareness, and is permanently inside the other person. This gesture of 'being in the other person' is something he brings with him into the world. He was at one with the spirits in



the other world, and is now at one with us – the younger he is the more so. To the child, we are spirits (angels), irrespective of what we are doing. He'll take in our doings, transform and practise them. Henning Köhler calls the child an 'impression creature' in this context. This absorption of the child in us, which is bodily and religious, is comparable to the mood of an adult who puts his hands together in prayer and rises to something higher. It means that the child's body connects with my I and the I of others around him (religion means 'to connect'). The key element in this is not only love, however, but also the spirit which the child senses in movement, speech and thinking. Rudolf Steiner said that the child chooses according to the spirit. This also determines whether he'll primarily imitate his father, mother or siblings. There is no formula for getting it right, but spirit meets spirit. The young child is a mirror which, however, does not stand before us, but is as if impressed, reflecting to the outside the spirit and soul of the familiar person. Finding this mood of devotion in the adult, the child can feel embedded in it, whatever form this may take – we have to consider that adults achieve a high level of authenticity particularly when they express aggression, e.g. using swearwords.

I find it helpful to ask myself as I live with children why I am doing one thing or another. Where are my will, feelings and thoughts involved with such awareness that my doing is neither routine nor letting myself go? As soon as we want something from the children, it won't work, for the child's will is not accessible to the adult. The child will resist, for he looks for what is genuine and true in us, not something intended, perhaps not genuine, but put on. So how can we make it possible for the child to connect directly with the other person? To develop a relationship to the child I should consider moments when the child 'is with me', imitating me with pleasure. He is looking for oneness, relationship, identification, and is therefore 'at one' with me at the time when he imitates me. If I then consider what I am like at such a time, I can create more such moments and thus deepen the relationship to the child.

As the child's self-awareness grows – his begins in the third year, with the first phase of defiance – the gesture of imitation gets more individual. To discover the child's individual nature I only have to watch how he comes more and more awake as the days go by and something begins to withdraw as he begins to say 'I'. The angelic, divine aura that has been around the infant young child withdraws more and more into the inner human being.

The child's individual nature shows itself in the specific way in which he relates to the world. There are different forms of locomotion at the crawling stage, for instance, or one can see differences in directed movements. What is the child wanting to achieve with his locomotion? How does he go after the ball or the crayon lying on a piece of paper?

Michaela Glöckler writes (see *Gehen-Sprechen-Denken*): 'We can see ... why young children imitate not only outward gestures but of course also still the moral gestures, the thought movements, the feeling movements of people, for this is what they have been used to do in the world of the spirit.'

The imitation phase is, as it were, a time when the prebirth habits of soul and spirit slowly fade. After this we begin to be progressively more independent, first in body, then in soul and spirit, and determine our own actions. To begin with, however, we are trusting, imitating what people do, just as before this life on earth we imitated the angels and archangels.

Imitation is a marvellous tool. Human experience of the I, the self, depends on the relationship to another human being, especially in infancy. The young child only finds his I, his centre, in me until he is able to develop his own. My behaviour thus plays an essential role in letting the child learn about himself and practice being human. I get the key to the child's behaviour by reflecting and practising myself in the following questions:

- How do I myself perceive the child?
- How do I myself listen intently, marvelling: Who is this here with me?
- How do I myself set about exploring the child's essential nature (feeling with him, smelling, sensing warmth?)
- How do I myself perceive what you yourself want and what pleases you?

Such questions create a mood in me which is close to the 'angelic mood': I am here for you; I accept you as you are. In this mood I am wholly with the child and coax out his powers of imitation. He finds his centre in me. Relationship develops.

Rhythm gives support and stability to the child and also to me, helping me to avoid nervousness and restlessness so that I am able to centre myself and be truly with the child in my thoughts, feelings and gestures. If I am calm, reflective or meditative, the child is able to enter into this mood in my actions and gestures.

To nurture the individual element in the child, I consider the powers of movement and will the child has brought with him. Above all, however, I observe how I myself enter into this. If I truly relate to the child my own inner mobility will attract and awaken the child's own will to take this direction. It is therefore important to see how I myself bring my thinking, feeling and actions into harmony, when I have identity in this sphere, for the child also thinks my thoughts. He is wholly within me. It matters how far I am able to let go of any ideas as to whom I have before me, and let it be as if I were seeing the world anew, not needing to take immediate action but allowed first of all to feel wonder and awe. The child notices this very different inner activity in me and grows very attentive. Power of imitation is then at one with power of will; and if there is enthusiasm as well, this will help the child, the human being, to come upright, to speak and experience his own self, his I.

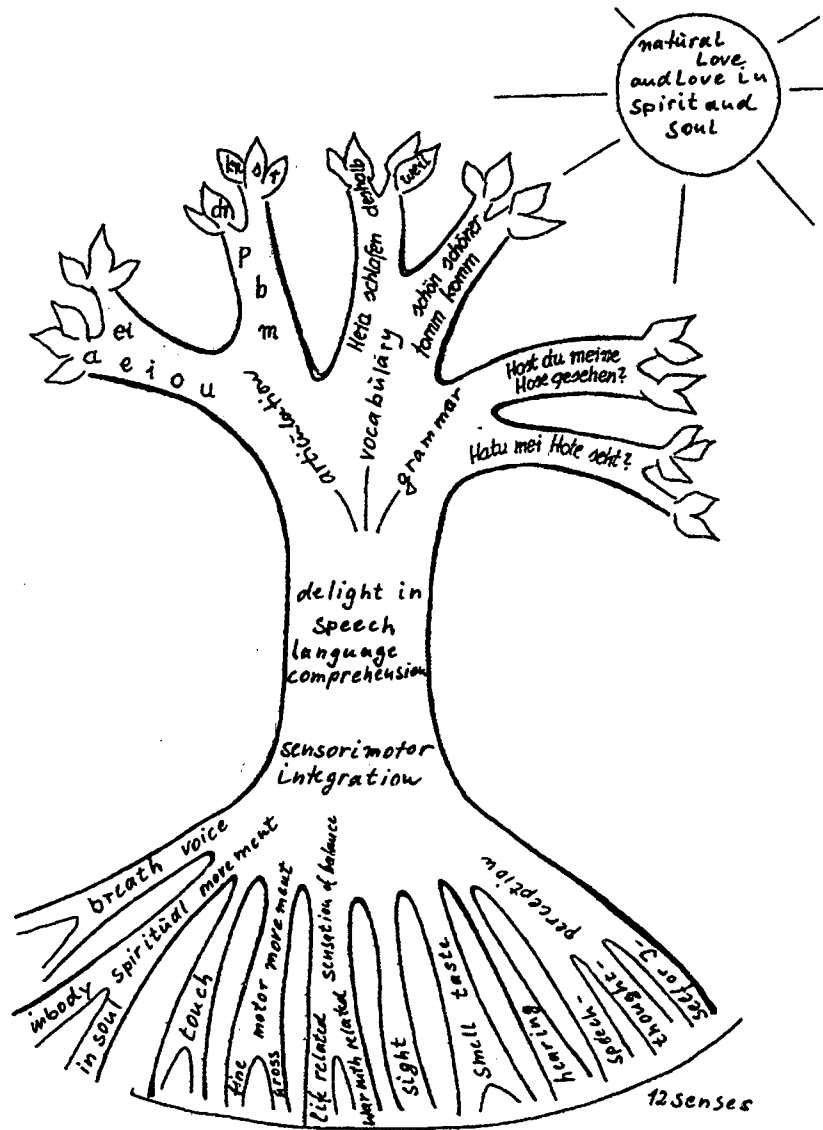
Speech development and its encouragement in the first years of life

Elisabeth Wutte

We looked at the speech tree designed by speech therapist Wolfgang Wendlandt. This helped us be aware of the many different factors, conditions and connections involved in learning to talk. We added anthroposophical ideas and concepts to the tree (see figure below).

Heia schlafen – beddy byes
 deshalb – therefore
 tomm komm – tom come

schön schöner – nice nicer
 weil – because
 Hatu mei Hote seht? – diddu seemy touters?



The roots of the speech tree – foundations of speech development

Speech development will not be delayed nor premature if development in body, soul and spirit is healthy. This is established by the physician during preventive care examinations.

The first kind of sound an infant uses is the cry. Usually only the parents are able to tell if it is from hunger, discomfort or pleasure. With his cry, the infant makes his first vocal contact with the

people around him. A smile will only come later. Crying strengthens the respiratory organs. In the second year we bring in blowing games, like blowing out candles, keeping wind wheels moving, 'table football' with bits of cotton wool, and above all singing and rhythmical speaking.

Peter Lutzker suggests that balance is a power that creates order for all stimuli that are received through the senses and thus helps the comprehension of words and sentences to develop.

For children, the spoken word goes together with the lip movements they see in speakers. This is why many blind children show delayed speech development. Investigations have shown that infants react with discomfort and confusion when a film is badly synchronized and the lips and the rest of the body move even fractions of a second differently from the speech sounds (see Lutzker).

Children hear when they are still in the uterus. From the seventh month of life onwards children start to speak on the basis of what they hear, whilst the first babbling stage had to do with tactile stimuli of tongue and lips. If children are less prepared to talk after the seventh month of life, the reason may be hearing impairment. Hearing itself is fully developed at about 12 months.

Speech and movement

Rudolf Steiner frequently spoke of the connection between speech and movement.

Speaking depends on the ability to govern the movements of lips and tongue with will and purpose. The fine motor movements this needs are gained when the child has strengthened his muscles and made his joints mobile by kicking and turning, crawling, standing and walking, climbing and jumping. There is a special connection between finger mobility and ability to speak. Mariela Kolzowa writes that one can look at finger movements to establish the level of speech development even if one has not heard the child utter a single word. Gestures and hand movements tend to bring more the emotional sphere around speech to life; they influence the tone and timbre of the voice. Free mobility of the fingers and finger games help articulation and the interaction of speech and thinking. They bring alertness into the speech process, with the thumb stimulating more the sphere of the will, index and middle finger the region of thinking, and ring and little finger artistic sensitivity in this alert sphere of speaking and thinking. All hand and finger dexterity helps speech development. It can be practised daily by threading buttons, building pyramids, painting, paper folding, kneading, rolling out dough, and so on.

In modern kinesiology it has been found that there is a further close connection between speech and movement. Speech always involves such fine and rapid movements of muscles that we do not consciously perceive them. They are so varied and interactive that we may say that our unconscious movement person in us is dancing with every word that is said. This is the case not only for the speaker but also for the listener. Speaker and listener move in a common rhythmical flow of movement with only minimal time lag (c. 0.4 seconds). The larynges of both make the same movements, as Rudolf Steiner put it, and both movement persons dance the same dance at the same time. The process is all the more harmonious the more speaker and listener are in a state of relaxed attentiveness, i.e. their general motor functions are in a living equilibrium between activity and rest, tension and resolution.

The newborn joins in the dance of words when someone speaks to him. He thus not only follows but joins in. We help infants and young children in their speech development if we talk to them in an alert but relaxed state.

The speaking human being thus develops out of the mobility of muscles in the whole body, and this is from birth, perhaps even already in the womb. Some investigators consider that the essential foundations for speech development are laid in the first six months, being complete after one year, that is, when the child is just beginning to utter his first words.

Summing up, we may say that speech development proceeds harmoniously if all the above-mentioned abilities and processes come together with the movement potential, so that there is sensorimotor integration which can be connected with the thinking. This integration does, however, have to happen by a certain time. At the end of the first 7-year period, the senses have gained maturity and the brain its final size. Peter Lutzker thinks this marks the intensive speech learning phase.

How does speech development go?

As speech development is highly individual, the age periods given in the table should be taken as mean values only; they may vary by as much as 6 months.

Age	Potential for expression in and understanding of speech
1 st year	<p>Crying to express various needs. Cooing in different pitches (e.g. to express well-being). Babbling (tactile stimulus) Reaction to sounds and noises. Understanding of speech cannot as yet be assessed.</p>
3 - 6 months	<p>Laughing, squeaking, cooing. First babbling stage: first sounds. These are international, i.e. similar sounds are found with children of all nations. This will later enable them to learn foreign languages. grr ... grr, esh ... esh. Taking fright at sudden noises, turning head towards source of speech or noise heard. Understanding of speech cannot be assessed.</p>
6 - 9 months	<p>Syllables and doubling of syllables (dada, baba). Tries different voice registers. Listens to own voice, begins to understand meaning of words in conjunction with pitch, facial expression and gestures.</p>
9 - 12 months	<p>Able to say at least one word, maybe even 10. Prattles, using words, syllables together, with no meaning in context. Responds to own name, to minor requests such as 'Give it to me.' Praise and encouragement help the child to tell if a word has meaning or is sound play.</p>
2 nd year	<p>The 2nd year characteristically sees development of the spoken word. It is the child's speech year.</p>
12 - 18 months	<p><i>Single-word sentences</i> The child asks, requests or denies using a single word, differentiating by using different speech melodies. 'Mama' means many things, e.g. Come, mum; I'm thirsty; I want to sleep now. Purposive production of sounds The child hears the individual sound and reads it on the lips. Because of this the first deliberate sounds are labials: m, b, p. They are connected with vocabulary. The child delights in rhyming and imitates animal voices.</p>
18 - 24 months	<p><i>Sentences with two words.</i> Papa gone. Now using nouns, verbs and adjectives (age 1y 11m 63% nouns, 23% verbs, 14% adjectives, acc. to König K., <i>The First Three Years</i>). Sentences unformed. Words put side by side. Lisa fall (s)tair. First questions. Purposive production of sounds Labiodental sounds v and f, and dentals d, t, l. Naming phase Things are given names. The word becomes name. At 24 months a child knows about 250 words. Passive vocabulary well ahead of active. Reacts on hearing his name at a distance of 4 - 6 metres.</p>

3 rd year	<p><i>Sentences with three words</i> ✓</p> <p>Subject, predicate, objects are used, with I-form of verb used for first time. First dependent clauses.</p> <p>Time of W-questions begins.</p> <p>Production of sounds</p> <p>Manages to articulate most sounds, but not all combinations such as gl, gr. Sibilants need not yet be fully mastered (sh, z, s).</p> <p>Vocabulary</p> <p>Explosive increase.</p> <p>Word creations stimulated by thinking about them.</p> <p>Example of speech: Woman there looks out the window. Why?</p> <p>Everyday speech understood apart from finer distinctions (e.g. big, bigger), foreign words and unknown objects.</p>
4 th year	<p>Producing complex sentences with dependent clauses.</p> <p>Only difficult sentence constructions are faulty. Child starts telling who does what where and why, using plurals and past tense.</p> <p>Mastering all sounds except occasional sibilants and difficult combinations of consonants, e.g. street.</p>
5 th year	<p>Vocabulary growing. Using pronouns and colours.</p> <p>Child is able to produce all sounds faultlessly. Sentences of 5 words, knows tenses and tells what he's been doing during the day. Asks for meaning of unfamiliar words.</p> <p>Mother tongue mastered in feeling range.</p> <p>A physician or speech therapist should be consulted if errors still occur in producing sounds, words or sentences by the end of the 5th year.</p>

Training in conversation

The speech behaviour of adults differs from that of young children. Our everyday speech is rational, informative, with the emphasis on communication. Young children on the other hand are discovering sounds, telling stories in word sequences. They respond to voices and answer to them. 80% of our everyday speech with children, on the other hand, is short statements or commands, e.g. Stop it! Stay there! This discrepancy must be overcome. It is also true that adults often feel helpless in the face of 'faulty' speech in young children.

Some suggestions

- It is most important to listen and let the child finish speaking if his language is to develop well.
- If as adults we accept the way our children speak and encourage them even if they make mistakes, they will gradually gain certainty in their speech. No corrections, therefore, but saying the things again in the right way. For instance: Kitty hurted - Oh, Kitty has hurt you.
- Verbal preparation for activities. Speech addresses the human being as a human being. The dignity of the other person can be recognized in the spoken word. Emmi Pikler spoke of how even children with multiple disabilities were capable of communicating if they had been verbally prepared for anything done to them. It is important to link word and action closely or have them run parallel, so that the word does not become abstract. In this way the spoken word can be the door through which the thoughts and personality of the speaker can be perceived. It is much easier to accept things that are done to one if one hears about them as well.

This is only possible because our understanding of speech is much greater than our capacity for speech, i.e. the child understands a great deal more than he is able to say. What is more, our upper senses are interactive, so that perception of speech also means a personal encounter. In speech, 'the

human being feels his own I in the I of the other person. If he then hears the sound of the other I, his own I lives in this sound and thus in the I of the other' (Rudolf Steiner, GA 45).

- As soon as we can put a name to a feeling we are no longer at its mercy and can begin to look at it as if from outside. Distancing oneself in this way in describing the feeling is a first step in developing the spiritual soul. This can be gently initiated even with young children. Thus mum might say: Yes, you're annoyed because you can't pull your shirt over your head like that. Or: You've bumped into the edge of the table. It hurts.
- To develop truthfulness in speech, we might consider the exercise called 'The right word', which Rudolf Steiner gave as a Monday exercise. He wrote: Only things that have meaning and significance should be on our lips ... Never talk unless there is reason! It is good to be silent. Try to say things in not too many and not too few words.' If the teacher takes care to use the right word, he'll also find the right, the true word more easily when communicating with a child.
- Compared to everyday language, children's verses and poems rhyme, have rhythm and contain word creations; they are thus much closer to the way children speak than our everyday language. Rhymes, repeating something similar, give stability in speech, rhythm creates flow full of life, and word creations encourage the child to look at things carefully and reflect. In becoming an art form, speech and language grow beyond being merely informative. In verse they gain additional power, something complete in itself that raises our spirits. Example: You've done that very nicely, Or: Well, I never. Aren't you clever!
- Children's verses and sayings relating to all situations in life have come down through the centuries [German examples omitted from the list]:
 - little stories, touching part of the body
 - hand tales
 - comforters
 - knee riders
 - finger games
 - counting verses, round games, riddles, nonsense
 - everyday life, e.g. cooking, laundry work, being quiet
 - family and relations, social policies
 - heavy-hearted, longing, derision

Children's verses are time-bound and not as objective as folk tales. We therefore need to compose new ones that relate to life today. An example is a blessing which arose when a separation had to be coped with:

Vest outworn
Hair all shorn
Wind so wild
God bless you, child.

Hans Magnus Enzensberger wrote in his postscript to *Allerleirau*, a volume of German children's verses and rhymes that it helps to provide the minimum of poetry needed for the survival of a person and a nation, with the universal poetry of life sometimes coming up unexpectedly in its pages. This may well be one reason why children's verse is such a tough, indestructible survivor. May it continue to be such.

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Fighting, conflict and aggression among young children in the group

Ina von Mackensen and Irmgard Molina

51 people attended the group. They came from 8 countries and were working with children aged from 2 months to 7 years. Wanting to develop a reasonably comprehensive picture of the child's situation in the first three years, we approached the subject slowly and from different aspects. For there are no short, pragmatic and generally valid solutions. We brought the subject alive with games, showing each other knee riders and 'love you' games and verses from different countries.

Overview

Key words serve to indicate how we treated many of the issues concerned, after which some subjects are gone into in more detail.

Part 1. Basics for understanding fighting, conflicts and aggression from the point of view of childhood development

Development of sensory function – motor function – relationships – play – early forms of expression in communication and their development – grasping things physically and mentally, Coming to blows, first with the body, the hand, then the mouth, and then the 'mind' – defiance, development of social skills - group dynamics – parental situation – teacher's situation

Part 2. Ways in which those responsible for the children can have an influence

Teachers' inner attitude to the subject – self education: how far is it due to me when the children in my care fight and become aggressive? – How do I myself approach the child, other people and things? (imitation!) – What can we do when a fight has developed? From what age are apologies meaningful? - Prevention – humour – significance of fighting and aggression in the child's biography: danger, opportunity, practising basic social forms – work with parents

Part 3. Some ways of developing care provision for young children

Age mixture – space requirements – rhythm – no 'kindergarten programme' for young children

1 Early development

The senses

We were able to take up the thoughts from Dr Glöckler's morning talk. The question came up if some conditions that are not right for child development have such an effect that the child cannot help but react with fighting, aggression and conflict.

It is especially in the first years of life that children take in every sensory perception without filtering it, without being able to resist it. At this age children also are unable to concentrate on one thing, pushing other things aside, the way adults can. They take all sensory stimuli deeply into their bodies. Rudolf Steiner's words were: 'The young child is all sense organ.' More and more children are born without a natural 'protective skin' that will make impressions run off. Child psychologists refer to lowering the stimulus protection threshold.

The four lower senses, as they are called – touch, balance, movement and life – are not adequately addressed as a rule today. Most of the objects a child gets in touch with are smooth, so that he

cannot gain differentiated touch experience. In the USA, rubber gloves must actually be used when changing infants in crèches. The senses of balance and movement are not challenged much in large cities. For where would you find hills, uneven ground, things that yield, where you have to keep your balance? Our civilization also does not help the sense of life much, for it is difficult to live in a steady rhythm for the day, week and year with the children.

This lack of stimulation in the sphere of the lower senses is serious in so far as they are the basis for development in the middle and upper senses. All differentiated learning depends on having well-developed lower senses. (For a full description of the senses see Göbel).

The middle senses – sight, taste, smell and temperature – are flooded with stimuli to an unbelievable degree, and this is also true for the sense of hearing. Over stimulation often causes sleeping problems in the first year, driving almost all parents to despair today. Other reactions are more frequent crying, flatus and not drinking well. These reactions show how far a child's progress depends on his environment and how much he still needs a protective space.



Development of potential for expression and communication

A child can only give expression to not feeling well when about to enter his second year, reacting with resistance or refusal, for instance. Aggression also depends on a certain level of development. Before that the child does not have the ability to express and perhaps even cope with feeling unwell, with all impressions directly influencing bodily development. Parents often find it painful when their infant, so 'innocent' until then, suddenly shows what appear to be negative traits.

The phase in which children try out their physical possibilities, their bodily instrument, comes between 10 and 18 months. The testing will be mainly addressed to parents or siblings. The children will bite, grind their teeth, pinch people, pull their hair, and be curious about what will happen as a result. It is clearly evident that there is no awareness yet of pain suffered by others.

At about 18 months the child reaches an expansive phase, when he joyfully enters into the experience of being able to move things. It coincides with the first experience of cause and effect: knocked cup off the table – broken! Stool by the table – can climb up and get some honey! Discovering that one can move things leads to increased self esteem. If the children are all the time forbidden things and restricted, this original power of bringing their own impulses into play can be weakened for life. Such children will generally also avoid moving, trying things out in their thinking, feeling and doing in later life.

With 2½ at the earliest, a child begins to sense that his own behaviour can cause pain to others. For it is only now that the child begins to experience himself as separate from others, including his mother. Child psychologists speak of 'introjection'. This developmental step shows itself clearly in that the children now venture beyond the reach of their mother's eyes; they have a first inner certainty of their existence.

Motor development

The decision as to whether a child actively goes out into the world, making room for himself, or is going to be more passive, on the whole, waiting for things to happen, is largely made at the point

when he makes his first attempts to move under his own steam, i.e. when he tries at about 4 months to make his own discoveries and practise. It is important to make room for this in terms of both space and time. Emmi Pikler discusses this in detail (see bibliography).

Play development

Young children still play and act very differently from kindergarten children. They rearrange, take apart and move things very much in outer terms. Kindergarten children are already playing much more out of inner images, the well spring of fantasy, and also show much more fine motor and verbal activity. Infants accordingly need more space, and just as their breathing rhythm is faster, so they will also only enter into a particular activity for a brief period. Kindergarten children play together; infants are not yet able to do this, they play the same things as others but alongside each other. An infant will again and again look for opportunities to be aware of his body. He'll create quite a chaos in the process, having as yet no overview, no goal, no order. It is easy to see, therefore, that conflict will arise even if one has just 5 infants who are at this stage in one room.

In the cradle room at the Prenzlauer Berg Waldorf Kindergarten in Berlin it was observed that 'conflict' was more frequent when several things were happening at once, e.g. with tidying up (too many sensory impressions and loss of overview). Tussles also develop when getting out of or into their clothes in a narrow cloakroom. Both adults and children differ in the amount of noise they are able to bear. This has to do with the vital energies and has to be accepted the way it is. The vital energies also regulate the need for sleep and determine how open or closed one's own space is felt to be.

2 What happens when there is fighting, conflict and aggression? How can we handle it?

Aggression means attack, the impulse to go and do something. For a young child it means that he's incarnated on earth to the point where he wants to grasp, take hold of it and become active.

Biting is often a cause for concern among parents and people looking after a group of children. As already mentioned, there are phases in early childhood when biting is a much more immediate form of expression than it will be at kindergarten age and after. Here we'll refer to just one reason why biting is so common among 1 to 3-year-olds in the group. I found that several children who had bitten others remarkably often had been breastfed well beyond their first birthday. The oral region did not lose importance at the right time. Another thought was that with biting, the bodies intercalate, as they did during breastfeeding. Some questions remained open, e.g. what goes on in a young child when he bites another, and how we can help children who tend to be 'victims'. It should certainly be taken into account that a young child, whose mind is still dreaming, does not yet have a sense of morality. Having barely gained self awareness, he still sees everything in terms of himself and is unable to enter into the feelings of others.

Between 18 months and 3½ years it is particularly important that the child has a few things he may call his own. This has to do on the one hand with pleasure in seeing them again, and on the other it is as if they provide a protective garb for his tender self. This protection through something that is one's own is easily provided by taking the child's own doll along to the group, for instance. This will be something from home; child psychologists call it a transition object. This is all the more important if the child goes to a day mother, where all objects that interest him will usually belong to her.

The above-mentioned need can soon lead to fights over objects. Forcing the child to share what is his, you upset his developing self awareness. This does not mean that young children can never share. But they need not yet be social at this age.

The aggressive reactions of young children are not always time- or person-related. Thus it may happen that a child is pushed again and again in the morning, but will only react to this much later, e.g. at lunchtime, by pushing quite a different child. This behaviour is also still quite common with 3 or 4-year olds.

A study has shown that when an adult was exposed to injury and insult for 20 minutes in a fight, his immune system went down to a measurable degree. How might this be with children? And how often do children experience such situations? Through the media as well as in the real world?

Children can only learn by imitation, through sensory experience, how conflicts are dealt with in a human way.

A Korean member of the group made a simple and beautiful suggestion as to how we might deal with fighting, conflict and aggression. She said: 'Who am I? If there's conflict I must always look first at myself. Everything starts with me.' We thus have to consider which is our own part in the conflict situation. Perhaps I have grown unfree myself because of a subdued conflict with parents or colleagues within me. I must also be clear in my mind as to how I relate to the child in question. My attitude, my approach are of tremendous importance. Michaela Glöckler's book *Die Macht in der zwischenmenschlichen Beziehung* (power in interhuman relationships) is very clear on the subject.

If aggression is frequent in a child, we should ask ourselves if this may not be a call for attention. Or does he want to test boundaries? He is in the process of gaining self awareness, and meeting resistance is part of this.

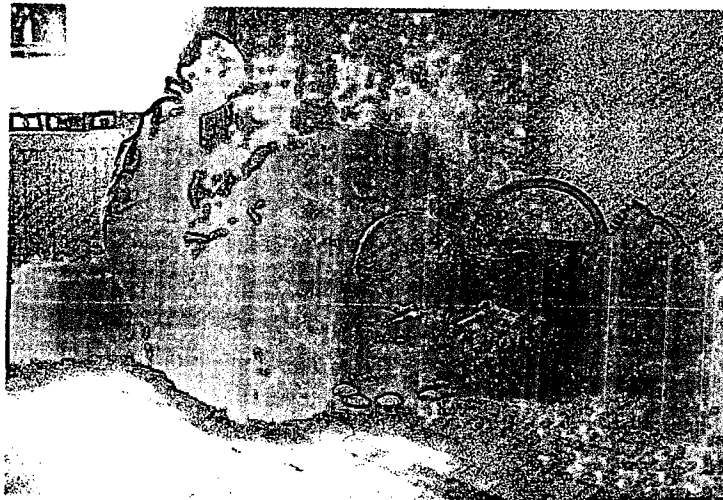
3 How can we develop clear concepts in the care for young children?

Mixed ages

Among the many areas covered, it seems particularly important to me how the way we see infant groups, especially the mixture of ages, can influence fighting, conflict and aggression.

The group should not exceed a certain size, so that staff can work without stress. Children often experience stress at home; they should not be exposed to it with us as well. Stress is also due to setting one's sights too high. Working with young children one needs to be truly modest about what one does; high standards should, however, apply to how we do it. It is wrong to make the day the same for children under three as in a Waldorf kindergarten.

I have found in my own and also other kindergartens that it had an extraordinarily good effect on the infants if they were able to observe the kindergarten children at free play. They would fight much less. The little ones need a lot of quiet during body care, eating and sleeping, a clear situation and different time patterns from kindergarten children. In this respect they need to be looked after separately. They can however learn to play by being with the older children, in a way that is never possible with adults. (The picture shows a 2-year-old absorbed in the play of a 4-year-old.)



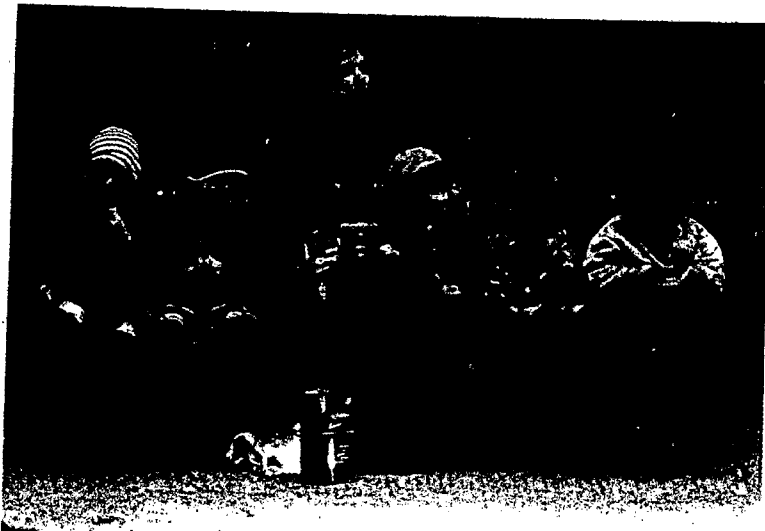
Children at kindergarten and school age always gather in groups, wherever they are. Infants can only join if the older children integrate them; they'll never get together of their own accord. The great age range during free play is therefore copied from natural situations. There should, however, always be opportunity for the little ones to withdraw into a sheltered place where they feel protected and can be looked after calmly and with individual attention.

Both in families and outside them one will often see children who are four or five years apart in age forming close bonds. There's hardly any friction or competition. This age span does not exist in groups of infants nor in a kindergarten, but is only possible if the two spheres come together.

It is especially important for the many only children to be with the very little ones and see what they themselves have been like once, whilst in looking at older children they see what they are going to be like one day. When custom, rules and limits are not determined by the teacher but copied from the older children, nonverbal education and hence a good climate in the group are greatly advanced.

Lack of exercise and confined indoor spaces

These will often generate conflict, one of the reasons why we should go out of doors with the children for a reasonable period each day. Experience has shown that all children manage far better with each other in the open air, and that they like being outside whatever the weather (except a gale). Clothing will have to be adequate, of course, so that one can let the children play on wet, cold ground. In cities it is often difficult to find a piece of nature that is suitable for infants, and many of them therefore do not get enough opportunity to play out of doors. However, the variety of things infants can learn in the natural world is something they cannot have anywhere else, even in small oases in municipal areas (see the two pictures from Berlin).



The day

In arranging the day, times when the children have to do prescribed things should be reduced to a minimum. Only then will they be able to follow their individual development. Rudolf Steiner said on 29 December 1921: 'The child brings into his bodily, physical organization what he has brought down from worlds of soul and spirit at birth or conception. He is involved in this organization. He does what he wants to do out of this organizing process, still closing the door on the outside world. And we should not awkwardly blunder into what the child is achieving in doing what he wants, thus not being open to the will that comes from outside.' In the kindergarten it is part of the programme that the children sit still and usually also have to be quiet at times. In infants, the more so the younger, this causes movement congestion and is asking too much of them. Many infants react to this with increased aggressiveness. It means that the nice rhythmical story which is a pleasure and a boon for kindergarten children means stress to the infant.

What the little ones do like a lot, however, are the little verses for riding on the knee or action songs that involve a loving touch. These give him rhythm, joyful anticipation of that loving touch, stimulus for the senses and security. They are a marvellous way of showing the child affection, so that he won't have to get in the habit of demanding the attention he longs for by shouting, fighting and biting. We ended our workshop by introducing each other to different children's verses and rhymes.

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The genius of play

Sally Jenkinson

Below is a summary of our three days of working together. I couldn't hope to do justice to the rich contributions made by participants. Let us hope it will indicate the worthiness of the topic.

Our aim was to discover why play might be important to us as human beings, why it matters and where it belongs in the human soul and spirit. More and more as the pressure for early academic instruction intensifies, as TV and video dominate the imagination, we need to be able to speak to parents and other educators about the importance, the *genius* of play.

Froebel said: 'Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in the child's soul. It is the purest and most spiritual product of the child, and at the same time it is a type and copy of human life at all stages and in all relations. ... For to one who has insight into human nature, the trend of the whole future life is revealed in his (the child's) freely chosen play.' (*Chief Writings on Education*, 1912)

Rudolf Steiner exhorted us to understand the characteristics of each child's play activities, especially those of his free play before the change of teeth. In *The Renewal of Education through the Science of the Spirit* he said: 'The individual gesture as revealed in the child's play up to the second dentition will emerge again in the characteristic way in which after twenty, he will form personal judgements.' According to him, observing children's play offers the possibility for profound insights into the true nature of the human beings we have before us in our homes and kindergartens.

He spoke about the importance of having an inwardly free soul, an inner nature which is not adapted to the world. We adapt ourselves to the world in our work and we serve the world this way, but our souls, says Steiner, must remain free. Our first freedom is manifest in our play and Steiner said with great emphasis that we must let children play freely if we really believe in an inwardly free soul – to do otherwise would be a sin against the child. He described play as nothing less than the powers of the child's as yet unborn spirituality.

English research in a Steiner kindergarten showed children playing 54 different themes of play over a period of 11 days. The children observed were passionate players. Their play contained so much, indeed 'all of human life was there'. It made us conscious of the pre-eminence of play in the early years and of the challenge: Can I grasp their world, nourish their imaginations, give my children physical and soul space to play? Can I preserve a space for their freedom, for their spiritual selves to grow and develop? We thought about the fine spiritual mystery: imagination changes reality and imagination is changed by reality. We spoke about imagination, inspiration and intuition and the way to the other person through 'empathy play' (being someone or something else; learning through play to understand the thoughts and feelings of others). Children need intuitions before tuition.

In our workshop we used ourselves as 'ex-children' as research material by recalling our own childhood play experiences. We were struck by the intensity of our memories and of the power those long forgotten games still have in our minds and souls. We tried to feel the way they might have helped to weave the patterns of our individual destinies. Our intention, as an international group with participants from Canada, Finland, USA, Denmark, Sweden, UK, Switzerland, was to produce a Charter for Play that would be relevant to all cultures and all nations. Each memory would produce a word or phrase for our charter. The following are extracts from the stories told.

I liked to play outside, knowing it was safe because my mother was nearby. If she wasn't there I couldn't play so well; she provided the safe ground for me. I didn't need to see her and she didn't intrude – just knowing she was there was enough. Often there was more fun in making the rules for games than in playing them. I learned to know my surroundings, the lie of the land, the shortcuts and long winding ways. I learned to become social; to gain understanding of the other children – even of the fights between the boys.

Safe ground

I remember carrying out operations on my bear at the age of five or six – a time when I was in hospital myself. He was a big bear, which I cut and sewed up again and his insides were made of

sawdust. I loved cooking and 'real' play – hairdressing with real scissors (and real cutting!). Relationships were most important to me, both between child and child, and child and teacher. I liked to have a special friend. In the kindergarten I was told to sleep whether I wanted to or not. If I couldn't sleep I was smacked. I liked to play at being a ballerina.

Relationship

I liked to be able to play in the forest alone. I liked playing with my brother, with the elements, with mud. I loved the outdoor life in all its seasons. Nature was a mystery world where you could be alone without fear. I loved the colours, the leaves, the dirt, the mud, the sense of dryness and of wet. I always wanted to know: 'What's around the next rock?'

Discovery

I played with my sister – dolls in bed – and with many other children at kings and queens. I loved tiny berries and big rocks. Each rock was a piece of a kingdom, a huge rock a castle. In my imagination there was a beautiful lady whom I was always expecting to come alive. She almost did, she became so real. My imagination was so exciting.

Imagination

I lived in a country village where my parents worked in a little grocery store. My little brother and I liked to do everything my parents did. We played shops and with the village children. We spent our summers near a lake where I experienced the freedom to develop a strong relationship to nature. I liked having my own spaces; places for privacy.

Privacy

I lived in the countryside in a house with a garden and was depressed when we moved to the city. I played with dolls, walked, dressed up in my mother's clothes and danced, mostly by myself. I felt in my play that I could meet another me – a new self.

New me

I lived in the countryside near a bakery in a little village. I liked to make little cakes with mud and leaves, and we built an elaborate oven. I was interested in the idea of making things to sell. Nature and outside were very important to me.

Making

I grew up in the suburbs of Texas and I had three little brothers. We played with a neighbour's girl in the yard at the back. Life was a bit constrained and held, although we had imaginatively free adventures climbing up and down the pile of bricks in the yard. Our adventures involved going up and down (the bricks) exploring an unknown world. My imaginary life was very alive. Our inner freedom made us strong. We were fearless; we had bold adventures and called ourselves The Great Girls. We spent hours on 'mastery play', becoming experts at Jacks.

Fearlessness

I loved marbles with their beautiful colours. I thought the squiggles, whirls and swirls inside them were magical. We developed skills and kept trophy marbles in a big jar. I was the eldest child of four, with two sisters and a brother. We would transform ourselves into princes and princesses, rolling out the rug to make a procession. I remember this ability to transform and I remember colour – light and colour.

Transformation

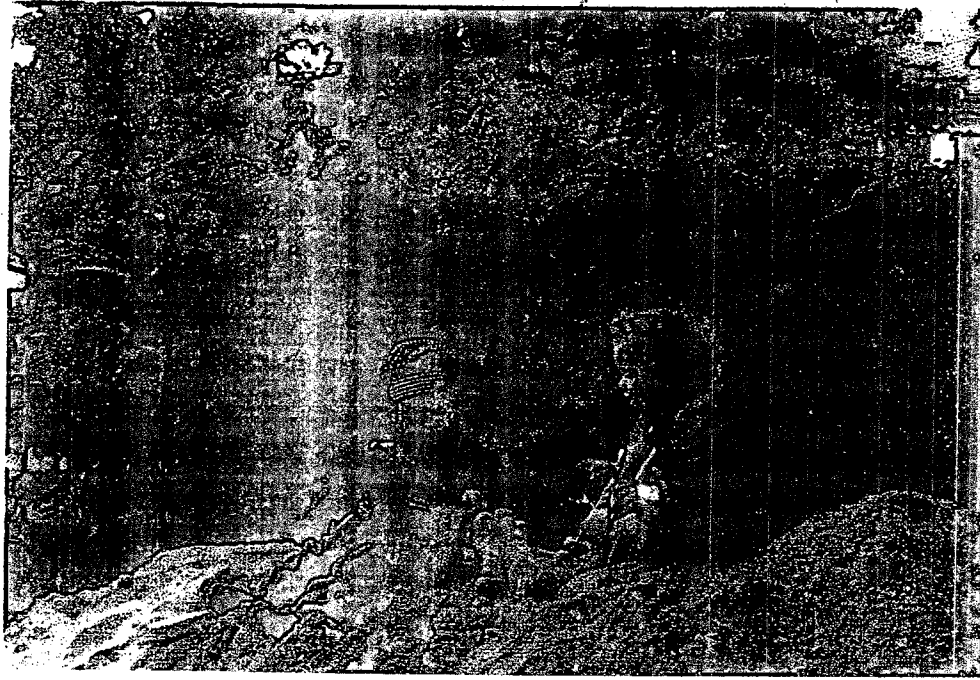


From these rich gleanings we created a Charter for Children's Play

Charter for Children's Play

Children play best when

- Adults are watchful but not intrusive, when safe ground lends courage to their discoveries and adventures.
- When their confidence in life is whole, when they welcome the unknown and are fearless.
- When the world is shared with them. When there are places and spaces they can make their own.
- When their games are free from adult agendas and when their transformations require no end product.
- When their senses are directly engaged with nature and the elements.
- When they are free to become gatherers, makers and world creators in their own time and in their own ways.
- When they can play with others and make relationships.
- When they can play alone, be solitary and private.
- When they can become new selves through their play with others and in their own imaginings.
- When they can reveal themselves, their joys, sufferings and concerns without fear of ridicule, and when mystery and imagination are not denied by fact.
- When play is recognized as the central activity of childhood.



Our Charter helped us to realize the value of our own play and to highlight its central place in all of our childhood. Some people began to make links with their childhood play and their later adult choices.

We began to see that play should indeed be recognized as the central activity of childhood, particularly if it leads to freedom and to the ability to fulfil as yet unmanifest karmic/spiritual intentions. A child who is not free to play will struggle with independence later in life. Educators who think equipping children with earlier and earlier academic skills will make them independent, may be misguided. Intuition through play should come before tuition.

We looked at how differently each child plays in the context of Rudolf Steiner's comments on play.

We should not introduce standardization into the upbringing of children, especially not in play. We must allow play to be individualistic. We must give special attention to the talents and interests of each child, for otherwise we would sin. (*The Education of the Child* (GA 307) p. 87; Nuremberg, 14 Nov. 1910. Anthr. Press 1996). and

Through play, children have a free but definable manner of acting upon the human soul constitution. Play and the accompanying soul activity of the young child arise from a deep consciousness of what truly constitutes the nature and essence of the human being. (Same publication, p. 99; Berlin 12 Jan. 1911)

We looked briefly at the work of Tina Bruce, an early years professor in England, who recommends tracking the play of individual children; looking at the self-chosen 'schemas' they are involved in such as enveloping, enclosing, trajectory play, etc. She believes particular themes and forms recur, and that the child works for a time with a kind of muse, then moves on to something else. The same forms, she suggests, resurface, for example, on the floor with pieces of wood, in bread-making, in movements and in drawings. We spoke of Piaget's recognition of the importance of play and of his attention to imitation as a force for learning and for the development of feelings. We thought about the importance of the child as creator; of the lifeless doll by the baby's side which later becomes the animated doll given life by the toddler.

We then also tried to establish the conditions that would best serve healthy free play. We are conscious that play in our kindergartens is sometimes rather precious and not always very free. What makes play possible? Our suggestions follow.



- It was felt that boys found creative play difficult and need materials to build with – it was felt that boys should build every day.
- There is a need for flexibility of materials. Thus a rocking chair with no seat made a wonderful boat, providing hours of play for a group of boys.
- Boys don't usually build houses. In our experience, they build ships, cars, rockets that look just like houses but are called different names!
- Children should play without fear of ridicule.
- Risk is healthy – some controlled risk is good.
- Children need opportunities to play in a threefold way to develop different spheres
 - cultural/civil – puppets, play performances
 - Political/rights – territory/tribal, war games
 - Economic – shops, barter.
- Much children's play can be seen as a recreation of the journey through humankind's history.
- Working adults are a great incentive to children's play. They should draw back from direct involvement where possible.
- Adults need to be brave and tolerant whilst ensuring safety.
- They need to be careful not to intervene in disputes too soon – children are often able to transform situations themselves.
- Children need to have opportunities to self-challenge in their play.
- Toys were not felt to be of much value as 'things'. The value is in the activity, not in the beautiful.
- We perceive a danger that Waldorf might be too pretty and aesthetic – a sanitized environment. Whilst not neglecting the good, beautiful and true, anything can engage the powers of fantasy. Often the things we have discarded supply the imagination with the greatest incentive to play.
- Children need time to play, sometimes even kindergarten teachers hurry children out of their play.
- They need plenty of outside play – in all seasons.
- Young children need their space and time to play. We have noticed that the youngest children often begin to play when the older ones begin to clear up.
- Children who can't play need their sense of life activated. Distress and illness prevent children from playing.

- Children are often afraid to play for fear of failure.
- Story pictures help play; they are flexible and allow soul-breathing.
- Adults need to develop the right kind of ears to hear when play is healthy and when otherwise. Children like to play out of sight.
- We need to be conscious when play becomes obsessive and to learn what each child's play has to tell us about his developmental stage, his social and emotional well-being.
- Children should be owners of their free imaginations and not bound by inflexible rationality; fear can come from too much explanation.
- Play should be allowed to rest for a while during the 5/6-year-old stage.

Baby play – what do babies need?

- Warmth, food, sleep, etc., bodily comfort.
- People and peace. To be in the vicinity of others yet also to have genuine times of peace.
- Committed individuals who give them time.

It was noted that many babies in many day-care places have their physical needs met (nappies changed, etc.) by young girls who talk to each other and ignore the baby before them. Babies play best when they are comfortable, happy and loved. If they feel they are truly met at feeding, nappy changing, cuddling times, then play will arise spontaneously out of surplus powers of happiness. Neglected children, in orphanages for example, cease to play. One of the signs of returning to health in a sick child is that he or she will begin to play. All play ceases when the sense of life is depressed.

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Mixed groups between one and six years of age based on family structures – Aphoristic notes

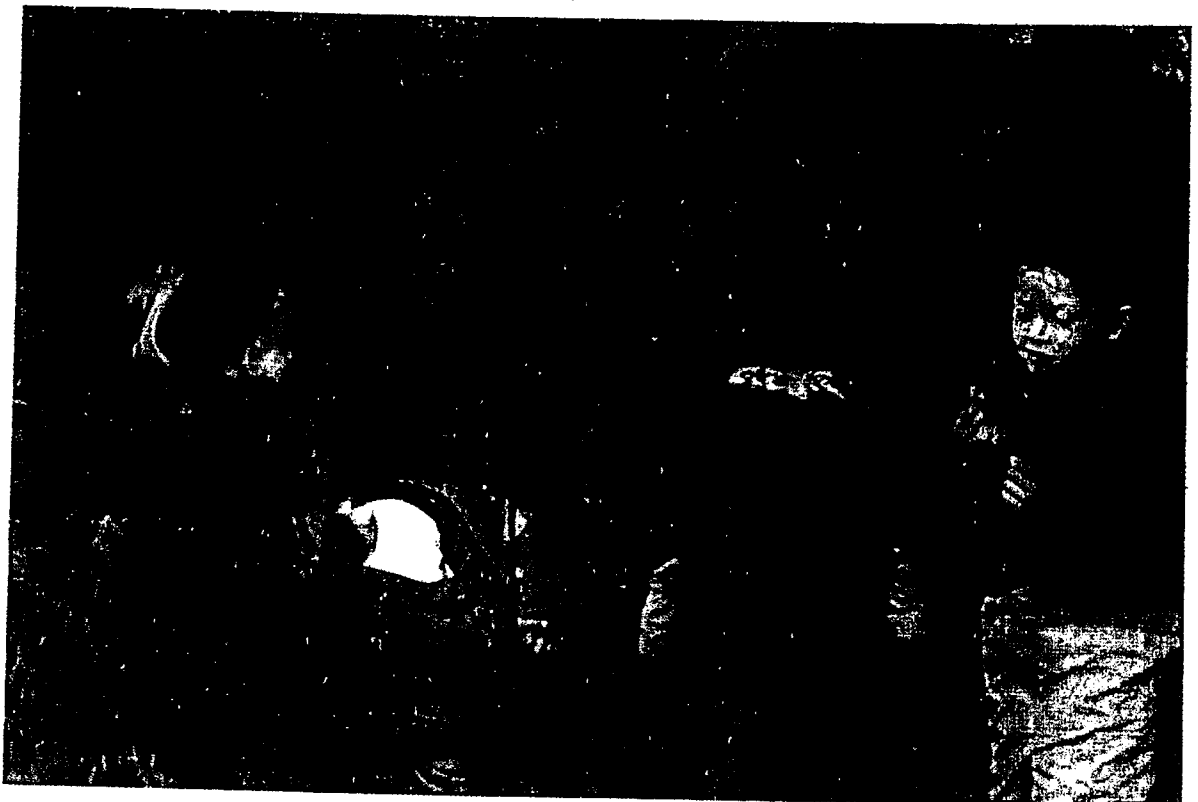
Helle Heckmann

Children may be accepted in a day centre when they are a year old providing the group is not too large. A mother should devote herself to her child for the first year in his or her life, after that she has the right to work. If children move on from day centre to kindergarten at three and then school at seven, these are too many different environments and adult contacts for them. If on the other hand they lived in mixed age groups, this ensures a degree of continuity. They have two pre-school experiences – family home and kindergarten – and they have the opportunity of learning from other children, above all older ones. This is part of learning by imitation.

We thus create a traditional family situation, with the children in mixed groups of between one and six years of age. Children learn how to play from the others. This builds an important bridge. The bigger ones learn to bend down to the younger ones and help them. The younger ones learn to reach out into the world and ask for help. And that is good so.

If one only has children aged one and two, they will only relate to their own age group. This can be a problem for the individual child, for a child may be of a different age inwardly than outwardly. Older children sometimes have to be younger and sometimes they have to be older. In a mixed group it is much easier for the individual child to find the environment he or she needs for development.

Adults have work on their own development and be well trained if they want to help children develop a personality that is strong but not egotistical and is able to make a real contribution to the development of the human race.



It is important that parents bring their children on time. We have our rhythm, and that is serious work. Our work is not exhausting, however, for the children give us a great deal.

We must find our own centre, otherwise we get overwhelmed and things get too much for us. You have to know your limits. We must always endeavour to work on ourselves and make progress. I am not the same person now as I was last year. I continue to develop. My kindergarten is not the way it was last year. And that is good so.

Every kindergarten has its own form, its own rhythm. You can really feel this when you visit other kindergartens. People lose their rhythm if too much is asked of them. For the children, past and future are not important. They live wholly in the present, the here and now.

Children incarnate in their first seven years. The organs develop. This has its own rhythm. Sleep before midnight is the time when we are with our angel.

We start on time every morning. Danes are generally phlegmatic. They want to decide for themselves what they do and when they do it. It is important for our rhythm that they are on time. It is important that beginning, middle and end are clearly structured. It is important to start and finish on time. There should be no discussion on this.

Parents may have to be prepared to change their life style.

I only interfere in family life where necessary. I'll usually say: 'I noticed this or that. What do you notice?'

Each child has his or her own destiny.

Violence in the family is not acceptable, and we also say this. Children also have to learn that they must not hit people. If they don't learn this, they'll have problems.

Different parents need to be approached in different ways. This is the most interesting work you can imagine.

Young children should not be woken up; they should wake of their own accord. You should not force eye contact with a child. You have to wait until the child is ready to say Good morning. Especially when one is working with so many children. The way in which a child comes in tells us a lot about the child himself.

Children rarely cry in the mornings. We must do the same things every morning. The children should not come into a noisy atmosphere. If there's a problem, one knows how one deals with it.

We have really tried to consider in full awareness how we can create universal flow in everyday life. We do not only talk about it with the children but really want to do it. Our daily work is reflected to us by the children's imitative play and work.

Our work is serious but we do it with pleasure; everything has meaning. Of course, we don't always laugh and sing - there are struggles, too - but it makes work in the kindergarten easier for the adults because they don't have to pretend. I have to work on myself inwardly so that I'll be calm, the ego in the kindergarten. I always stand firm, not letting myself be driven hither and thither. I try to stand thus, and yet always know what is going on.

I cannot help discovering all the time how much fun the work with children is. So many crazy things are happening all the time! Always something new. We must always be flexible and can never switch off. If we do, it creates problems for others. We are in the flow of life, whether we want to or not, and that is healthy. It is chaotic at times, but not at other times.

We have to prepare the children so that they will be able to work with concentration when they go to school later on. If we do not create an environment that is appealing, natural and interesting, and so attractive for them that they will concentrate on it, they will not be able to concentrate later on. This means they should be out of doors a lot, for there they have lots of space, and the noise is less in the garden. But it is not just a matter of space. There are many trees, so one can go and hide. The adults have lots to do - working the soil, preparing fruit for jam, picking apples, building tree houses, mending things. Lots of work, but I can observe the children at their play as I work, without disturbing their play. They know I am there; they see me at work; but they take no notice of me for I do not interfere. I know the children. They'll come and report to me and make sure that all's still well with the world. Once they know this, they can go on playing.

It only seems to be the way it used to be, for what happens today happens from conscious awareness. If it really were the way it used to be, I would not be here. I have a university degree and would follow an appropriate career. Here it is different. The significance of my work is clear to me. My mother did things without full awareness.

At teachers' meetings we have to ask ourselves: 'Why do we do this?' This makes an enormous difference, that we have to talk about it and ask ourselves what it means to work in dear conscious

awareness. I am not doing it for myself. I am doing it for the children. Of course I also do the work in the kindergarten for myself; for I am getting paid. I am actually getting paid! But I also do it because the children need it.

Some of the work is adult work. The walls must be painted. The children may only watch. They can help with the gardening work. I don't organize this; as a rule they come to me. I hold back, so that I won't do anything just for myself it is very difficult with infants. You have the feeling you are literally 'eating them up'. Some like to sit on your lap, others keep their distance. We have to respect this. And once you know them better they'll come closer and take you by the hand. You have to learn to be sensitive and quiet in your dealings with them.

It is really important to respect this and not go too far. A child who is tired will put his arms round your neck. That is trust, something not to be taken for granted. Sometimes you can kiss a child, or tickle them in play. A child will come because he or she wants to know if you're really there. This is the time when you can do such things with them. They don't generally want to be kissed, certainly not on the mouth; sometimes they'll offer a cheek to be kissed, but that is rare.

We need to work in agreement with the parents. The children belong to their parents, and we should never go beyond the boundaries.

Children can be really bored for a time, but it is healthy to be bored. It will generate the best creativity in play. You can't be really creative unless you're bored. If children don't know what to do their parents tend to get worried, asking themselves if the children should go somewhere else or if it is time for starting school. But the children will gradually come out of this phase, and then they'll be better at dealing with the little ones. They suddenly realize that they are now the big ones, and that they organize the kindergarten. They can do everything. I withdraw, of course, for one should not be a tyrant. 'Can I wash this? May I dry up?' Suddenly they can do everything and take on tasks. But they also know that much remains to be discovered. They need physical challenges, and encouragement. This is the time when the environment must be right, or they'll really get bored.

We never help the children. If they can't do something, then they can't do it. We've had some bad falls, but no child has ever died of them. They learned from them. How can children learn if you avoid all risk? Of course we don't ask them to cross the road and watch to see if they're run over. But in a natural environment we must provide opportunities for learning. A sensible child will never climb 30 or 45 feet high and then find he can't get down.

Unfortunately we help such a lot today that we paralyse the children. This is something we have to realize. If we truly love the children, we must let them go. We have to be there for them and be understanding, but we must not help. We need to be attentive, and also say No sometimes; then they'll have confidence and try again and again.

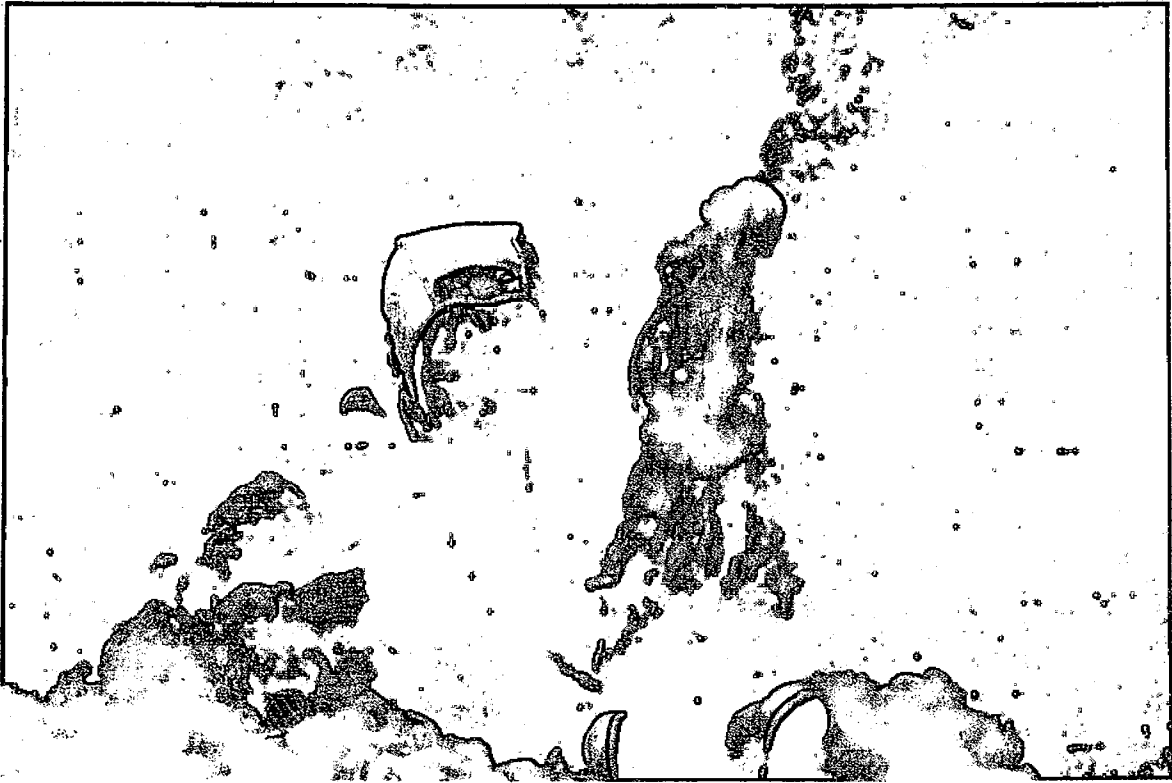
We learn to talk with the physical body. Talking has become a major problem in many countries. This is because of lack of movement. The children do not enter properly into their bodies. Children with serious problems need much more healing than we will ever be able to give them.

When we come back from a walk we split up. The reason is that eating is a serious business for 3-year-olds, for it marks the beginning of the important process of digestion. They prepare for their meal even as they change their clothes. This means they need quiet, and we'll only say the most essential things. We help them take their outdoor clothes off. We don't hurry them; we have time. They go to the toilet, wash their hands, and sit down at the table. All this is done in peace and quiet, and one can observe how important this is for the children, how they help with this and want to do things for themselves. Only the children who are over 3 years of age start to play, and they can do so. The atmosphere created by the little ones does, however, help them to be quiet as well. The older children eat in a different house. The little ones then have their sleep. Afterwards we have a short time indoors together before the children play in the sand. Creative work forms their bodies.

Before a family is accepted on to the waiting list, the parents are asked to ready my book. They get it from our library. This is asking a lot! 'I'm supposed to read something? I really just wanted something. First the book has to be read. If the parents still have their wish after this, they are included in the waiting list. It is important to make one's expectations, wishes and conditions clear in this way, so that parents know to what they give their assent. They see the quality we offer, and when they perceive this they are often prepared to make sacrifices. We must be in a position to bring in our knowledge. We have to be better, but we must also be able to face the parents as equals. Not as teachers; we are not the parents' teachers. Personally I know nothing about parenting

courses. I regret this. For it is, of course, a good thing to have classes for the parents. We offer many courses.

When the child has been received into the kindergarten, the parents must accept certain conditions, e.g. the 6-hour day, living and sleeping out of doors, vegetarian food and the close collaboration needed to solve problems. If the parents wish it, we can meet in the evening. This happens quite often, for both the younger and the older children. It takes half an hour for each child or every home visit, if required. We have a reading group, lectures, work days (Saturdays). The parents don't want to hear anything about children; they are interested in adult powers of will.



We sing as we work. We don't paint on Monday, do our baking on Tuesday, and so on. We do what is needed. The seasonal festivals are integrated in the pattern of the day. We are in the happy position of having the natural world all around us, and therefore do not need to specially create appropriate situations.

It is not a bad thing to paint, but we must know what we want to paint. Many children paint at home. It is not enough that one likes doing something; you have to have a reason.

Maltreatment, neglect, abuse of power

Madeleen Winkler

In Holland, 15% of women and 2% of men say they suffered 'bad' experiences (abuse) before they were 16. 30 - 60% of people seeking help from psychotherapy and psychiatry have been subjected to some form of abuse. 10% of children, which is 1 in 10, have known abuse, maltreatment and/or neglect. 3% of old people are abused or maltreated.

Many people think such things do not come up in anthroposophical establishments (schools, kindergartens, practices). This is not true. We just don't see it because we don't know the symptoms.

There are different forms of maltreatment.

- Physical maltreatment. The child is beaten, for instance, or tormented.
- Sexual abuse. Incest, sex crimes.
- Physical neglect. The child is not well nourished, not dressed right for the season, unwashed, uncared-for, is not given love and attention, and much more.
- Mental maltreatment. The child is shouted at. Things permitted one day are not allowed the next. Expectations are such that the child cannot meet them. Thus a father may have wanted to study the piano but was not allowed to do so. Now the child has to study the piano though he does not want to, and has to practise for hours. It is this kind of mental maltreatment we find at all levels of the population.

Extreme stress which the individual is unable to cope with will often lead to different forms of maltreatment. Anyone may find himself in that situation. The following experiment was recorded on video. A woman was locked in together with a child who kept crying. She was unable to get out and got more and more desperate. After 24 hours she was so desperate that she wanted to smother the child, using a cushion. At that point she was released from the situation.

Conclusion: Everyone is at risk if the burden is greater than one can bear.

Risk factors

- 1 People who were maltreated in childhood and youth tend to do the same to children.
- 2 Adopted children, disabled children, premature infants are at risk.
- 3 The family's social situation – single parent, financial problems, flat too small, etc. – may favour maltreatment.
- 4 Some convictions about life, e.g. dogmatic religiosity, may result in upbringing being excessively strict.
- 5 Young, immature parents may lack parenting skills and therefore do not react appropriately to their children's behaviour.

In recent years, healthy intuition, i.e. instinctive knowledge of how to bring up children, has been found to be getting less and less. In this age of the spiritual soul, we have to show skills to parents, counsel them and encourage their good intentions. This is something that needs to be done in Waldorf schools, kindergartens and medical practices. Children are challenging us! They take us to our limits, wanting to discover them. Parents are learning from their children. If a child is consciously or unconsciously maltreated and then not comforted, the adult is harming the child's integrity and his I-development is affected. It is the task of parents and also of teachers to ask themselves: What does this child need now at this age, so that he may fulfil his mission on earth? It is important, therefore, that we recognize the symptoms of maltreatment.

Symptoms

Infants

- The child is skinny, undernourished, transparent. Blue marks, frequent injuries.
- The child tenses, making himself stiff when touched or changed or during a medical examination.
- Signs of hospitalization – rocking, no eye contact, tendency to withdraw, etc. ... – signs of incarnation problems due to external traumas.
- No crying, or crying all the time.
- Shrill cries.
- Refusing food or greedy feeder.
- Fungus infections or redness in genital area may – though at this age need not – arouse suspicion (certainly later on).
- Bladder infection. Nappies or urine need to be examined for sperm.
- Problems sleeping, sleep disorders, nightmares.
- Frequent infections may suggest ill treatment or not being well incarnated.
- Severe or inexplicable pain (head, abdomen), frequent or excessive use of analgesics.
- Munchhausen syndrome. Child is deliberately made ill with medicines or by other means. The mother (or another person) achieves the recognition they seek on going to see the doctor or attending hospital with the child. Many investigations are required, often as an inpatient, to discover the true reason. (Issue of self medication?)

Young children

- Irregular attendance at the group.
- Child has not been seen at the doctor's for some time.
- Parents tell different stories to different people.
- Child no longer laughs or cries all the time; clings to a reference person, refuses to be looked after by anyone else.
- Child 'flows' out into environment. Will scratch, bit, hit out or tickle when contact is made, or know no limits in his behaviour.
- Child keeps concentrating on genitals, touching them – either his or her own or those of other children and adults.
- Very embarrassed on going to toilet.
- Isolation of the children. Child not allowed to play with others, visit others at home, to join in some group activities, e.g. going swimming or any kind of sport.
- Children take their orientation too much from siblings.
- Defecation.
- Bedwetting and daytime wetting. One has to ask oneself how far I-development has progressed. Is it a constitutional problem? (Bedwetting at night undoubtedly has other causes than wetting during the day.)
- Self destruction.
- Instability. Child always wants to lie down.

An example from a medical practice

A mother brings her child who is suffering from asthma. She complains, weeps, is utterly helpless. The child puts a hand on the mother's lap and says: 'It'll be all right. You see.' This is a highly noticeable situation. The child protects the mother.

Other symptoms

- Marked change in 'physical' expression.
- Children stick up for themselves, especially the boys, or withdraw to an extreme degree, especially the girls.
- Children's drawings can tell us a lot. Something may be missing, or sexual organs can be recognized in the picture. Dominance of black in the picture or around it or a frame put round the child's drawing of himself indicate great isolation.

- The children won't stand in a circle with the others in the group; they don't want anyone to look at them.
- They don't let people dress or undress them.
- They arrive very early in school or are always late.
- The children never talk about home in the group.
- The families concerned tend to move frequently, changing doctors and therapists.
- The children keep telling the same thing, e.g.: 'Dad brought up a banana in the night.'
- Mixed-up food causes revulsion.
- Children chew sleeves, trousers, etc.
- They overdo things where body care is concerned, e.g. washing their hands over and over again.
- Parents try and evoke an image of perfection, are also helpful. In conversation the problem is limited to the kindergarten – as the teacher you begin to feel guilty; apparently there are no problems at home.
- Children are always the victims.
- Children always stay in the corners of the school yard or near their teacher.

One person (early intervention at home) suggested that parents shy away from abuse if they know the therapist uses massage or baths, which means she undresses the children.

Questions and suggestions

The damage has been done by the time we note the symptoms. It is always like that. What has been said so far presents a dilemma, however, for the symptoms may of course also relate to other problems or disorders, or simply to a particular disposition. When do they point to maltreatment or abuse?

All symptoms require careful evaluation. This is only possible if we train our powers of perception, also for the etheric, for this is also affected if there is abuse. If several people observe a child's movements for some time, for instance, and then share and compare their observations, the image of the child which results will provide further insights. We must therefore look at the phenomena, let them speak for themselves, and talk about them together until we gradually get a clear picture. It is only after this that steps can be taken to bring healing.

Karma?

What does abuse have to do with karma? There are people who go well together and others who do not and yet have something in common. They cannot let go of each other. Hatred and love are very close to each other, as are wrongdoers and their victims. The karmic relationship between wrongdoer and victim (child) tends to be hidden; all we can say is that a connection exists. It is important for both parties that the wrongdoer comes to realize what he or she has done whilst still in this life and tries to clarify the relationship to the victim.

Role of the ether body

Physical and also sexual abuse damages the child's physical body. When someone has suffered a trauma, Rudolf Steiner said, the ether body comes loose from the physical body. If this happens more often, part of the ether body remains outside permanently. An 'etheric island' develops which is separate from the rest of the ether body. The child then has a 'hole' in his ether body.

Regular abuse causes a common ether body to develop between wrongdoer and victim (child), something that always happens when people do something regularly together with others, e.g. in study groups, teachers' meetings, and so on. In this common ether body the wrongdoer now fills the hole in the child's ether body, and since our habits are at home in the ether body, the child cannot do other but follow the habits of the wrongdoer. The hole in the child's ether body remains even if the abuse stops. This is the reason why children and also adults who have been abused for some time will soon come to be abused by others as well. The hole in the ether body absorbs the other ether body, and the individual loses his power of independent decision.

Physical and mental neglect and maltreatment

Inadequate provision of food, clothing, hygiene, lack of parental love, etc. really are etheric maltreatment. For regular daily care provision comes from the ether body. The child's ether body is damaged by the deficiency.

Mental maltreatment paralyses the child's own astral sentience and expansion. The parents' astral wishes take their place. Children are burdened with too much responsibility; they are treated as young children for too long; they have to take up their parents' hobbies simply because the parents want it, whilst the children are not that way inclined at all. This may be seen as astral damage. If it goes hand in hand with traumas and an ether island has already developed, corresponding 'astral islands' may develop. They take the form of fixed ideas and/or compulsive feelings.

Multiple personality disorder will develop in the worst case, with the I unable to hold together everything that lives in the astral body.

When a child is traumatized, he will try and protect himself by withdrawing his I from the process. If violence happens too often, the I, too, will create an 'island'. This will be separate from the everyday self which continues to develop. As the situation continues, more and more parts of the I are separated off. Finally several personalities live in the I – the mother, the prostitute, the night club hostess, the young child – each knowing nothing about the others. The aspects of the soul which we hold together in the I are separated in the case of multiple personality disorder.

Children's guilt feelings

In her book *Gwendolen*, Nigerian writer Buchi Emecheta describes how a girl living with her grandmother is raped repeatedly by a family friend. Finally she tells the family. The 'uncle' is cast out from the village community. Some months later her grandmother complains, however, that they no longer had enough to eat because 'uncle' was no longer coming. Gwendolen later went to join her parents in London. When her mother returns to the grandmother, Gwendolen's father indecently assaults her. She is afraid to speak of it. After all, he's her dad! If he's no longer there, who'll look after her little sister and her brothers? And in England a father like that is put in prison. Buchi Emecheta tells the whole story in a way that one can feel how the child is first made not to tell and then blames herself.

How do guilt feelings develop?

If I have an ideal of how something should be and do not have the strength to carry something through, so that I do not achieve the ideal, uncertainty will arise in me, things get 'wobbly'. And that's my fault. Guilt always puts the account in the red. The ideal which was too great takes us into the realm of Lucifer and if we don't succeed in achieving the ideal, we fall into the realm of Ahriman, into guilt feelings.

Children naturally see authority in adults who are like gods to them. If an adult does something which does not fit this highly idealistic picture, the child is unable to cope with this, to digest it, and falls into deep guilt feelings.

Treatment

For treatment we need the educational and curative educational principles given by Rudolf Steiner. The teacher uses his own ether body to educate or heal a child's physical body. He uses his astral body to heal or educate the ether body. He needs his I to educate and heal the astral body. He needs his spirit self to 'heal' or educate the I. It is thus always the higher body which influences the one immediately below it.

We have not yet developed the spirit self. As individuals we are thus unable to heal the consequences of abuse. It needs intense collaboration among several people if a spirit self is to connect with their work.

If I nevertheless have to work for a patient on my own, his own I not being available, I turn straight to the patient's guardian angel, asking the angel to help me and work with me. We cannot heal 'against karma'. And we'll never be able to take away all pain or heal all sickness.

When someone has suffered a trauma, be it in an accident, a rape or other situation, the ether body loosens its connection with the physical body. External treatment by an anthroposophical physician, and anthroposophical medicines taken internally, can bring the ether body back again into the physical body. The external application addresses the organ of touch, which covers the whole body, and the ether body begins to take an interest in the physical body again. This treatment calls for a great deal of tact. Talks with the physician or a therapist (psychologist) can help the patient to tell the whole story, work through it and digest it. With children, play therapy would be suitable.

If the trauma is severe or happened some time ago, psychotherapy and often also one of the art therapies may be considered. Biography work is also suitable. The trauma is then embedded in the whole biography, which usually makes it easier to talk about it and work on it. Such work will take away its power to determine the whole of life, so that the good moments in life, which had been completely blended out, begin to shine again. In art therapy, it is often possible to see months earlier what the patient will only be able to express in words later on, e.g. from which direction the threat came.

The deep-rooted guilt feelings and fixed ideas connected with the etheric island will create undesirable situations every day. I ask the patient to imagine such a situation and then paint a picture with as much detail as possible. At my suggestion the patient will then try and think of something that will help the situation. This stimulates the will and usually reduces the compulsion a little. We have to work together in maltreatment situations, not only with our colleagues at the medical centre but also with schools, child psychiatrists, paediatricians, family help organizations, educational advice centres, advice centres for abuse, etc. It is well worth while to go to advice centres for information and suggestions.

Prevention

If there has been trauma, it is worth while to give quick rehabilitation treatment for the ether body, as already mentioned. The key point is that all of us – physicians, teachers, nurses, therapists, carers, day mothers, leaders of children's groups, etc. – know the symptoms that may suggest abuse, maltreatment and neglect. Almost all of them may also have other causes, and we must therefore gather observations and share our knowledge as objectively as possible with others. Care must be taken not to let a negative mood arise which may then also transfer to other children. Many situations are not ideal educationally and demand a high degree of patience and compassionate love from the individual.

If there are well-founded suspicions, it can be helpful to consider some special situations. For instance, can we let children go to the toilet on their own in kindergarten? Are there no older children around? How would it be if a 'nice little house' has appeared there, made with cloths and items of furniture? Maybe I'll come and 'visit' every 5 or 10 minutes and look around. This applies particularly if there's a child in the group who is at risk because of personal experience of maltreatment, abuse or neglect, or a disabled child.

Attempts to get abused or maltreated children to tell their secret by means of role play or games with dolls, are not usually successful. I have therefore been considering, and asking lots of people, which folk tale would be suitable in the situation. The Goose Girl by the Brothers Grimm would be appropriate.

There are also instructions for inventing one's own story, with animals or other children whose situation would compare with that of the child. Such a story can also help children of divorced parents, for instance.

Why do we ourselves have guilt feelings all the time, blaming ourselves perhaps because it took us so long until we noticed the child's suffering, or did not intervene right away? We are always too late in cases of abuse and maltreatment; it has happened already. We have to know that abuse,

maltreatment and neglect may be caused by women as well as men, and at all levels of society. An attempt has been made to describe what we can do.

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Felted wool pictures

Susan Weber and Rena Osmer

15 people attended the group. We considered the subject of waking and sleeping in itself and by using an artistic approach. We started with short talks and a puppet play about these experiences, which are so important for the child. What is the nature of sleep? What does sleep signify for the young child? Why is it so important? What is the connection between being awake and asleep in a young child?

These are some of the questions which we briefly discussed. We then considered the qualities, functions and artistic potential of wool fleece. What does it feel, look and smell like when it comes straight from the sheep? How does it change with washing and dyeing? How does it activate and heal the senses? How can we use this material with young children, children and mothers, to support sleep and healing? Inspired by these thoughts and experiences we started on the art work – felted wool pictures.

The process was simple. We started to create a picture with crude wool coloured with vegetable dyes on a background of heavy indigo-coloured wool. A steam iron was then applied to felt the wool. Several layers of felt could be produced.

As we worked we took time again and again to share our experiences and questions on the subject of sleep. The people in the group came from different cultures and so we got a rich and varied picture. Someone from England observed, for instance, that it greatly helps a child to find his sleep rhythm if the parents are aware of the importance of sleep. Parents with less experience in bringing up children are likely to have more problems in getting the child used to regular periods of sleep.

In Holland the situation is similar. There it was also noted that some children find it difficult to let go of the day. They are full of plans for the next day and can hardly wait to be awake again. The question which emerged was: Is sleep important in our cultures? If not, it may be difficult to convey the significance of sleep to children.

In Majorca life still follows a rhythm, and there are no problems at this level in family life. In Paris, on the other hand, some children have problems sleeping at home but will easily and happily sleep in their kindergarten. Someone from Switzerland said parents are concerned that their child might sleep less well at night if he sleeps in the kindergarten during the day. How can the right measure be found? Many of us had brought photos of children asleep when travelling – in their buggies, in car seats, anywhere. We spoke of parents whose conditions of life make it difficult week work that needs to be done away from home waiting, so that their child may sleep at home. In America, vibrations from machines are often used to get the child off to sleep; many car seats have a built-in vibrator, and some young children are put on the washing machine or dryer to get them to sleep, or in their car seats.

We came to realize that it is one of our most important tasks to deepen our own insights into sleep and try to meet the needs of families and children in many different situations in life. We found that many things can have a bad influence on children's healthy sleep, which is such an important phase of renewal for children and for those who care for them.

Before and after our discussion sessions we continued with the pictures. They expressed the subject of waking and sleeping in many different ways – two sisters sleeping in a fairy-tale rocking bed, a lively sky with sun, moon and stars, a motto and a mushroom in autumn woods, children happily dancing in a garden ...

The finished pictures were exhibited in the foyer and attracted much attention. After the conference they went home to children's bedrooms, play group rooms and day centres all over the world.

Singing with children in the first three years of life

Using a children's harp to develop the mood of the fifth

Veronika Biesantz

We started by trying to come close to movement in the young child's world. First we moved quite naturally, the way we usually do as adults. Then we tried to walk like young children, finding that they have a much greater variety of movements at their disposal. A child will start to run, for example, suddenly stop, change direction or slowing his pace. He swings and moves with many small toddling steps, with the arms often waving to and fro. This is also reflected in the fact that breath and pulse are faster than they are with us. Adults use large steps, more regular, with more emphasis on gravity and with few variations.

We then moved to songs with the kind of beat adults like, choosing autumn songs. People from Holland, Denmark and Portugal gave examples from their countries.

Turning again to the world of the young child, we sang some pentatonic songs by Alois Künstler. Then we sang and moved to a number of songs based on the fifth from Julius Knierim's *Quintenlieder* and some songs of my own invention. All were easy to sing for movement and round games. We thus tried to enter into the mood of the fifth in which the young child lives, in voice, words and movement. We also moved to words and sentences invented out of the moment, on a single note or in the fifth. Some of the songs based on the fifth could be walked and sung to a beat of three as well as two as far as the speech rhythm was concerned.

The question then arose as to the differentiation between diatonic, pentatonic and above all the mood of the fifth. With diatonics, a seven-stage scale develops on the basis of every note, taken as the fundamental, going vertically up and down. It consists of whole and semitones. With pentatonics, a sequence of five notes such as d' e' g' a' b', which may be based on any note, does not include semitones. It moves towards the fundamental, and may be in the major or minor. The mood of the fifth, finally, has a centre, a 'home', in the a', widening out into g' e' and the fifth, d', in one direction, and via b' d'' to the fifth d'' in the other, returning to the middle, the a', from there. It is more of a flowing, swinging movement with no major or minor quality as in pentatonics.

In a lecture he gave on 7 March 1923, Rudolf Steiner said: 'Up to about the ninth year, children do not yet really have a notion of major and minor, even if one is able to present these to them. When they start school, children may be offered major and minor moods to prepare for something that will come later, but they themselves have neither the one nor the other. Though one may not like to admit it, children essentially still live in moods based on the fifth. And so it will, of course, be possible to use examples in school that include thirds; but to come really close to children, we need to encourage their understanding of music by basing ourselves on an understanding of fifths. This is what really matters.'

We did singing exercises with specific combinations of vowels and consonants to try and approach the region where the child's speaking and singing voice is at home. The M helped us with this; it surrounds the child with warmth. To enliven the lip and cheek region we practised the 'labial' R the way babies like to use it as they playfully take hold of their speech organization, often repeating sounds over and over again.

Combining M with \bar{t} , ng, l and other sounds, we tried to get brighter, lighter sounds. A gentle smile makes it easier to access this region. P with its elasticity helped us again and again to let go. The voice exercises which I am just mentioning briefly come from the therapeutic material provided by Mrs Valborg-Swärdström.

We sang specific vowels to the seven notes of the children's harp, similar to the concordance sequence Rudolf Steiner gave for the relationship between vowels and the notes in the scale.

Children's harp: d' - e' - g' - a' - b' - d'' - e''

Concordances: O - A - E - ü - I - O - A [German vowels]

With M and 'no' we sang the notes in the range of the mood of the fifth, moving around the central a', going up to the double fifth and then again returning to the a'.

For the final part of our workshop we considered the children's harp. It was developed on the basis of sound quality studies and observations made with young children up to the ninth year initiated by Julius Knierim. It was built by upper school students in collaboration with their workshop teacher at the Engelberg Waldorf School near Stuttgart. It is made of a single piece of wood with two open sound bowls directed towards each other in a lemniscate. The instrument comes quite close to the young child's feeling for music. We brushed across it with a hand and listened to the sound. It is a delicate, mysterious sound that relates to the surrounding world, as if around the harp. It has lightness and the sounds have little weight. We also passed the sound on to our neighbour, who received it and passed it on, going anticlockwise, clockwise and also across the group.

To give a feeling of the difference from a children's harp, I played a lyre, a string instrument with a resonance body similar to those of most musical instruments. The sound is much heavier, has weight, it is louder, fuller and more bound to the instrument.

We then practised playing the seven strings of the children's harp. We followed this with songs in the fifth which we played and sang, including those to which we had initially moved in space. We also learned some pentatonic songs, to bring out the difference from the mood of the fifth even more clearly.

We shared experiences made in using the children's harp with young children. One member of the group spoke of the way children aged between one and two grow very quiet when she plays the harp, following this with a brief finger game, and then briefly lets the harp sound once more. Another had invented a song in the fifth about a little boat which she played for us and then taught us.

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The Madonna as a source of strength in body, soul and spirit

Hanne Looij

The subject of Madonnas is vast and we therefore chose three aspects for discussion in the workshop.

- 1 The Madonna as a source of strength for the **body**. How can art, and especially a painting of the Madonna, be a help in looking after our health?
- 2 The Madonna as a source of strength for the **soul**. What can this archetypal image of mother and child teach us and show us with regard to our inner attitude to the child?
- 3 The Madonna as a source of strength in the **spirit**. What can paintings of the Virgin tell us about our relationship to the world of the spirit? Images from different phases in the life of the Virgin reflecting the development of human conscious awareness. The way from the Annunciation to Pentecost.

The Madonna as a source of strength for the body

Rudolf Steiner made us aware that sensory perception is not a passive reaction to impressions that leave their traces as a copy, imprint or projection in the eye or another sense organ. It is an active process involving the whole of our organization. When we consciously perceive something we imitate it inwardly; this perception is no involuntary mirroring but a new creation of our own.

When we look at a painting, our ether body is set in a specific kind of motion which depends on the colours and shapes we perceive. The ether body recreates the movements and shapes of the composition and the gestures of the figures shown – also, of course, the colour and shape of any room we may be in. Unless we are clairvoyant, the process is an unconscious one. (Steiner 1911)

We can understand, therefore, that it can have a healing and calming influence on us if we regularly look at a Madonna painting; it helps to bring harmony and balance to the ether currents. Raphael's Madonnas are particularly suited for the purpose, above all the series of paintings Dr Felix Peipers put together in 1911 in collaboration with Rudolf Steiner. The individual paintings should be looked at in a specific sequence. (Robert R. Nuber) The sequence is determined by the position and movements of the child relative to his mother. He is standing by her right or left leg; he is carried on one arm or the other; the foreheads of mother and child touch, and so on. The sequence is such that relative to his mother the child describes a pentagram. It begins with the *Sistine Madonna*, where the whole composition is markedly determined by the pentagon, and concludes with a detail from the *Transfiguration*, where the figure of the Christ is also a pentagon.

Looking at the whole series and inwardly following the movement of the child relative to his mother, we find that the paintings are but stations along the way, with the actual movement happening in between. Thanks to our ether body we are able to follow them in the invisible realm.

When we enter into the images more deeply in meditation, this stimulates the different currents in the ether body in a healing way. The effect is even greater if the exercise is done before going to bed. The series is therefore suitable for mothers-to-be and for people with heart conditions, sleep disorders or anxieties. (Walther Bühler has gone more deeply into the healing effect, showing most beautifully how ether body activity corresponds with the content of the paintings.)

The Madonna as a source of strength for the soul

To come closer to this aspect, let us look at *The Virgin in the Rose-bower*, painted by Stefan Lochner towards the end of his life, between 1447 and 1450, in Cologne.



Fig. 1. Stefan Lochner. *Virgin in the Rose-bower*. Wallraf Richartz Museum, Cologne.

It is quite a small painting (50 by 40 cm), probably so that in looking at it one may develop a truly personal relationship to the figures. It is painted with great love, with much attention to detail, clearly using a brush with just one or two hairs.

The Virgin is sitting in the centre, the Child on her lap. Her deep blue robe spreads in many folds over a red cushion and small green plants. She wears a richly adorned crown, and a precious, costly brooch. Many small angels form a circle around her that is open at the front. They are playing instruments, folding their hands, or offering a rose or an apple. Their garments are red, blue and yellow. Behind the Virgin we see a bower overgrown with red and white roses. The ground is gold, with numerous fine rays in it that all originate in a golden semicircle from which the kind face of a very old man looks down on the Virgin. His hands are protectively cupped around a white dove which is about to fly down. Around him are numerous small angels' heads. In the left and right upper corners angels hold up a richly decorated red curtain.

The painting is highly symmetrical. Only the Child stands out from the symmetry, a movement balanced out by the slight inclination of the Virgin's head and the gesture of her right hand. Horizontally, too, the painting is divided in two. Below we have the green meadow with its many plants; above, all is radiant gold. The two spheres are connected by the figure of the Virgin and the bower. The figure of the Virgin is a equilateral triangle; another, inverted triangle is given by the lines in the bower. The two triangles interpenetrate, with the Virgin's head in the area of intersection. The brooch is at the point where the imaginary diagonals intersect.

What can this painting of the Virgin and her relationship to the Child tell us? The composition with its symmetry and the two triangles creates great calm and balance. The impression is deepened

by the blue of her gown and inward look. The amulet plays a key role in the composition. The eye is drawn to it and comes to rest in it. This point may be experienced as the Virgin's inner centre, the source spring of her inner calm. This experience transfers to our own body, so that we perceive the heart as our inner centre.

The Virgin is at home in two worlds and also represents the connection between them. She is sitting in humility in the living green of the earth; the upper part of the body and her head, on the other hand, are regally borne in the gold of heaven. On the one hand she is very much connected with the earth; on the other she finds stability in a heaven that is open to her.

The roses grow between the two realms – just as the Virgin's soul seeks to rise to the realm of the spirit. They are firmly rooted in the soil and their woody branches bear hard, painful thorns. Yet from this sphere, which is so close to death, arise noble, delicate, scented flowers. This process of being progressively more noble and pure comes to completion in the crown where the flowers of the earth have become heavenly flowers of precious stones.

The angels in their protective semicircle around Mother and Child create a safe space. It is delimited from the outside and yet open. Looking at the painting you feel invited to enter in. We see the same gesture in the cloak. It protects and delimits as it lies on her shoulders, but it also leaves space for the encounter with the Child. The same gesture can be seen a third time in the Virgin's hands. They support, share, 'feeling the Child's pulse', and also let him be free. There is no compulsion or imposed will anywhere.

The Child holds a special position in the composition as a whole. He alone is naked, showing himself openly, as he is, in his innocence, purity and vulnerability. Breaking up the symmetry, he brings life and movement into the composition. The gestures of the Virgin's hands and head restore the balance. The Child looks to the right and beyond the picture. The right side is our active side, where we experience things of the future. In this painting it is also the side from which the light comes. Shadows are cast to the left. Again the Mother creates the balance, with her head turned in the opposite direction and her eyes looking inwards. The Child, though sitting, appears active. The open, bent legs show an intention to move, whilst his Mother is sitting absolutely still.

Even if we leave aside medieval symbolism – God the Father, Holy Ghost, apple of paradise, red and white roses, white lilies, the numerous small plants in the green – the composition, colours and light show us that new life can arise where heaven and earth touch, and where one consciously seeks to elevate earth to heaven and embed the spiritual in the earthly realm. This creates something of a centre where great stillness may be experienced. And this stillness makes it possible to have living movement of renewal. Looking inward is a precondition for looking outward into something that belongs to the future. The pure higher self can only show itself in a protected space; and this is only created where limits are set.

The two angels at the top raise the curtain for us so that we may see something which is normally hidden. In the process of sensory perception, we ourselves raise the veil. We bring to conscious awareness how the colours and shapes influence our souls. This influence is also there at a superficial glance, but in that case it does not come to conscious awareness.

The Madonna as a source of strength in the spirit

In the lecture on Isis and Madonna, Rudolf Steiner spoke of how the Madonna may be seen as an image of a human soul that has cleansed itself of all sensual desires and keeps thinking bound to the physical body. Cleansing, catharsis, allows the soul to awaken the inner eye in itself and give birth to the higher self of the human being. As the human soul (the Virgin) opens up to the spirit and receives it (the Father) into itself, it can awaken the spiritual principle within itself (the Son).

The life of the Virgin Mary might be seen to reflect the development of the human soul. The different stages of maturation in her life reflect the development of human conscious awareness.

There are two events in her life where the Holy Spirit influences her directly – the Annunciation and the pouring out of the spirit at Pentecost. In our workshop we compared two paintings that show these two events – an Annunciation painted around the year 1400, and a 12th-century painting of the Pentecost.



Fig. 2. Unknown artist. Annunciation. From a travelling altar. The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.

The composition and the gestures show the inner attitude of Mary and the conditions under which she encountered the world of the spirit in either case. She can thus be an example for us in our own inner life and development. The major differences established in the workshop are given below.

Annunciation. Mary knows the influence of the Holy Spirit in an encounter with an angel.

Pentecost. Mary knows the influence of the Holy Spirit together with 12 others who have the same experience.

Annunciation. Mary and the angel each take up half the picture.

Pentecost. Mary is the central and biggest, i.e. most important figure in the group.

Annunciation. Mary is much moved, her body makes a curve. She is responding out of her feelings.

Pentecost. Mary is entirely vertical, in frontal view. She is responding out of her I.

Annunciation. Mary has her arms crossed and is looking inward. She is modest and wants to withdraw.

Pentecost. Mary's hands are open. Her eyes are awake and 'all-seeing'. She occupies her place in full awareness.



Fig. 3. Psalter from St Albans Abbey near London. 12th c. Hildesheim. Publ. by St Godehard Kunstverlag, D-56653 Maria Laach, Karte Nr. 5672.

Annunciation. Mary is wholly with the angel, listening.

Pentecost. Mary is receptive. She opens up in full awareness, is very much awake as she listens, highly concentrated and in inner equilibrium.

Annunciation. Mary has a roof over her; the space is open at the side.

Pentecost. Mary is in an indoor space; however, a sphere that goes beyond space fully opens up in an upward, or better, inward direction.

Annunciation. The dove moves towards Mary in the diagonal.

Pentecost. The dove is vertically above Mary.

Annunciation. The rays come from the mouth of the Christ; the dove flies in the rays.

Pentecost. The rays come from the dove's beak and go to the heads of individual people. The dove is connected with a semicircle in which there is a kind of star or eye.

We see Mary develop from a young, pure, 'white' maiden who is surprised and given the grace of an encounter with a supersensible spirit, to a fully aware woman who enters independently and wide awake into direct relationship with the spirit out of the powers created in a human community

where each individual is inwardly active. In her youth, openness shows itself in readiness to take on her destiny. At the end of her life, having intensely lived through and suffered her destiny, she opens up out of the wisdom that has arisen, and consciously makes the connection with the spirit.

I feel it is not without its deeper reason that Rudolf Steiner spoke of the *Sistine Madonna* when opening the Stuttgart building. For the image of the Madonna is profoundly connected with the mission of anthroposophy. It shows us how the human soul can give birth out of itself to the higher self, how man receives life impulses from the world of the spirit, and how this world can make the gift of an earthly 'body', so that human beings can bring their inmost impulses to realization on earth. The Madonna painting also makes us aware that the process of gaining insight is a birth process. When we enter actively into Madonna paintings, they do not remain outside us but connect with us and help us, so that our souls grow more as it should be, practised and sensitive, and is able to live in these thoughts as in a spiritual reality. Madonna paintings make our souls ready to give birth.

I hope Madonna paintings will always find their way to children, parents and teachers, group rooms and bedrooms, parents' evenings and education meetings, gatherings of people working in a play group or day centre – and simply into the meditation of every individual person.

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Spaces for children

Reinhard Pontius, Carmen Kollmer

The thesis on which we based our combined efforts was that the shape and configuration of rooms has as much educative value as do the things we teachers do for and with the children. We therefore started with the question: What kinds of spaces do young children need? Can we establish basic trends that may provide guidance when we arrange rooms, even in the details?

We need an ideal concept of a room based on personal life experience if we are to create rooms that serve our purpose well. We did exercises on the way space arises, assessing the quality of different rooms and modelling to gain experience of sphere and cube as basic forms, and this showed that essentially there are two qualities which are opposites – rooms that are more spherical (round room or vaulted ceiling) and rooms that are more crystalline by nature (cubic space).

- We experience the spherical nature of space, for instance, if as a group we try to use our voices to create a common sound. The sound spreads around us and we feel ourselves to be in a spherical space. This is mainly created from inside and tends to spread, to grow.
- We experience crystalline quality in space if we observe the way sunlight comes in through a window, for instance, so that light and shade create linear contours, boundaries, surfaces. This kind of space is on the whole created from outside and tends to condense and solidify.

One experience made with modelling sphere and cube in clay, considering them to be the archetypal forms of spherical and cubic space, was that when we modelled a sphere, we entered into a more dreamy, meditative state, perceiving this more in the abdominal region. Modelling a cube we were more awake; we had to look more closely, working more deliberately, and experienced ourselves more in the head. This difference reflects the qualities of the two different spaces.

Summing up we may say that

- a room which is more rounded has sound character; it is more inward and warmer, thus supporting a life that is more dreamy, wanting to unfold in vital and growth processes;
- a room that is angular and crystalline has light character; it is cooler and harder, supporting thinking processes and conscious awareness.

To arrange rooms for young children, we can assume that children need to find the forces and powers they have inside them also in the world around them. They need more rounded forms that are in accord with their vital energies and their own rounded forms and strengthen these. They feel more at home in these than in angular forms. The ideal would be an organic inner space that combined the spherical and crystalline principles, but with the emphasis on the spherical. The egg shape comes closest to this ideal.

We thus first of all considered the question of fundamental form tendencies. There are of course a number of factors to the way we experience a space. They include lighting, colours, furnishings and decorations.

The most important factor was only mentioned almost at the end – the teacher must arrange the room in such a way that he or she also feels comfortable in it, for it is of great benefit to children's interest in the world or their surroundings if they can sense that a grown-up also has a loving relationship to the surroundings.

Members of the group described various situations children met in the many different spaces in their lives. The question was asked how the surroundings influence children and their organs and if there are ways of actually perceiving these influences. Examples were given of how shapes generate inner responses which then have a direct effect on the breathing. Another influence can be seen in the children's behaviour, the way they immediately want to touch things, grasp, try out, doing this with their whole body. (The issue of discipline immediately came up, of course, as to how much a teacher can permit.)

Another question was if items of furniture should also show what purpose they serve in their form. Do they have to be multifunctional so that they can be transformed in many ways?

Another question we considered was what our children need today and how a teacher can work in such a way that he makes up for the things no longer available from a natural environment. Individual situations were described and we identified the following 'symptoms':

- lack of space
- too many children in too little space
- lack of financial support

Some suggestions made for arranging spaces:

- In the available premises, which generally means cubic spaces where one does not normally have opportunity to vault the ceiling and give form to the walls, something can be achieved by rounding the corners between walls and ceiling, moulding them concavely (e.g. with plaster),
- It is pleasant to have curving or vaulted elements in the room (reflecting the vault of the heavens); it is relatively easy to have a curved rather than a straight pelmet when a new one is needed anyway.
- Lighting should be diffuse or scattered. Opal glass bulbs will achieve this. Light coming in from outside may be modified with curtains of fine but dense fabric, so that there will be no deep shadows or hard contours.
- The corners of rooms can be modified in many ways.

A final question for future consideration: What roles do symmetry and asymmetry play in arranging rooms and what effect do they have on children?

Talks with and classes for parents. How?

Adult education in understanding child development and self reflection.

Methods for talking with parents

Ursula Middelkamp

The group included about 40 people from different work backgrounds – day mothers, children's nurses, staff from advisory centres, paediatricians, course tutors, teachers, play group leaders. The age ranged from c. 28 - 65 years.

Assuming that they were all people with considerable experience, I used Ruth Cohn's TCI (theme-centred interaction for the first time. The words 'be your own chairman' and talks with TCI practitioners led to the decision to permit a group process to develop its 'own dynamics', with minimum intervention on my part. The days fell into four sequences.

First sequence

After general introductions, with everyone also describing their work situation and the questions that arose in this, it became evident that the subject of Dr. Glöckler's morning lecture also related to the workshop's basic theme. The feeling that one should do more! How can I reach my goal, how do I implement it?

Everyone was asked to put their questions or core concern briefly on prepared cards and place the cards in the centre of the room. Issues mentioned included understanding for the parents; structure of conversations; parents' self esteem; giving advice; primary confidence, where and how; and many, many times the question of confidence, courage, teaching (presenting knowledge) and conducting talks (moderator training).

The last of these was omitted after brief consideration, as it seemed we did not have the time and opportunity to deal with it thoroughly.

A brief concluding conversation brought out the key terms confidence, courage and education:

- How do I create confidence (in the other person) so that I may find the courage to open up, or let the other open up to me?
- How can I make teaching fruitful for myself and the parents as an instrument of a common orientation in what we do?

Second sequence

After a brief summary of the preceding day and a look at the morning's lecture, we divided into three groups to enter into conversation on the subjects of confidence, courage and education. A speaker chosen by each group would report to the plenum where the results would be subject to general discussion. The time for conversation in each group was c. 35 minutes.

Because of lack of time, the first group could only present its topic, education, briefly in the plenum. We had posters on the blackboard, and the cards relating to the issues considered in the separate groups were attached to these and discussed.

The speaker for the group on education started.

How do I protect myself from the powers that 'suck one dry', making confidence vanish? How can I deal with attacks? Separation between 'work with the child' and interest in working with the parents (people of our time). No formulas! Inner attitude determines what we do. Tension between acceptance and change. Letting questions come (wait for question). Ability to show the maternal and paternal principles clearly. Ideal and reality. Actions show that the educational approach is not understood. How do I get out of the 'lecturing' mode? How do I enter into a process of evolution? Is it easier to do practical work together than to talk to one another? How far do we consider what matters to us in education (and less so what matters to the parents)?

The second sequence concluded with a brief look ahead to next day's plenum discussion.

Third sequence

'Something well-meant may turn out well even if it was the wrong thing, because reality takes a hand,' said Dr Glöckler.

We started by taking another look at the 'teaching' group's plenum presentation. Then the group on 'confidence' reported. Time not to exceed 30 minutes, with explanations. The cards read as follows:

Speaking parents' language. Offering advice. Art of putting anthroposophical things in plain words. Offering personal experiences (individual, emotional, failures, things not achieved). Hold back own expectations. Develop interest (in the child, the parent's profession, etc.). Provide 'physical warmth' before going on to 'inner warmth' (providing security) before serious conversation can develop. Offer 'parent surgeries'. Home visits. Create core of confidence and trust around the child. Valuing people. Trust through openness. Take away fear. Build bridges. Acknowledge and encourage parents. Share concern for the child. Perceive the child's special nature.

There followed a plenum conversation on the above, on other experiences and thoughts relating to this.

The presentation from the 'courage' group followed:

Dare to do work on basics with the parents. Encourage questions, get them to ask you for further details. Talks in small groups rather than lectures. Develop confidence and trust in Waldorf education and confidence in one's own effectiveness. Courage to state one's point of view.

This was again followed by plenum conversation.

Fourth sequence

Moderation or summing up in new aspect offered by course leader

After a brief review of the previous three days, with the cards re-sorted (the day before), the course leader related the cards to the seven learning and life processes listed by Coenraad van Houten. All the thoughts on the cards can be applied to learning processes. This will give me differentiation and an overview of my will impulse.

Long rows of cards on the blackboard showed the process in which each is involved.

- 1 Breathing – perception
The basic condition for our work is that we perceive the symptoms of our time (family breaking down, new orientation for mothers who combine work and family, etc.). I find my (research) task by observing the world. What questions does the world pose for me? One answer might be that adults and children need a form of education that meets the need for individual development. (The courage question has its place here. See also the experience from the first sequence that the world is challenging us; we ought to do something.)
- 2 Warming – making a connection
It is important to make the task one's own, take pleasure and be enthusiastic in helping to shape it without losing sight of the situation (conditions). What is there already? What is the nature of my task? To whom do I turn with a view to perhaps working together? Where can I base myself on something that exists, where can I develop new prospects?
For education this means that we must clearly establish what enthuses us in Waldorf education and find ways of making things that make sense intellectually truly our own.
- 3 Nutrition – digesting
I have to fully understand my sphere of work (extending competence) and learn about new (related) subject areas; this alone makes me able to meet the other person 'objectively' and talk at a professional level to examine (my own) progress. Where do I find my teacher(s)? How can I effectively work with the specialist literature and find help through the media? (See also stimulating questions and observing children - 3rd sequence)

4 Separation – individualization

I have found my task and am working to rid myself of old structures that no longer serve or may even impede (courage). I get rid of stereotypes, e.g. that motherhood and work do not go together. Out of the many different approaches to educational reform I find my own way, working to see clearly how all these views differ from Waldorf education. What is the guiding principle in my institution? What do I want? Love that leads to action and awareness that one is always learning allow confidence to grow and give courage to act.

5 Maintenance – practice

Everything new one has worked for, as well as inherent abilities, must be nurtured; otherwise they turn into withered shoots, ballast for ourselves and others. Nurturing newly acquired abilities and established skills is something that has to be quite individual, taken up anew all the time.

6 Growth – growing abilities

Growing skills depend on practice (perseverance). Even if results are not immediately apparent, I can be sure that the powers will rise up anew in the night and allow me to work with new skills during the day.

7 Reproduction – creating something new

The (successful) conversation in which I (perhaps) make Waldorf education come alive for the parents and be something they can work with, creates a new reality that relates to the future. Love for the child creates powers of renewal that build a bridge between those who raise the child.

Summary

Courage and confidence, trust, determine each other – without confidence we cannot have courage, and courage grows when we are confident of succeeding. Both are future-orientated, relating to the qualities immanent in the children. Working with the parents this creates a basis for working together.

The reality lies in the future – we see this from young children's play behaviour. A 3-year-old turns his eyes to the future. Where to? To mid-life. The child plays daddy and mummy. A 14 or 15-year-old asks himself: What is the meaning of my life: This question is with us all our lives. Where and how can I do things – with all my imperfections and in my given life situation?

This workshop, too, did not come up to the expectations voiced at the beginning of the week's work. I hope, however, that here and there a thought has become clearer and will make it easier to act in future.

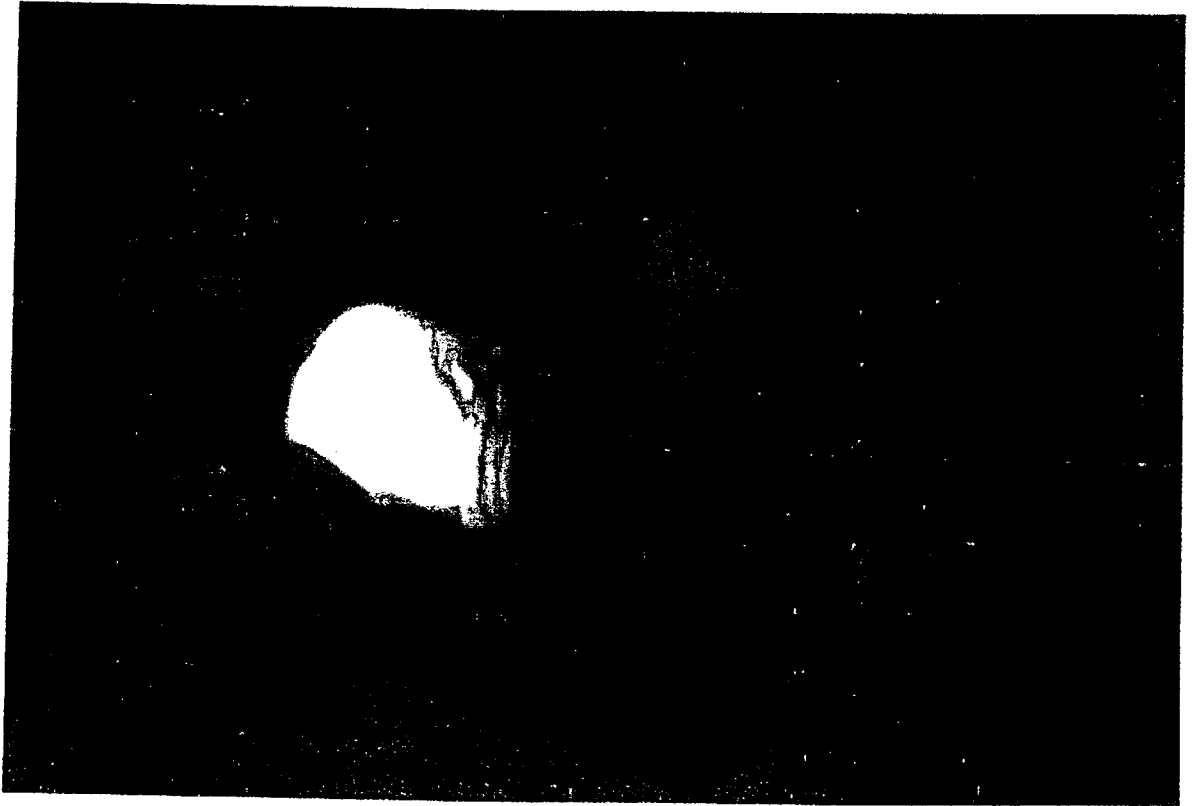
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What do parents with young children look for in parent-child groups and what do we have to offer?

Brigitte Huisinga and Claudia Grah-Wittich

Many years' experience in parent-child group work in Niederursel provided the basis and suggestions for sharing experiences with the workshop group which numbered about 30. Below, a summary is given of the subjects considered in the group.



The current situation for young parents

Parent-child groups from the baby stage are currently popular. Most mothers make enquiries – sometimes even before the baby is born – about activities with their babies such as baby massage, baby swimming, crawler groups and the Prague Parent and Child Programme (PPCP; German acronym PEKiP). Parents want to do the best for their children, whilst changes in life style have brought in new needs and desires of their own.

The relationship to young children, taking care of them and bringing them up no longer follow from traditional customs and instincts but are determined on the one hand by isolation due to social change and on the other by masses of information supplied on everything the young child is said to need in order to cope with a competitive world in later life.

Many of the parents' questions have to do with child development and with help and stimulation for their child. How much attention does he need? How much sleep? How should I play with him?

The changed life situation is reflected in a mother's words: 'I always wanted a family. Now I have one – two young children and a husband who leaves the house at 8 in the morning and does not come home before 7 at night. He is working. My days concentrate on children and household. I am not working. I am on leave. Family leave. But I don't feel as if I am on holiday but alone, with too much often demanded of me, questions I cannot answer and burdens that are too much. Altogether!'

Life does not meet people's expectations. They have to find their own role anew and also the right balance between the child's needs and their own.



Provisions for young parents

Various bodies offer different kinds of classes for young parents. Confessional institutes offer a comprehensive programme of antenatal classes, baby massage courses, and so on. Numerous parent-child groups from about the 5th month give contact with other parents, sharing experiences and mutual support, plus fun and games for the children. Centres for mothers have the emphasis on personal initiative through membership. Again the emphasis in groups is on sharing experiences and doing things for the child.

Baby swimming and baby massage courses and groups working according to the PPCP programme have additional early intervention elements, so that group leaders need special training.

A video was shown of PPCP group work (available on loan from the Association). It is the most widely known and recognized type of parent-child group (in Germany) for infants in the first 12 months and we can take a positive view of it. Special importance attaches to strengthening the mother-child relationship through sensory perception. A negative aspect may be that in spite of emphasis on the individual pace of development, the early intervention concept can lead to development being forced.

Parent-child groups as part of parenting classes in the Waldorf education system

Considering what is on offer we have to ask ourselves how we want to our parent-child groups to be so that they are in accord with our 'dignity of the young child' conference theme.

A precondition is that we see group work with parents and children at baby age as a social necessity and a reality. We should also be clear in our minds as to how conditions may be created that meet the needs of the young child and at the same time do not prevent parents from bringing their demands and questions to us. In other words, How does the anthroposophical image of man come alive in working with people, in the group process and also in the outer forms we create?

In Niederursel we tried to create a space in the widest possible sense where peace reigns first of all, where no one 'has to' do anything, with all tension and expectations dropping away; a space where respect, warmth and consideration arise, as well as confidence in the child's development and the parent's abilities. The basic attitude of the group leader must be one of empathy. Training in the basic principles of adult education and conducting conversations is absolutely essential. In this 'space' we want to give parents the opportunity to 'perceive' their child, so that with their perceptions they are able to find their own solutions and insights.



We also give courses for the parents that are largely based on exercises. As an example, we started the second workshop session with an exercise in perception. Together we looked at a bunch of artificial flowers with sympathetic and antipathetic bias respectively. Once we consider the matter, perception takes us straight to the thing itself. Two further exercises designed to open access to the young child's world were the following.

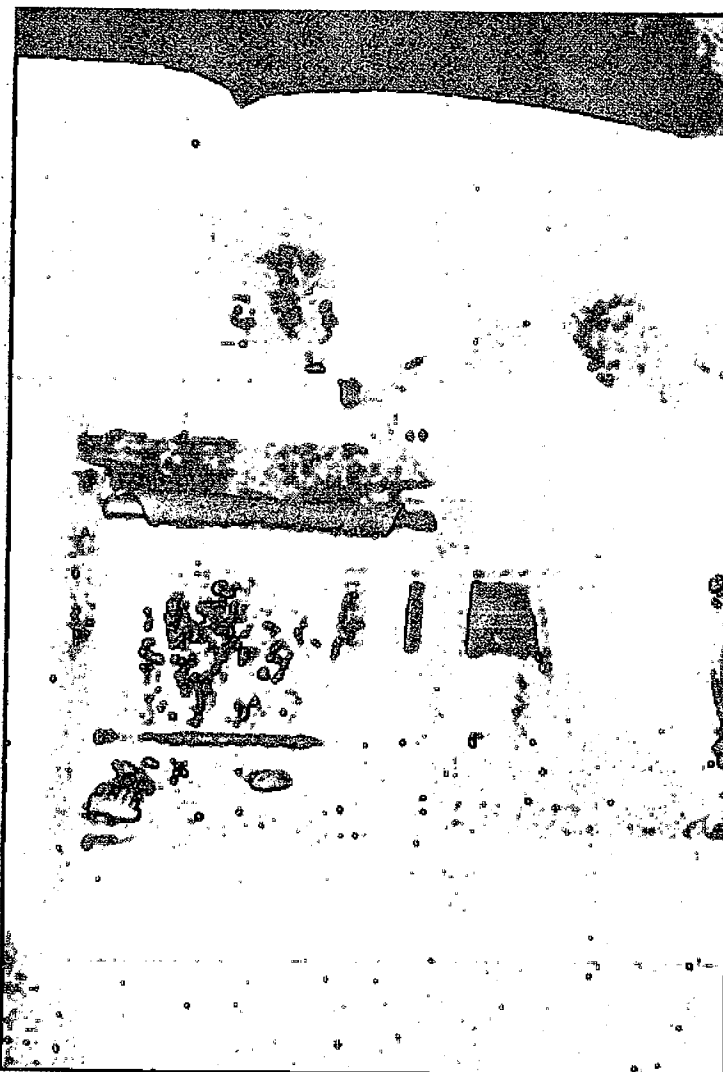
- 1 A number of familiar objects were shown and immediately identified by the group. The less well known the object, the more were the senses used to investigate the object. As adults we are subject to purposive thinking and a fast pace, young children still enter into things and meet themselves in them.
- 2 Looking through binoculars the wrong way round, people had to cope with a number of obstacles. The change in visual appearance takes away familiar certainty. It was clearly possible to investigate, with caution and also courage. Comments like 'Hey, watch out!' or anxious offers of assistance were a hindrance rather than a help.

Such exercises can help parents understand the development and behaviour of their child, opening up new aspects.

We consider child development on the basis of the anthroposophical image of man and try to work on this in a way that is easy to understand during 'parent weeks'.

Emmi Pikler's work is a great help with practical group work. This may be summed up in the words 'Give me time to do it myself', 'get to know one another', and 'being on one's own and being together'. As an example and to have a basis for discussion, we looked at part of a film made at the Pikler Institute and another from our own group work.

Parents often ask if they are offering their children enough. They do not ask if they are perhaps asking too much of them. The film, which is also a medium we use in work with parents, showed how much will to learn and be active a baby actually has. It also gave an idea of the way the room can be arranged – a wooden platform with a wooden board making a slope, shells, containers, cloths, pieces of wood, familiar utensils give the child security whilst always offering new experiences in a new stage of development.

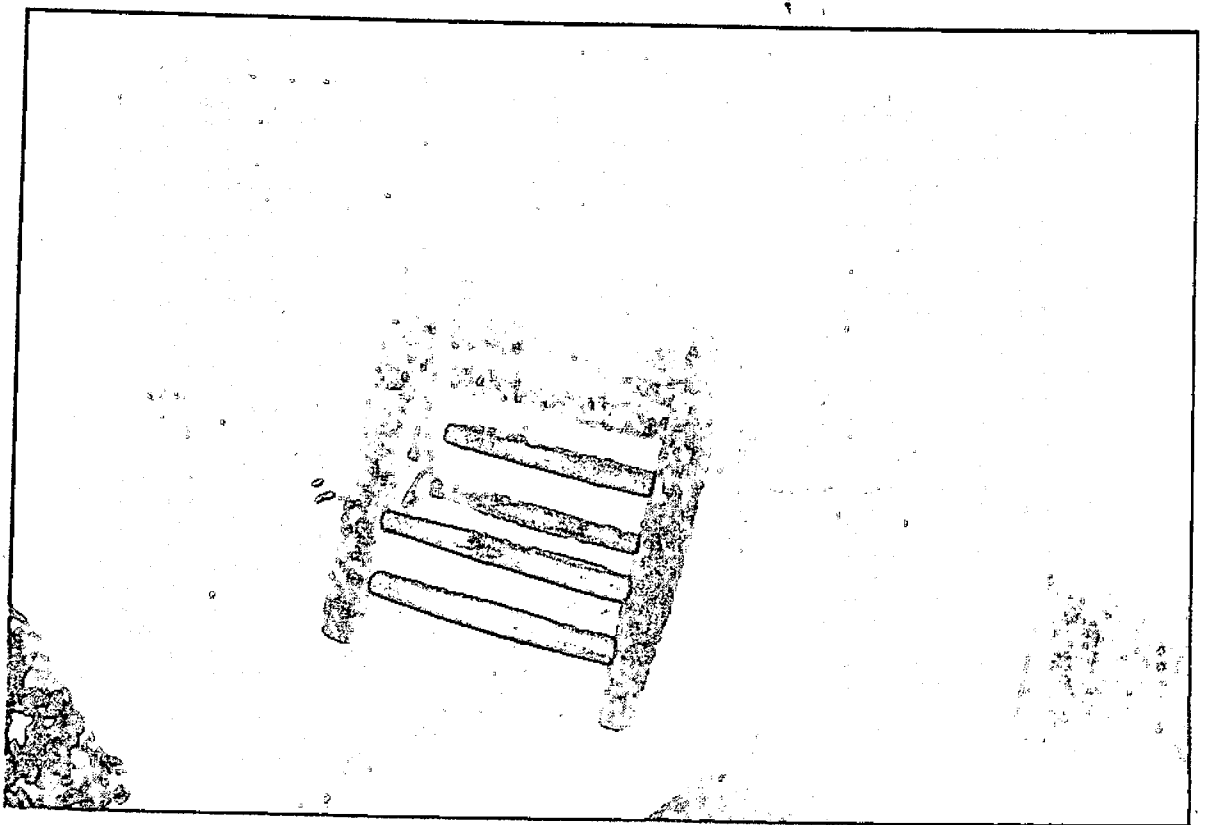
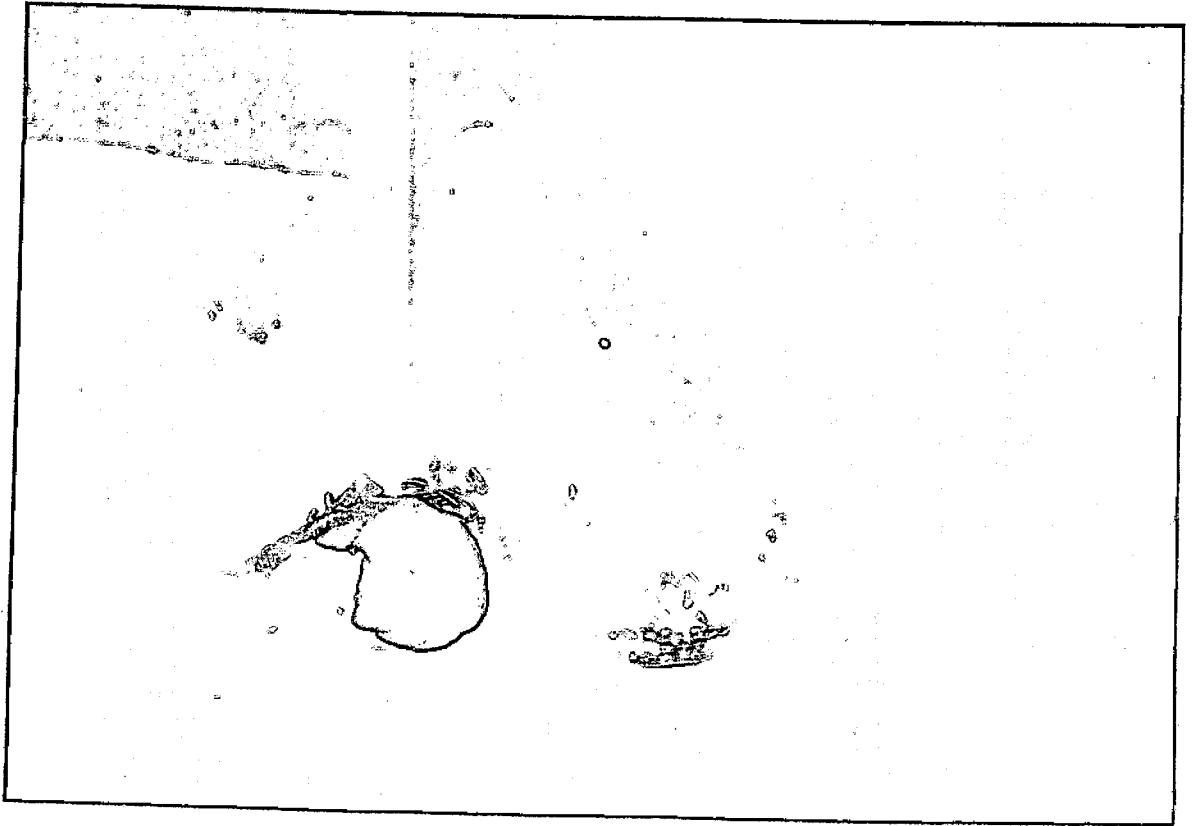


Facilities for parents with children at ages 1 - 3

The third day in the workshop was mainly devoted to questions and sharing of views, with special reference to children between 1 and 3 years of age.

The form chosen in advance, e.g. starting and finishing together, needs further development. Where example and imitation are concerned, it is increasingly more important for mothers or fathers to do something. Thus a light meal might be prepared for the children. Eating together gives the children another fixed point. In the group it can be possible, for instance, to deal with problems that often exist in making the transition to a meal at home. Parents and children experience the verse

that is said together, starting together, saying thanks at the end, and so have the opportunity to make this, too, part of their everyday lives.



Questions as to the nature of parent-child groups

Anyone wishing to develop parent-child group work needs to consider the following questions.

- What is the aim?
- Where are the groups to meet?
- Who's to be addressed?
- What form of advertising and registration should be chosen?
- How long should a session be and for how long should a group continue?
- How can the work be financed, what should it cost?

Future prospects

This very brief report on our work in Niederursel and what went on at the workshop may give some idea of how much background knowledge and training are needed to meet the needs and parents and children in group work. We need to work with anthroposophy, study group processes, conflicts and modern adult education methods. It is equally important to use self reflection to avoid transfers and projections. Group work can thus be a field for practical learning about education and changes in attitude.

We hope the above will encourage people to develop their own ideas and help them to develop new things as circumstances demand.



Introduction to anthroposophical studies of man and early intervention

Claudia Wittich-Grah, Stefan Krauch

Composition of group: 11 heads of day centres from Korea

Unit 1

Introductory talk

The threefold nature of the human being. Characterization of the three centres as they show themselves in body build, their relationship to rest, rhythm and movement. Relating to key points in development for the first three 7-year periods. Development of the will in the first period. What does it mean for a child to have movement development limited by an intellectual approach or haste?

Binoculars exercise

The exercise was designed to create openness, entering in an entirely new way into new sensory perceptions and at the same time getting a feeling for the situation of children who are unsure of themselves.

You take binoculars and look through them the wrong way round, using one eye and keeping the other eye closed. The severely restricted field of vision only shows things at a distance, as if through a tube. Being thus handicapped you try and go through a small obstacle course – a vase, for example, a chair lying on its side, some steps or similar things – without causing any damage. The tension may be heightened by having fragile objects, by a companion who urges you to hurry or makes nasty remarks, such as: 'Can't you go a bit faster? The others want to have a turn as well. Do pay attention! Now you really don't need to be afraid! Or: Don't make such a fuss! And so on. Just as we sometimes ask children impatiently to do things which are a matter of course to adults but are still strange to them. The enormous uncertainty created in movement coordination with such limited vision can really wake us up, so that old familiar things are experienced in a completely new way.

Evaluation

Everyone made incredible efforts to do as well as possible in the exercise, show little uncertainty, be finished quickly, and not expose oneself. It then took some effort to elicit the actual inner experience by asking questions. Then at last they did honestly speak of the anxieties and problems individuals had gone through, and this really made everyone think about the way one handled young children.

Unit 2

Introductory talk

What does it mean to learn by imitation? From which level of our inner nature does the ability to imitate come? What role does the head play in this? What conditions should a good example meet to make imitation possible? Discussion of the following subjects: inner presence and calm, unambiguity of movements, gestures, touch, reducing speed, large number of impressions and activities done simultaneously.

Role play: teacher and child

The task was to play the following scene in pairs and in two ways. A child is sitting on the floor and playing; a teacher comes in and asks the child to come outside with her.

1st variant. The teacher is rushed for time and first of all asks the child kindly but firmly to stop his playing and come with her. The child, who was wholly absorbed and has been taken unawares, turns obstinate.

2nd variant. The teacher approaches the child gently, feeling her way, makes good contact and then takes the child out of the room in inner certainty and assurance. The players then had to change roles and later report how they felt in the different roles.

Afterwards the others who had been the audience were asked what they had observed.

Evaluation

The role play made people very much aware how an intellectual verbal address affects one and what it effects. They spoke of isolation, hardness, failure to understand, resistance, antipathy. The more empathic, gestic, unambiguous way of making contact, meeting the child where she was in her absorption, led to feelings of closeness, understanding, protectedness, certainty, clarity. The audience were able to reflect very clearly from outside when speech and gesture were 'genuine'.

Unit 3

Introductory talk

The development and nurture of the lower senses in the first three years as a basis for healthy self awareness and relationship to the world. Which conditions help the 'bodily senses' to develop well – good contact at soul level, guided, warm, playful body contact, e.g. when given body care, moderate levels of sensory stimulation, being relaxed about movement development, with no time pressures, etc.

Guiding the blind and touch exercise

A blindfold is put on and each is taken individually into an adjacent room. There they have to feel all kinds of different things which are placed in containers on a table. Last comes a bucket of warm water for washing one's hands, after which the hands are dried with a towel, if possible a warm one.

These elementary sensory experiences can make one unsure in a good way, for it makes one awake in a new way, open and ready to consider the other person.

It is important to help people not to leave it at quickly recognizing the things but to enter into intensive sensory perception and inner response to this.

Unit 4

Report on curative education work in the kindergarten and early intervention – nature of anomalies and disabilities, means and forms of treatment. Questions and conversation. It was very interesting for us to hear that the anomalies described in Korea are much the same, but that therapies such as remedial gymnastics, occupational therapy, speech therapy and the like are not known there.

Weather report

In pairs. One partner stands behind the other and follows the instructions given by the course leader lightly works on the other's back from head to foot, using light touches. It may start with gentle rain, then heavy rain followed by hail. Gentle snow is followed by wind and finally the sun breaks through the clouds and brings gentle warmth to everything. One has to find the right calm for this and work at the right speed. With some people it is necessary to avoid the head, because they are particularly sensitive in that area; the feet should be worked on right to the tips of the toes.

Concluding remark. Language problems with the Korean ladies and the need to have translation all the time resulted in highly concentrated, attentive work. We had the impression that the Korean mentality is very open to things of the spirit, and much still lives in their traditions which is in harmony with the anthroposophical approach.

Training and further training

Christopher Clouder

The group talked mainly about training for students who prepare for work in the new area of day centres. The aim was to concentrate above all on one aspect of this. The following three steps were considered particularly relevant.

0 *Observing children under three years of age and self observation*

We found that to start with, students should work on their own biographies. The next step might be observation exercises. Different approaches and methods can be used. One way would be to observe an object of no special interest and then find out if it is possible to develop real, live interest in the object by giving it one's attention and describing it. After this students may move on to observing children in the first three years of life. What is the child? What is he or she doing? Examples:

- The child moves. Describe the movements.
Seeing, hearing, tasting, taking hold of things, putting them in the mouth, reacting in different ways to different things, smelling them, etc.
- The child imitates. When does he cry? Is she helpless and dependent on others?

The observations made by others should also be taken into account.

What insights can scientific research provide? And the science of the spirit? The emphasis should be on development of

movement
the senses
speech
play.

What do we know about the incarnation process and embryonic development. Further child observation. We should ask ourselves, for instance, if what we have learned is true. Students who have not so far lived with young children need to gain practical experience.

We must never forget that the child is our teacher.

Learning to understand the child, we prepare ourselves to cope with the uncertain demands of the future.

1 *What qualities should adults have?*

We might ask the students what qualities they would expect in an adult who works with young children under 3 years of age. Examples:


Openness, patients, joyfulness, attentiveness, lack of bias, interest, selflessness, self knowledge, love. They should be aware of their habits, movements, way of speaking and attitudes and yet be natural!

They should be able to take parents' wishes and feelings into account and respect them.

We talked extensively about these aspects and asked ourselves how training (in a descriptive, not prescriptive way) can help students to develop those qualities.

2 *How can these qualities be developed?*

To make it possible for the necessary qualities to develop, we think it is important for students to have continuous opportunity to see the practical work done by day mothers and at day centres. Practical experience should come before theory.



Eurythmy seems to be very important, also speaking well, being musical, and developing skills in other arts. Our hands are an important tool; they serve communication. They should therefore be used thoughtfully. Patience is needed, for many of the above qualities take time to develop. We can show students in training how they can learn new things, also about themselves. An indispensable element are the insights into human biology, health and growth that are gained through anthroposophy. A good field for practice is projective geometry; it can give insight into the way the powers that create life work.

How can we learn to observe, listen and understand. The will and courage to do inner work and take a critical look at oneself are the precondition. Students and teachers can learn from the children how to learn – keep trying; don't give up! Which is what children do.

How do we encourage collaboration with official and expert bodies in public life?

What opportunities are there for active collaboration in the Alliance for Childhood?

Christopher Clouder

Introduction

It was Rudolf Steiner's wish that anthroposophists should be politically active. In the wider sense politics is also the art of living together – a task for our life on earth! Our everyday life is political when we try to find structures for working together. Opportunities to express ourselves in public have been ignored far too long among anthroposophists, perhaps from fear of getting things wrong. We can observe, however, that readiness to hear what we have to say is growing, above all in the fields of education, medicine and agriculture. Many people know what we are about but often do not venture to speak freely of their thoughts and feelings. Many people are ill at ease with current educational policies but do not have the words to formulate what lies behind them.

What furthers communication in the public domain?

In Waldorf education we are able to formulate the background to the problems and find words that people can understand. The doors are open – but only if we do not consider ourselves 'missionaries'. We have to feel that we share the responsibility with all other educational impulses in our time, i.e. expand our horizons beyond Waldorf education and join forces in our common goal, which is the raising and education of children. This is not a matter of making compromises, but of being interested in the aims of other educational impulses, and learn to distinguish and differentiate as we compare them to Waldorf education. One has to give a lot of time to this, but it is absolutely essential and ultimately also enriching.

There are different ways in which horizons may be widened:

- reading the work of various authors
- attending specialist conferences in state education
- public conferences on educational subjects
- gaining information through the press

To avoid getting depressed in our daily work, it is advisable to study the media in concentrated form, e.g. in publications that give summaries. If we show open interest in what happens at government level and also represent our views, giving the reasons, we are indeed welcome!

If we stand apart from political events we are considered arrogant, with some justification. Primarily it is this attitude which must change; we must transform the defensive gesture into an inviting one, be present and always ready to reply to questions that are real, our basic attitude being one of openness.

We also must ask ourselves gain and again: What has to change in our sphere? Are we doing everything the right way? Are we prepared to take in new impulses, new ideas and not just expect such readiness from others?

To move within the spirit of our time is to be always prepared to change. This also depends on training. In modern teacher training, we should make students aware of the works of modern authors on child raising and education, e.g. those of Howard Gardner. He is one of the best educationalists today. His approach bases on teaching to know truth, beauty and goodness. Many people today are considering spiritual aspects in education the way Gardner does. We must join forces with people like this, who show good will in creating space for and awareness of the young child, in the spirit of 'united we stand'! For young children are under tremendous pressure, with the world of economics seeking to influence education more and more for its own ends. Even young children are to be made to conform to the principle of international competitiveness.

Communicating with politicians

Many politicians also feel concern over developments. If we learn to hear what they are saying we can gain interest in their ideas, ask questions and enter into dialogue with them. We should make much more use of opportunities to communicate with politicians and journalists. They will then also speak of their problems, express their feelings, and personally take note of our process, not the Waldorf 'label'. It should be clearly understood in the public domain that the 'Waldorf' method is for all children and takes the side of all children.

There are all kinds of different examples to who that the Waldorf method of education is given public recognition – including the spiritual side. And so we may of course also speak of the meditative technique today.

- The Norwegian Minister of Education said he was grateful that Waldorf education had already given powerful impulses to school life.
- Teachers working in a prison are given helpful suggestions for their work by Waldorf teachers.
- State teachers' training colleges are adopting a number of educational methods used in Waldorf schools.

Communicating with the press

The most important principle in contact with the press must be to be always open and prepared to open doors, that is, always be prepared for press enquiries coming to the schools.

Such enquiries must be answered in full awareness. Of course there are risks, but it is better to accept these than to be open to attack later. Opening up, with take the wind out of the sails of possible attacks. For we have nothing to hide. It can be a help if every school appoints one person to be responsible for public relations, someone with authority and competence who will be available to give information at any time. Schools where such a mandate has been established usually no longer have bad experiences with the press.

Another key element in communicating with the press is presence of mind. And honesty! If we lost sight of our spiritual background we'll be decried as a sect, a label that will continue to be attached for a long time. If on the other hand we practise presence of mind, 'changes and ideas' will come and show that we can put our trust in the higher powers.

Opening up to the press paves the way for new acceptance. The press is now beginning to ask questions of the Waldorf movement. It remains an open question as to why questions are put just in this 'small corner'. Yet we often hear that this is the only critical voice that really has something to say.

It is also important for us to make the articles we write for publication concise and to the point. This is an area where it is only too easy to grow superficial and lose the point.

Being a highly responsible task, publicity work needs the support of all colleagues. Functions like these are only in their beginnings, but they will be of increasing importance. If we are active, invitations will also come to help shape things. This is where a great opportunity lies for us.

Communicating with television

The principle is the same as in dealing with the press – be open, do not close doors, be honest about problems. If we do not merely react but take action on our part, making ourselves known, rumours will not arise.

How do we create 'mouthpieces' for ourselves?

According to the principle of 'united we stand', we need instruments to hold up our own end in legal terms. These may take the form of establishing associations and/or coordination centres, for instance. Structure are perceived more by the outside world. In a number of countries, the public relations functions have been given official structures. Here it is important that the pre-school and school movements work together.

Other structures in the Waldorf school movement

European Council of Waldorf or Steiner Schools

This has existed for 9 years, with its seat in England, and is the body representing the Federation of Independent Waldorf Schools, the Friends of Education, and the kindergarten movement. 17 countries with about 500 schools are represented. The Council has made it its task to gain a clear picture of educational trends in all countries and share experiences in this field. When it became apparent 4 years ago that attacks on the young child were getting more threatening, requests reached the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association from different directions. This led to the Alliance for Childhood.

Alliance for Childhood

The movement bases on the impulse to act internationally, for the souls of all nations, in independent, open structures without hierarchy (president). Everyone can be an active partner who feels able to relate to the underlying ideas. When the movement was founded in New York in 1998, people from different fields of science, medicine and education met and worked together on the question as to what childhood is and how we may describe it. The thoughts that came together make up the Alliance for Childhood Charter (given at the end of this report).

The Alliance has its own individual character in each country. In the USA, for instance, the main concern is the overwhelming influence of computers and media, in England, where the official age for starting school is 4, the pressure for intellectual learning. A counter campaign has started there, with T-shirts bearing the words 'Let the children play'.

A congress will be held in Brussels on 11 – 14 October 2000 where people who have made the raising of young children their special concern to meet, share views and gain new impulses for the future. This will need the support of as many kindergartens around the world as possible. The Waldorf School movement is one supporter; others are needed.

Main areas of work will be to compile lists of lectures on present-day issues; lists of press items on the subject of raising young children; creating synergies; preparing for the publication of a book on the world of the young child.

We hope that the Alliance for Childhood will help to remove existing inhibitions about 'Waldorf', so that people from many countries with different educational impulses can work together. We ourselves need greater awareness, so that we don't fall into the danger of denying our own source and origin for the sake of mistaken consensus.

Ideas as to how we can effectively work for the Alliance for Childhood

- Make our activities and endeavours known
- Report our work to the Federation of Waldorf Schools, also asking why the kindergarten movement is not represented more strongly in the Federation
- representation in the public domain as 'international school movement'; UNESCO are working with us because we consider the issues on a world-wide scale.
- Make more use of the Waldorf education journals (English and German editions available) published by the Friends. They appear twice a year and are sent to all schools. Permission to make wider use of its articles, following due request and acknowledgement.
- Europe-wide activities of WOW Day (Waldorf One World), that can also help the Alliance for Childhood. Waldorf pupils at a particular school are given a free day on which they collect for countries in need – e.g. children in Bogota and Kosovo refugee children – presenting dances, music, story-telling, acrobatic exhibitions, etc. The European Council will name three countries each year for which the children will collect. The Friends of Education take care of the administration and pass the monies on. Actions like these are highly successful as they offer direct contact and results can be seen. The press is usually also receptive to such activities.

Collaboration with expert bodies in the public sector

Apart from involvement in politics, collaboration with press/TV and expert bodies in education, there are other steps that have to be taken.

Documentation

We have no real experience yet in putting what we are doing down in writing. We should produce annual reports and above all record our work in pictures. Little text and many pictures—this gets a response. Exhibitions on public occasions are also important. Such work must always be topical; old reports serve no purpose. We should also have brochures with children's drawings, photos and introductory texts for parents who may be interested, with reading lists and addresses of institutions—not to advertise ourselves, but quite objectively.

Ways of quality assurance

Quality testing is done in many areas in all European countries today, and that includes government establishments and nurseries. The European Council of Steiner Schools is therefore working on a quality handbook. We need to work consciously on our quality, before the government forces us to do so. Part of this will also be to keep written records of the development of individual children.

Peer review and monitoring can be helpful for fruitful collaboration among colleagues. It is good if they sit in on each other's classes; they can thus perceive and inspire one another. Sometimes it may also be helpful to have a mentor for each teacher. This must of course be people who have had special further training to make them competent in this field.

Further training facilities must be created for the teachers; we have to show that we want to improve our work.

An example of quality work: INFANTS, a government educational research institute in Berlin, works for state nursery schools in the whole of Germany. Children and educators are filmed at work so that their behaviour can be looked at and examined later on. Every six weeks a German nursery school is visited for a whole day to do such behavioural studies. It is helpful to observe oneself so carefully at work for once.

Legal aspects are also part of quality. Thus legal agreements have to be made between parents, teachers and pupils. They are like the skeleton, the form, which gives the organism stability, structure and security. Children have the right to be heard. Parents must have contact persons and know to whom they may turn. Teachers, too, need a body they can trust.

Work on our guiding principles consists in formulating common ideals and goals, recasting them over and over again. The way is the goal! We are in a process of becoming. We may have the same goal, but may take very different roads towards it.

The curriculum is considered internationally. Our schools base on the principle of wholeness. The question is, how is it implemented everywhere? We should be able to show how we are different from other schools and what methods we aim to use to achieve our goal. This also applies to the first 7 years of life.

These are some major aspects to be considered in the Alliance for Childhood. Differentiation will, of course, be necessary everywhere. For whilst the Waldorf School movement may consider itself to be international, this does not mean that cultural and national characteristics are to be wiped out. The movement actually lives in the tension between the universally human and the individual.

Childhood

Childhood is a term for learning about the essentials –
about the heavenly world and the earthly, about goodness, beauty and truth.

Childhood is a time to love and to be loved –
to express fear and to learn trust –
to be allowed to be serious and calm and to celebrate with laughter and joy.
Children have a right to dream, and they need to grow at their own pace.
They have the right to make mistakes and the right to be forgiven.

Children need help to develop self-mastery,
to transform themselves and bring forth their highest capacities.
Children have a right to be spared violence and hunger, to have a home and protection.
They need to grow up healthily, with good habits and nutrition.

Children need people to respect,
adults whose example and loving authority they follow.
They need a range of experience – enderness and kindness,
boldness and courage, and even mischief and misbehaviour.

Children need time for receiving and giving, for belonging and participating.
They need to be part of a community, and they need to be individuals.
They need privacy and sociability.
They need time to rest and time to play, time to do nothing and time to work.

They need moments for devotion and room for curiosity.
They need protective boundaries and freedom for creativity.
They need to be introduced to a life of principles, and given the freedom to discover their own.
They need a relationship to the earth, to animals and to nature;
and they need to unfold as human beings within the community.

The spirit of childhood is to be protected and nurtured.
It is an essential part of every human being and needs to be kept alive.

Alliance for Childhood

- Kidbrooke Part, Forest Row, East Sussex, RH18 5JA UK
- P.O Box 444, College Park, MD 20741, USA
- Medical Section, Goetheanum, CH-4143 Dornach, Switzerland
- c/o Dr P. Panosot, 297 Mooban Panya, Patankarn 30th Rd, Suan Luang, Bangkok 10250, Thailand
- and other countries

D. Additional material

Working with daily, weekly, monthly and annual rhythms*

Why is it particularly important to work with rhythms in early childhood? Because on the one hand all vital processes have specific rhythms and time structures, and on the other hand the rhythmical order of functions is not yet developed in infants and needs to be created and stimulated.

Human beings with their autonomous intellectual functions are able to isolate themselves from their natural environment and origins and largely ignore the rhythms that bear life. This can lead to a wide variety of pathological conditions and states of exhaustion, when they have gone against the rhythmic order of their functions for years and years so that the limits of elasticity are exceeded and the system collapses. On the other hand, considered care of the major rhythms can prepare and develop the organism's ability to cope with life's demands.

What is special about given time rhythmic structure?

With rhythm, similar processes are repeated in comparably similar conditions. Our breathing is a model of rhythm – no breath resembles another as regards depth and length, if we measure it exactly. Yet every breath is similar to the one that went before.

Rhythms always balance out polar opposites. Wherever opposites meet in nature, rhythms can regulate the situation. Thus the rhythms seen in a 'mackerel sky' indicate that areas of high and low pressure lie next to each other. We see rhythmically arranged wavy lines in the sand on a beach where mobile water meets firm ground. In the same way, movement and rest, polar opposites, are brought into rhythmic balance in our breathing.

Rhythms are the basis for any process of adaptation. Because no rhythmic repetition ever is exactly the same as the one that went before, but there is always subtle play around a mean, with rhythmic processes capable of elastic adaptation. A rigid beat, on the other hand would be wholly inflexible, quite unable to balance anything out or integrate it.

Rhythm replaces energy. Anything which proceeds in a regular way needs less energy than when it happens outside the habitual time or circumstances as a one-off event.

Activities done regularly and rhythmically lead to the creation of habits. These are the basic support structure in all personality and character development. If we have got in the habit of regular meal times and bedtimes, if we are in the habit of organizing the day in an effective way, so that work and play, tension and relaxation are in a good relationship, we are well equipped and able to face the stresses of daily life. For as long as we are greatly dependent on external circumstances or our momentary inclinations, not having our own timing, we are easily in danger of overestimating our capacities in coping with demands and become exhausted. We lack the elasticity needed for adaptation, the power to keep pace and a feeling for healthy standards in life.

Every repetition we enter into consciously strengthens the will and thus also our readiness to act.

It is through rhythms that nature and man relate to each other in the changing seasons, the sequence of night and day, and the many different movements of the planets against the background of the fixed stars. All the rhythms and numerical relationships that regulate the movements of the planets in our solar system can also be found in the vital processes of plant, animal and man, indicating the common origin and interconnectedness of life for known creation.¹

The study of biological rhythms and time structure has only developed into a specific area of research in the 20th century – chronobiology, later followed by chronomedicine and chronopharmacology. The following paragraphs give an overview of the major rhythms which sustain vital processes.

* Based on extracts from the chapter on rhythms in *Kindersprechstunde* by W. Göbel and M. Glöckler. Stuttgart 1998.

Working with the daily rhythm

Everything which happens with such beautiful regularity in adults, synchronized by the sun as the giver of time – the 24-hour rhythm of the temperature curve (0.5 °C lower in the mornings than at night), circadian variations in blood sugar levels, different hormones and, blood salts, and other metabolic processes – does not yet have rhythm and is not yet synchronized in the newborn. The development of typical maxima and minima in the alternation of night and day has to be learned first.

The way in which this 'rhythmic system' of the infant – still so open and ready to learn – takes the impression of the many minor activities involved in eating, body care, play and sleep will determine the structure, elasticity and adaptability of this system in later life. For all organs, especially the major metabolic and digestive organs, must be attuned to each other in their functions and need to learn to work together in the best possible way. The greatest possible regularity in the daily pattern of mealtimes and meal intervals, activities and sleep is vital in developing this. It is therefore a help in developing the 24-hour rhythm to take special care over taking up the child in the morning and putting him to bed at night, as far as possible at much the same time. This may be done with a morning song and taking a look out of the window together; whilst in the evening one may start from the very beginning to light a candle and sing a few notes, perhaps accompanied by a simple children's harp or lyre – pentatonic if possible² – concluding with a brief bedtime prayer and saying goodnight.

The more clearly each day is also given its shape in the course of weeks and months – being at home in the mornings when the housework is done, being taken out of doors in a baby-carrying shawl – the more definitely does the child also experience the course of the day and the difference between night and day, being able to react to this with the whole of his organism.

Weekly rhythm

The names of the weekdays still tell us something of the connection seen between them and the planets in the heavens in earlier times – including the moon as it orbits the earth:

Sunday	-	sun
Monday	-	moon
Tuesday	-	Mars (French <i>Mardi</i>)
Wednesday	-	Mercury (French <i>Mercredi</i>)
Thursday	-	Jupiter (French <i>Jeudi</i>)
Friday	-	Venus (French <i>Vendredi</i>)
Saturday	-	Saturn

The planets look different from each other up in the sky – Saturn far distant and insignificant in appearance, Jupiter bright and brilliant, Mars with its flickering red light, Venus in warm radiance in the evening or morning sky, Mercury only showing itself delicately and briefly at dawn or dusk, the moon with its constantly changing light form, and the sun, greater and more luminous than all. We can experience and cherish the quality of our weekdays in a similar way. Research has shown the 7-day rhythm to be reactive and therefore important in processes of adaptation and healing.³ We therefore recommend giving the week a specific rhythmic form, so that the 7-day rhythm is also given support and is stabilized as a basis for elastic reactivity to stresses and injuries of all kinds.

Thus Sunday may be made a more festive day – a leisured breakfast, perhaps with some singing or something read aloud before or afterwards. Every other weekday may also be given its special morning song or a special character by specific plans or activities. Various duties may be spread through the week in such a way that minor cultural activities done regularly – visiting or receiving visitors, reading aloud, looking at pictures or making music – make us look forward to them, giving each day its special note. People have more and more emancipated from the weekly, monthly and seasonal rhythms in recent centuries. Growing irritability and lack of energy (burn-out syndrome) now make it evident that loss of rhythm and timing undermines our health. 'Having time' begins with conscious attention given to time, letting its sequences and intervals be rhythmical by alternating between different activities and breaks. The same applies to the nurture of religious and meditative

life. Regularity of one's inner work, with a daily or larger rhythm, is the secret if one wants to create the potential for and develop inner powers and abilities.⁴ We should also mention that from the chronobiological point of view, a six-day week is distinctly preferable to a five-day one for school children.⁵

Monthly rhythm

It is known from rehabilitation medicine in spas that the recuperative value of a 4-week period is significantly greater than that of a 2- or 3-week stay. It has also been found that someone who is truly exhausted needs 2 or 3 months to convalesce and a 4-week break will not usually do it. The monthly rhythm proves to be the rhythm of recuperation at a deeper level, and also of establishing habits and gaining stability. It needs at least 4 weeks until a new habit is 'fixed'. The fact is made use of in Waldorf schools where main lessons are as far as possible given in 4-week blocks.⁶

Work with the monthly rhythm may involve the following: consciously looking at calendar pictures, singing songs for the months, observing life in the changing seasons and agricultural and gardening activities connected with them. Our clothing also changes over the months.

Our recommendation for holidays is this. If at all possible, take account of the 4-week rhythm. Short holidays for children are not advisable if they are meant for recuperation. An adult may be stimulated and helped to think of other things, but for children short holidays tend to be rather a strain. It is not uncommon for them to catch some infection which will develop once they are home, or get sick on the actual holiday.

Annual rhythm

It takes 9 months and the first 3 months after birth for the physical body of an infant to mature sufficiently for the child to focus on things and take hold of them. It needs a further year before the child is able to walk, and yet another before he'll speak. He then needs one more year before he is able to use his own thoughts. The physical body then continues to develop in annual rhythms and receives stimuli from the seasonal changes in climate and light. Childhood diseases also show typical annual peaks and troughs. Adaptation to a place, for instance, takes about a year; once you've experienced a season there for the second time you feel 'at home'. Once you've been there for seven years, you begin to feel native. It is thus a good tradition to celebrate anniversaries of historical events, birthdays, and the annual festivals.

Saying these things we'd like to encourage parents to do something to help develop a new family culture that takes account again of annual rhythms. The reward for their efforts will be their children's future health and ability to cope better with stresses.⁷

The Platonic year

The basic elements of rhythmic functions in the human organism are interrelated. The rhythms of the sun and moon as the great 'time givers' (day; week = a quarter moon period; month = full cycle from full moon to full moon), accompanied by the planetary rhythms, are reflected in the rhythms that regulate the vital functions of plant, animal and man. Something that really touches us deeply is the fact that our breathing rhythm, which relates so harmoniously to our heart beat, does not only mediate between the refreshing air around us and the used-up air in the human organism, but also is in inner harmony with the sun's progress through the zodiac. According to ancient calculations, the spring equinox takes 25,920 years to move through the zodiac (Platonic year).⁸ If we take the mean number of breaths per minute when at rest, which is 18 a minute, and work out how many this would be in 24 hours, the result is exactly 26,920 (18 breaths a minute = 18 times 60 = 1080; multiplied by 24 you get 25,920).

The surprising agreement makes us aware that the life of the large world follows the same rhythmic order in numerical relations as life in the human organism's small world.

Notes

- 1 Endres, KP, Schad W. *Biologie des Mondes. Mondperiodik und Lebensrhythmen*. Stuttgart 1997.
Amelung W, Hildrebrandt G (ed). *Balneologie und medizinische Klimatologie*. Berlin 1985.
Hildebrandt G, Moser MM, Lehofer M. *Chronobiologie und Chronomedizin. Kurzgefasstes Lehr- und Arbeitsbuch*. Stuttgart 1998.
- 2 Pentatonic scales have five notes, with no half tones, e.g. d-e-g-a-b. The melodies are light and open in character and may end at any note. Pentatonic flutes and lyres or children's harps are used in Waldorf education and curative education.
- 3 See note 1.
- 4 Here we would refer specifically to the Buddha's eightfold path which Rudolf Steiner gave in a way suitable for people of the present age. It includes a special exercise for each day of the week – on Saturday, special attention given to the life of ideas; on Sundays, work on right judgement; on Mondays, conscious attention paid to conversation and the use of words; on Tuesdays, attention paid to the way we do things ('the right deed'); on Wednesdays, finding the right standpoint in life; on Thursdays, getting a proper idea of one's own potential energies and abilities; on Fridays, seeking to learn as much as possible from life. See Steiner R. *Guidance in Esoteric Training*. London: Rudolf Steiner Press 1994.
- 5 Hygicia = grec godness of health.
- 6 See Schad W. *Zur Hygiene des Unterrichts. Erziehung ist Kunst. Pädagogik aus Anthroposophie*. Stuttgart 1994.
- 7 See also detailed consideration of the subject in Glöckler (ed.). *Gesundheit und Schule*. Dornach 1998.
- 8 The subject cannot be considered in detail here. The phenomena and movements of sun, moon and planets are, for instance, given in Schuitz J. *Movement and Rhythms of the Stars*. New York: Anthroposophic Press 1986.

Clothes as a field of exploration for the young child

Juliane Endlich

As children, we first enter into physical existence in a period of our lives when freedom is still out of the question where the earthly impulse is concerned. Consider how much depends on the way in which we enter into physical existence as children – the abilities that are drawn forth from within us, the paths we are asked to follow. This is of infinitely great significance in the whole of our lives on earth. Later on we will of course be able to intervene more or less independently in our own lives, but we shall only be able to do so in the place given to us by our childhood.

Rudolf Steiner, 11 June 1924

The infant starts to learn with the first breath he takes, gaining his orientation in the sphere of life, the 'place', into which he is born. Everything around the newborn can help physical development and either strengthen his organs or lay the foundations for organic weakness in later life.

Natural fibres

Clothes and the textiles the child has around him in his cradle or cot are part of the child's life sphere, which is still very limited at this stage. It is therefore important to give some thought to the choice of such textiles. The table below shows the realms of nature or chemistry to which individual fibres belong and how they relate to human beings.

Animal world	mammals	Wool – sheep, goat (mohair, cashmere), angora, alpaca, guanako, camel, etc.
	insects	silk – mulberry silk moth wild silk – tussah (oak egger)
Plant world	seed fibre	cotton
	stem fibre	linen, ramie, hemp
Plant cellulose		1) viscose, spun viscose flock – spun rayon; finished viscose = Modal 2) acetate, finished acetate = Tricel 3) cupro (cuproammonium rayon and wool)
Mineral world	coal, crude oil	Chemical processes yield a number of synthetic fibres 1) polyamide (artificial silk) – perlon, nylon, nylsuisse, enkalon 2) polyester (fabric-type) – diolene, trevira, mitrelle, grilene 3) polyacryl (synthetic wool) – courtelle, dralon, orlon, dolan

There are other trade marks as well in these last three groups. The range of products continues with names like polyurethane, elastane, etc.

Wool – hair of warm-blooded mammals

Like human hair and skin, wool contains silica. In the first two years of life, the fine, soft wool of merino sheep is most suitable; mohair and angora would be too powerful, with a negative effect on the development of the child's warmth organization. Sheep's wool gives pleasant, balanced warmth, keeping in neither heat nor moisture. The inclusion of air in the hairs means not only is warmth retained, but excess heat and moisture are allowed to escape to the outside. Wool is the textile fibre

capable of absorbing the most moisture. This property is utilized in infant care by using woollen panties over the nappies.

The natural material does not hold odours, nor does it provide a nutrient base for micro-organisms or fungi. Airing will freshen woollen things up again, but exposure to sun damages them. The countless fibres in fine merino wool gently massage the skin at every movement and stimulate the circulation. Wool thus provides natural, enveloping warmth and can protect children from continuous colds.

Sheep's wool always comes from the living animal and therefore still has a little of the vital energies of the creature. Demeter quality wool is now available that is unbleached and undyed.

With inflammatory conditions such as otitis media, bronchitis, sore throat, etc., fresh, unwashed raw sheep's wool taken from clean parts of the fleece (unscoured wool) encourages the healing process. If the sheep was conventionally bred, care must be taken that the wool fat does not contain residues of drugs applied to treat sheeps' diseases.

A warming woollen cloth is essential with all packs and compresses.

A sheepskin in the cradle helps the physical development of the newborn. Premature births and underweight children have been found to gain weight more quickly with this. The skin should not have been given antibacterial or odour-binding dressing; it should have been tanned with special care. Residues from dressings and tanning may cause allergies to develop.

Sun-spun silk

Pure fine silk is a welcome alternative to more scratchy wool. 'Reeled silk' is smooth, softly flowing and cooling. The short bits of silk waste are spun into the thread from which bourette silk is made. This gives warmth. Nappy pads of bourette silk prevent nappy rash, and a silk cap protects the infants head, always a little moist and warm, with its fontanelles still open. A silk cover for the cradle pillow supports form principles. A bourette silk pad in the nursing mother's brassiere helps to prevent the dreaded mastitis.

On 26 October 1923, Rudolf Steiner spoke of the connection between silk and sunlight. When the caterpillar pupates, creating a cocoon around itself, the 'caterpillar is giving himself up to the sun', and 'the thread which is being spun (is) spun in the direction of the light line. The caterpillar is exposed to the light, follows the light rays, spins, stops when it gets dark, then spins on again. All of it is really cosmic sunlight, sunlight filled with matter. If you take the cocoon of a silk moth, for instance, which is used to make your silk dresses, what you have in the silk is sheer sunlight spun into the silk moth's substance. Out of its own body the silk moth caterpillar spins its substance in the direction of the sun's rays, and that is how it creates the cocoon around itself.'

Cotton - vegetable fibre

Like all things in the plant world, cotton seed fibre contains cellulose, whereas wool and silk as animal fibres contain protein. We can't imagine life without cotton garments today, especially if they can be boiled and thus made sterile. Instructions to wash at 40 or 60 °C mean that the garment has been dressed, i.e. gone through a number of special processes. 'Non-iron' and 'easy-care' are achieved by treating cotton with synthetic resins and formaldehyde. The latter is banned in Germany, but as many textiles are produced in countries where wages are low, anyone buying them is not protected from residues. Even underwear and children's garments which are to be worn in direct contact with the skin are still treated this way today.

A good alternative are garments offered by manufacturers and traders who are members of natural textile organizations. Strict quality criteria include controlled organic growing methods, hand picking, no sprays, strict tests for contaminants, no chlorine bleach, no optical lighteners, dressing to prevent shrinkage and creasing must be mechanical and thermal; no dyes or only those of vegetable, animal and mineral origin, no chemical dressing of any kind. Textiles that meet these requirements are labelled as 'better' or 'best' natural products. The Danish Green Cotton seal also merits attention.

Being fast to boiling, cotton is indispensable with infectious and fungus diseases. Children allergic to protein and therefore hypersensitive to wool and silk will generally tolerate cotton clothes well. With wool, there are usually no problems if a long-sleeved cotton vest is worn underneath.

Linen, ramie and hemp are stem fibres with similar qualities to cotton. They are often used in blends, but do not really play a role in clothing for infants and young children.

Synthetic textile fibres – made by man

These were largely developed after the last war. They do not make suitable clothing for the very young whose delicate bodies, capable of being moulded, need to find their own strong form and configuration. Chemical processes have taken away all connection with living nature from their raw materials which were of natural origin. Modern chemical fibres are like slag, dead matter, and as such come between the child and the world around him. They are more likely to be an obstacle to subtler, intimate contact. In the light of this, the much advertised advantages – easy-care, easy to wash, etc. – lose much of their significance.

Garments made of chemical fibres may, however, have their point. This applies above all to high-quality outer winter garments which protect the child from wet, cold and wind. The clothing worn underneath should, however, be made of wool.

Synthetic fibres based on minerals have been found to let ultraviolet light pass through; this means a real risk to health. Especially polyester fabric, used to make outer garments, sun hats, sun shades and also in shades for children's buggies, does not stand up to solar radiation. This results in headaches, sunburn, nausea, etc. Manufacturers are trying to deal with this by coating the fabrics with UV-impermeable material and by special spinning and weaving techniques. Articles impermeable to UV rays are labelled as such.

Blended fabrics

Blending wool and cotton or silk before they are spun has proved very effective. Sensitive children are really comfortable in these soft blends that do not scratch. Tights stand up well to wear if made of blends using wool and silk or cotton and wool. It is not advisable, however, to wear wool and silk on top of each other. Both develop electrostatic charges when worn and this creates a undesirable field of tension which causes nervous tension. One will sometimes see sparks as the garments are taken off. A child wearing a silk vest should have a cotton garment as a neutral layer over this and then his woollen pullover.

Blends with synthetic fibres are not suitable for young children for the reasons given above.

The first years of life – a time set apart

A child's skin – organ for light

Gaining insight into the world of nature one is always amazed how wisely things are arranged. Thus the developing human embryo and the membranes that protect it 'contain a high level of silica. The siliceous element creates the outline form, as it were, the human light form, with the developing organism growing into it.' (Alla Selawry).

The relationship to light in the early years of childhood is like a gesture which nature makes, expecting a reply from us. Sheep's wool has a relatively high silica content, and good quality woollen clothing therefore continues something which nature has already established in the skin; both are permeable to the powers of sunlight. Even a thick pullover or winter coat can thus never be a dead, insulating layer. Wool is like a window on the cosmos and open to its influences. All natural animal and vegetable fibres, and even a simple straw hat, provide good protection from ultraviolet rays which are essentially harmful.

A child's skin – organ for the environment

The skin is particularly soft, open and permeable in infancy and therefore exposed to many dangers in our age, dangers from detergent additives, fabric softeners, cosmetics and also textile dressings (see above) and excess textile dyes. Many substances are activated by the general moistness of a child's skin, especially in the nappy region. Ecological washing agents are therefore preferable to perfumed detergents and fabric softeners.

Vegetable soaps and oils are best for baby skin care as they protect the skin. Mineral-based skin oils do not create enveloping warmth; they form a thick layer on the skin.

The young child's warmth organization and his clothing

Much has already been written and said about the human senses (see Michaela Glöckler's second lecture and Albert Soesman's book on the twelve senses). Here we will above all consider the question as to which senses are specifically addressed by clothing. Apart from the sense of sight, which perceives colours and shapes, and the sense of touch, the sense of life is also involved, conveying comfort or discomfort, for instance, and the senses of warmth, movement and smell. In relation to clothing the sense of warmth plays a special role.

In the early years of life and also through youth, the development of a resistant warmth organization is much to the fore. Man is a warmth creature and relates to the temperature element in many and varied ways. The newborn does have a sense of warmth, but it is still undeveloped. Everything needs to be carefully brought to body temperature – food, washing water, clothes when changing. The mother needs to envelop her child not only in warmth but also in 'awareness', all the time trying to sense what is needed. Young children do not yet develop the goose bumps which give the alarm in adults, indicating that the warmth organization is upset and he has to put on warmer clothes.

Being thoroughly warm depends on three factors which need to be in harmonious balance – clothing, food and movement. Lively children full of temperament, who are perhaps also good feeders, do not need as much warm clothing in summer as do pale, transparent children who do not like to eat and are often sick. Such children need a woollen vest to hold together their vital energies throughout the year.

'Hardening can only be right if it makes the human being play a positive role in the different spheres of life,' Rudolf Steiner said on 11 September 1924. One can always overdo things. Hardening taken too far, and also protection taken too far, will both have a negative effect on bodily functions. Because of this, only sheep's wool was so far mentioned as suitable for children's clothes; for sheep's wool gives a pleasant warmth that is not excessive. The other kinds of wool, especially angora wool, give more intensive warmth and are not advisable for young children; angora wool has healing powers that meet more the needs of older people. Degenerative diseases in the second half of life are not infrequently due to too little or too much of something in childhood. To care properly for the enveloping warmth, it is necessary 'that we really above all make the clothing such that the individual can be neutral in his experience of temperature conditions, and this means that we must really consider every detail.' (Rudolf Steiner, 6 January 1920)

All this is in a vast spiritual context and it is good to bring this to mind again and again. The senses tell us about the earthly world. But this earthly world cannot exist on its own; spiritual entities are active in it at all times. Because of this, Rudolf Steiner was able to say (on 11 September 1924):

'Colours, shapes, heat, cold, roughness and smoothness appear to be active in our sensory perceptions. But what is active in reality? In reality only everything that is in some way connected with an I-nature has an influence. Hidden spiritual entities that have something to do with an I-nature leave an impression on the child, and this means above all spiritual entities of the higher hierarchies from man upwards, but also the group souls of animals, the group souls of elemental spirits. All this does in truth influence the child, and out of these spiritual powers, out of this magnificent spiritual dynamic, he creates his second body from the model; this gradually grows and exists as a second body to the degree to which the second teeth appear. This and only this is the body the human being builds for himself as his own first body; it is a physical body built out of the world of the spirit.'

Children's clothes for the first three years

It will be evident from the above that children's clothing for the early years should be in accord with the natural situation in which the child is still very strongly held. Some aspects concerning textiles and items of clothing in direct contact with the child's skin are considered below.

Nappies and wrappers

For the first weeks of life, a wrapper (70 by 80 cm) of highly absorbent material (Mollton or wool) is still the most appropriate. A muslin square folded into a triangle goes inside; and on it as the innermost layer a small rectangular piece of Mollton or bourette silk. This old-established method is much more protective and simpler than struggling to pull on rompers. Later, 'woollen nappy pants', which are highly absorbent, replace the wrapper; it does not matter if they are somewhat felted up. Unless actually soiled, the pants can be dried in the air after every nappy change.

Cradle and cot

The textiles used in cradle and cot are also part of the infant's sphere. The first place on earth to receive the newborn, the cradle, has a mattress of coconut fibre, horsehair or kapok, definitely not a block of foam rubber. A full cover of white cotton, linen or hemp is better than a sheet, since the child may pull this out. The cradle has a canopy. Rose coloured and pale blue silk or cambric may be used to create peach-blossom coloured light, reducing the glare of daylight.

The first pillow (22 by 18 cm) is loosely filled with millet. Make a dell in it with your fist for the child's head. The pillowcase of silk or bourette silk is made to tuck in, for there should be no buttons in reach of an infant, for fear of getting swallowed.

A sheep's wool quilt makes a suitable cover in summer, and a woollen blanket may be added in winter. Feathers heat up too much and do not create a good sleeping climate.

The same principles apply to the cot for the older child. Children are particularly warm and protected in a sleeping bag that is filled with wool and quilted. The pillow is now filled with horsehair or sheep's wool.

Vest

The vest, preferably of wool or a blend of wool and silk, is a protective covering under which hidden powers of will and I are preparing; vital energies gain in strength. Wrap-around vests with long sleeves are good for the newborn; they tie up with a ribbon. Vests and combinations are available for slightly older infants. The sensitive kidney region must always be protected.

Underpants

Cotton briefs worn next to the skin offer no protective warmth. Woollen pants should be worn on top to protect bladder and kidneys.

Change of linen

Changing bed or body linen always means a loss of energy and warmth for a child. It is a help to put the items in question into the cradle or cot some time beforehand so that they can absorb some of the child's atmosphere and warmth nature. Such little things have proved particularly helpful with infants and with weak and sick children whose vital energies need special support.

Cap and hat

A cambric or silk cap protects the newborn's delicate head from losing too much heat via the tender skin and fontanelles that are still open. It should be worn day and night for the first weeks of life. A woolly hat for out of doors protects the ears and can be tied under the chin. When it is hot outside, the hat may be replaced with a headscarf or sun hat.

Jacket for out of doors and anorak

Depending on the weather, these are made of wool, cotton or silk. Jackets with hoods have proved useful in winter, offering good protection up and over from the back. A woollen hat under the hood protects the ears as well. The jacket does not have buttons but a zip or velcro fastening. Older children also wear jackets like these.

Pullover

Young children have relatively large heads. Pullovers should therefore be such that they can be opened on the shoulder, in front or at the back, to make them easier to slip on. Like the vest, they should cover the kidney region.

Rompers and crawlers

Rompers will gradually replace the wrapper during the day. The legs are really active now, movement being an archetypal need for the child. Crawlers need to stand up to the strain of the child crawling around on the floor. The climate is different down there than in the regions where adults move. Cold draughts often come through under doors; frequent colds and inexplicable diarrhoea are not uncommon as a result. A warm rug on the floor, woollen underpants, woollen tights and then the crawler's suit on top – this protects the child from getting chilled from below. Tights made from synthetic fibres cause damp, cold feet.

Up to the age of 5 or 6, crawlers' suits and trousers still have bibs or shoulder straps. The children are still 'little barrels' at this age, having neither waist nor hips. However tightly a belt is drawn, the trousers will slip; a belt merely harms the development of internal organs.

Little girls' first dress

This is usually a sleeveless smock with shoulder fastenings. All kinds of pullovers, blouses or T shirts can be worn underneath. No belt, as with trousers.

It is above all important that the child is warmly dressed under the frock. Cotton tights are worn even in summer. Children should only run barefoot in a meadow or in sand on really hot days.

Knee socks

These should not be worn by young children for various reasons. The elastic below the knee interferes with the circulation; the bare thigh grows cold. Briefs will not keep the abdominal region warm; tights are therefore absolutely essential.

Shoes

Our feet have to carry us through the whole of our lives. They must therefore be healthy. Young children do not experience pain if a shoe is too small and pinches. The foot adapts to the small shoe. It is only very seldom, however, that deformation of the feet can be corrected once it is established. Children's shoes must therefore be checked all the time to make sure they fit. When buying new shoes, the first thing is to measure the feet. Open the shoe as wide as possible for trying on, for young children involuntarily tighten up their toes at that point and one can no longer feel if the shoe fits. Really good shoes that do not make the child's feet grow damp are of real leather, in winter with a warm woollen lining or woollen socks inside. Children's feet will quickly grow cold, and tights are therefore not enough. The shoe sole should be elastic and flexible, the shape of the shoe adapted to a child's foot, i.e. broad in front. Synthetic material promotes sweating and fungi. Moon boots and fashion shoes of that kind induce the child to put his foot down on the ground in the wrong way; they ruin his gait and hence also the foot. Gumboots, usually made of plastic today, may be worn for short walks only on wet, cool days.

For indoor footwear a warm, non-slip sock is usually sufficient at first. It allows the foot to strengthen without hindrance and is almost like walking barefoot.

Nightwear

There are always weak spots in the day where even the most attentive mother may fail to realize what is going on. A particular instance are the early hours of the morning when the little fellow crawls out of his warm bed because he feels drawn to his box of toys in the corner. There he sits then, absorbed in play, and catches a chill. Children do not feel the cold at this age.

Once a child is able to get out of his sleeping bag by himself, or no longer likes it, the nightwear must be such that he's warm from top to toe in it. For the bed covers, too, are not always in the place where they should be. Two-part pyjamas or night dresses also get out of place. Combinations with feet are thus preferable; otherwise socks have to be worn also in bed. This will avoid many a runny nose.

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Colours, patterns and motifs

Colours

Children relate to colour in a very different way from adults. We experience red as warm and glowing, blue as rather cool and withdrawn. A young child, who is still all sense organ, reacts to outside impressions like a dry sponge thrown into water. The elements which thus enter into the child determine the direction in which his organs will develop. Adults can get a feeling for what goes on in a child if they observe, for example, what happens when they look intently at the colour red, for instance. A green after image develops in the eye. In *The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy*, Rudolf Steiner replied to the question as to which colour was appropriate for a child:

'In terms of spiritual science, we have to do things differently where the surroundings are concerned for a 'nervous' child, an excited one, or again one who is lethargic and not very active. Everything needs to be considered, from the colours of the room and of other objects that are usually around the child to the colours of the clothes one dresses him in. ... An excited child needs to be surrounded by red and reddish yellow colours, and his clothes should be in those colours. For an inactive child, on the other hand, one would take blues or blue-green. What matters is the colour produced as the counter colour inside. This is green with red, for instance, and an orange yellow for blue, as one can easily test for oneself by looking for some time at an area in the colour and then quickly moving the eye to a white surface. The counter colour is produced by the child's physical organs and brings about the relevant organ structures the child needs. If an excited child has red in his surroundings he'll produce the green counter image inside. And the activity of producing green has a calming effect; the organs take the calming tendency into themselves.'

Figured motifs

How do the youngest of them all experience these? What does the eye take in, and what part of them enters into a body still in the process of being moulded? The nursery's wallpaper pattern, the curtains and the sandman on the bed linen, Donald Duck on furniture and children's cups and plates, with a dinosaur even on the potty – all this creates restlessness in the nursery and does not inwardly nourish the infant. What the child really needs is a calm, warm atmosphere, friendly colours, no patterns, but perhaps a beautiful picture of an angel or the *Sistine Madonna*.

Pictures on clothing

You hardly find a garment today that does not have the weirdest animal figures on it. The shapes thus imprinted on the senses and therefore the whole human being in earliest childhood damage the potential for the good, the beautiful and the true right deep down into the physical body, giving the wrong direction to development. For the same reason the cot should not become a playground for all kinds of grotesque animal forms.

Patterned fabrics

Of the many different patterns used – stripes, flowers, checks, dots – those with small patterns are most suitable in the early years. Hard stripes merely cut up a calm surface, and the tender eye has difficulties with the angular corners of checks. Children take these divisive patterns deeply into themselves.

Something round, a ball, on the other hand, is an image of the small cosmos and the great; it corresponds to something which at the time is still deeply anchored in the child.

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Do young children need special milk?

Informative leaflet from Arbeitskreis für Ernährungsforschung e.V.

Special milk recommended by the manufacturers for young children aged 13 to 36 months has been on the market for some time. These milks consist of diluted cow's milk enriched with vitamins (e.g. A, D, E, K, B1, C, niacin), minerals, and vegetable fats to increase the relative proportion of unsaturated fats. The milk has been partly skimmed to keep the total fat content down. One product contains lactic bacteria with bifido bacteria and is therefore a kind of probiotic product. The calcium content of cow's milk is only matched by one product with added calcium citrate; the others are below it. One manufacturer has added organic powdered milk and organic cereal flours as well as the other additives.

These milks cost about 2 or 3 times as much as ordinary milk. They are generally in powder form; one is sold in cartons ready for use.

The Institute for Research into Child Nutrition in Dortmund, Germany, has made a critical analysis of these products.¹ Nutritional physiology does not call for added vitamins and minerals. The industrial associations on their part said that eating habits are poor in some families, so that added vitamins and minerals would make sense. The question is if the parents of such families will buy the expensive powdered milk.

Might one not also think that it benefits these firms to make children dependent on their products also after babyhood, up to 3 years of age?

It needs to be considered that children should learn to share in family meals, get to know the taste of foods and slowly develop positive eating habits. These milk products extend the baby period, as it were, and nutritionally speaking this is an exceptional stage. Taste preferences develop especially in the first three years and will continue for many years of life. The milk products do not taste of cow's milk; one had a slightly metallic taste (probably because of added iron). What taste preferences do the children develop?

All in all, these products reflect current thinking in terms of nutrients. Individual substances count and there is no mention of the quality one has with living, grown foods. At most one will use 'organic' in the argument, though still adding synthetic vitamins and minerals (some of them required by law).

The situation will only change if quality is seen in a new way. Products of this kind have a chance for as long as there is fear of vitamin deficiency or of cow's milk.

Recommendation. Special milk is not needed for young children once they are a year old. They can drink milk, or one may make up one's own bottle feeds. This is more natural and it is also cheaper, even in best Demeter quality.

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Mother by profession – dream of the future

Isabella Quist

Society needs children. They are its future. The raising and education of children is therefore the heart of our society. It helps the children to find their place in the world. They are 'socialized', i.e. learn the values and rules of the community in which they live. Education goes far beyond this kind of adaptation, however. The aim is to enable children to develop powers in spirit and soul which they can later use not only to maintain the life of that society but to help shape it and develop it further.

Education as an art

Society has never been as differentiated and individualized as today. In the past, the parents' footsteps would point the way for the children. Today family life is no longer in the stream of tradition as a matter of course. Large families are rare, and this means that there are no traditional examples of bringing up children. It does mean more freedom for the child to find his own way, but the risks are also greater. On the one hand the child is allowed to develop individually, on the other he has to find his place in society. The field of tension between adaptation and freedom, imprint and individuality is the work place for all who are involved in the raising and education of children. This calls for art, setting great tasks for the artist.

Families past and present

In the past, the outside world was the domain of the men in the family – hunting, gathering, protecting, 'earning money'. The women guarded the fire and guided the children on their way into the world – a mother's work, though this need not necessarily be women's work. Today men and women share the outside world. The inner world has grown emptier, however. Few devote themselves wholly to the woman's traditional functions. Many women try to reconcile the two worlds – with considerable stress and often little success. Is this one of the reasons why more and more children are showing signs of neglect in the inner life? Care is often limited to the physical and material aspect; the children are provided for, but there is no one to guide them in soul and spirit.

The basics of life, the things that need to be done to maintain ourselves, have become obscured. Heat comes from heaters, as though produced by magic; electricity from a socket, it needs just the lightest touch to light up the room. Food comes from the freezer or a carrier bag. Pain is conjured away with tablets, music conjured up at the press of a button. Everything can be bought, no one repairs shoes any more or mends trousers. Parents disappear in the mornings and come back again in the evening. The person who is at home with the children acts merely as an administrator. The mother-child relationship has lost most of its meaning.

This is an exaggeration, but it indicates the direction in which things are going unless the helm is energetically swung round.

Fulfilment in the relationship

A relationship becomes fulfilling if one joins forces in caring about a third thing. Is there anything which mother and child can care about together in such a way that it means fulfilment for both? The idea of all mothers and their children all returning to nature, taking care of animals and plants, for instance, is not only unrealistic but would also be inadequate, as it would be at a rather superficial level.

There is a third thing and it is at the spiritual level. It is something with which the child is completely taken up – the longing to find his role in the world. This is the heart of the matter in

bringing up children – to help the child to follow his own way, find his own real task in life and develop the skills needed for this. This could be the third thing which mother and child have in common. Thinking along these lines one finds that raising children gains a completely new quality.

What do young children need?

In the first place children need a 'nest'. It need not be large, but it must be quiet and protected. There they are nourished and given warmth, night and day. As they grow, their space, too, must grow, the nest widen out. Boundaries give security, the interior space allows the child to grow and unfold.

'Milk and honey' should flow in the nest. Milk here means food, protection, care. Honey flows in attention, love, enthusiasm.

When the child takes his first steps out into the world, he needs a hand that will hold but also be ready to let go. Security and protection give courage to take those first steps and discover the world. Respect of the child's person and unconditional love make it possible for him to find his own way.

Who catches the little ones when they fall out of the heavens? Who builds this nest for them? Who has the courage to shape the life of a little person whose way ahead one does not know, whose language one does not understand?

What do mothers need?

Many women want to have children, but this does not necessarily mean that they want to be mothers. There are also many women for whom conditions of life have gone changed completely when they became mothers, and they are simply unable to devote themselves entirely to their child because they have to earn a living. Family situations often no longer provide the context in which it is possible to be with a young child all the time. As time goes on, fewer and fewer children will be brought up by their biological mothers and it will be a matter of finding people who can give themselves wholly to the task. It is time to consider not only what children need for their development but also what the people who raise them in their early years need. The mystical image of all-encompassing mother love still haunts people's minds, something which enables women to protect, nourish and raise children from sheer 'gut feeling'. The reality tends to be very different. A great many offers of help, oases and refuge islands are on offer for tormented, over tired, frustrated mothers, always with the aim that the women should function perfectly again afterwards. Help is also offered in various ways for children's behavioural problems. This practice does, however, always put the mothers in a position of having failed or of having to ask for help. All the things on offer can only be patch work, dealing with symptoms, unless we get to the heart of the matter, i.e. discover the causes of the misery, explore and combat it.

Being a mother is a job in its own right; it deserves to be given its own status in our society – professional status. It is not only done by biological mothers, of course, and indeed not necessarily only by women. Essentially mothering is not specifically woman's work. To be a mother does not mean to be a woman, but to do work that has mothering quality, i.e. makes 'milk and honey' flow.

Being a mother is a specific occupation. Thus it has a time limit. Requirements change within this time period, for the inner world of the work changes as the child grows older. The care provision aspect grows less, the need to be a companion increases but will also gradually disappear as the child matures. It is necessary to be well prepared as one enters wholly into the world of the young child, to reflect continually as one goes along, train further and at the same time keep the 'life after child' in the outside world in mind and develop an approach to it. It is probably the only profession where the aim is to make the worker superfluous in the end.

This work, this profession, needs to be taken to a new level in our society, in politics, in the churches, in the hearts of men and women. It is worthy of recognition as a highly respected profession. Basic work needs to be done on this – politically, philosophically and psychologically. The subject of 'motherhood and child raising' also needs to be reviewed in its historical aspect.

Professional profile 'mother' – first steps towards realization

Every area of qualified work has a definite professional profile today which covers qualifications, training, further training, remuneration, free time and holiday arrangements. We need to produce such a profile for the job of a mother. It also gives us opportunity to bring new impulses into our 'work scene'.

Developing such a profile needs extensive interdisciplinary work on a wide range of subjects, e.g.

- availability of special training with final qualifications to demonstrate competence in education, child psychology, hygiene, paediatric nursing, domestic management;
- giving help with reflection and self knowledge (experiencing and assessing own person) and self education;
- possibilities for further training;
- supervision;
- counselling for conflicts and special problems;
- mother initiatives to advise and support each other (network);
- telephone service (hotline for mothers, spiritual help over the telephone)
- internet provision for mothers (further training topics, advisory services, sharing of views);
- creating relief services so that mothers may have regular free time (using day mothers, students doing their practical work, trainees);
- changing people's awareness so that family income may be fairly apportioned; remuneration for mothering work, provision for old age;
- extending curricula in general education to include the above subjects;
- practical work and trainee opportunities for young people;
- introducing a voluntary 'family year';
- political lobby.

The first step will be to develop a concept for the professional profile, to substantiate and harmonize it. Then publicity will be needed to gain a broad-based response. Here the media will be important. Putting it all into practice will call for the stirring-up of policy makers, i.e. especially also politicians at local, regional and national level, and finally a complete change in the way society sees these things.

A vital question is if it will be possible to motivate people who will commit themselves to a responsible approach in the raising of children.

What is curative educational family support?

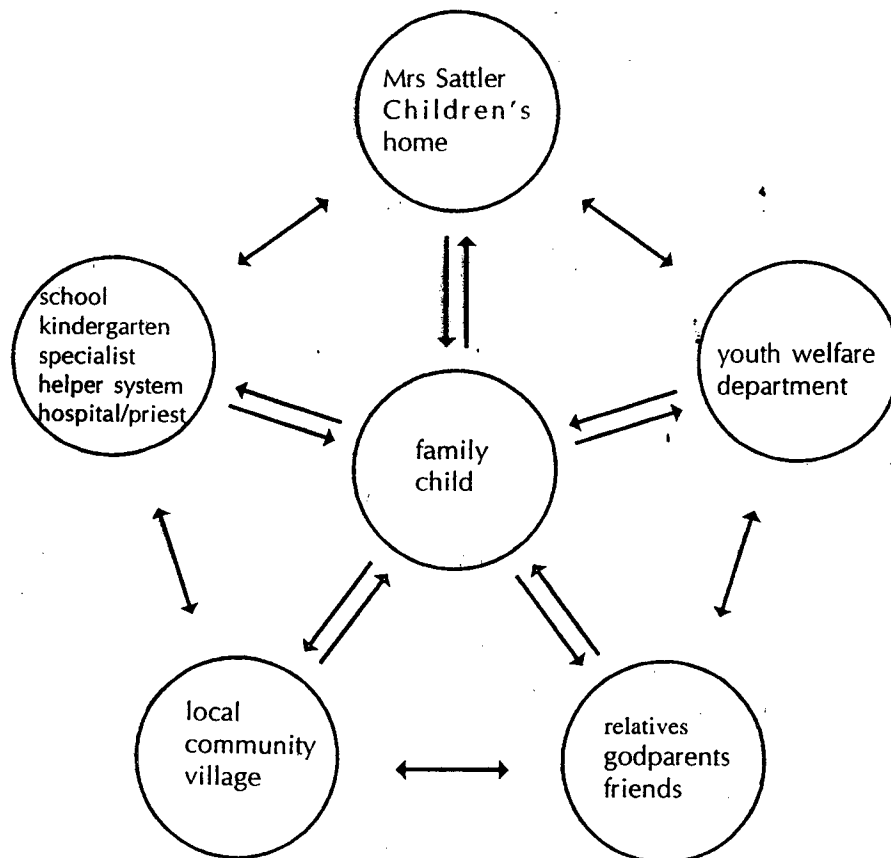
Ingrid Sattler

Curative educational family support is holistic in approach. It involves support given to people at all stages of life who are permanently or temporarily facing problems in personality and inner development. Curative education supports children whose physical development or inner equilibrium is impeded, delayed or threatened by external influences or through disorders that are organic in origin.

It supports parents in developing insight into their current situation as a person, a couple and as father and mother. This creates an attitude that can prove helpful and healing for the child whose development is inhibited and for the whole family situation. Parents thus develop the independent ability to shape their everyday life with its many demands constructively.

Necessary framework needed for effective curative educational family support:

- 1 Interlinked support system under the aegis of the youth welfare department, so that aims can be defined in collaboration and expert support provided accordingly.
- 2 Parents, helpers and the whole family being prepared to co-operate with the support system.



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Mothers – parents – children
The current situation
Experiences gained in general practice

Angelika Dahmen

If I am asked to answer the question as to what changes there have been in recent years with regard to children up to three years of age who are seen in a general practice in Kreuzberg, it immediately comes to mind that children are going to day centres at an increasingly earlier age. Seven years ago, when I opened the practice, which has a high proportion of children among its patients, most of the children would at the earliest go to a day centre at 2 or 2½ years; today they go at 1 or 1½ years.

In the early 1990s, we had the 'day mother' model in Berlin, with younger children preferentially accommodated in such family-type care. The authorities supported this, so that the financial burden on parents was about the same. This financial support was progressively reduced, however, on the one hand because the reunification of Germany had resulted in a surplus of day centres, and on the other because the model was largely beyond the control of the authorities (Senate). It also got more and more difficult to find enough day mothers; the job became unpopular. Many mothers and parents are not entirely comfortable with the idea of their child forming a strong bond with a stranger. They believe the work is more efficiently monitored in an 'anonymous' day centre, but fail to realize that the frequent change of reference person in these centres is a problem.

I noted, however, that children looked after by day mothers in the first three years suffered from distinctly fewer infections than children who were attending a day centre at this age. In themselves, childhood illnesses, and especially the individual typical childhood diseases, are something quite natural; here I am, however, referring to a different kind of continuous illness. Children who grow up with day mothers or at home will of course also fall ill, but the frequency and duration are very different in their case than with day centre children and their endless infections. Children whose first year has been protected, relatively calm and easy, often lose much of the openness and healthy curiosity of childhood when they start at a day centre. They get more nervous, also in relation to me as their doctor, whom they know, and are particularly sensitive to touch. They seem to have lost their inner resting pole.

Looking at the step children take in going out of the family, I often find the process quite astonishing. Thus a mother with a 1-year-old comes and asks for a certificate that her child is suitable for a day-care centre, i.e. that he is healthy. A short time before I had a long talk with her in which I said that perhaps it was time to think of gradually weaning the child, to relax a relationship which I felt was somewhat too close. Characteristically the child did not sleep through, not in his own but in his mother's bed, and if conflict arose, he'd be given the breast even during the day. This closeness, too great for the child's age, was now to change, with immediate separation, and no intermediate stages to soften the blow. There was no feeling for the magnitude of the step for the child. I do of course try and make people more aware in such talks, but my arguments tend to be countered with the statement that there would be a long settling-in period and that the child was only going to go to the centre for one or two hours a day. In my experience it will not be long, however, before the child spends six hours or more at the centre.

To sum up, I often think the mother-child relationship is too close in the first year, with the child given no opportunity to learn basic things, such as finding peace in himself, going to sleep on his own, occupying himself or managing to wait for at least a short period before a desire is met. Metaphorically speaking, we have a situation of a non-swimmer being thrown in at the deep end.

Then the 'infection spiral' begins which I, as a physician, dread. After two or three days at the day centre the child has an infection that will take two weeks to get over. Meanwhile the mother will come and ask if the child can't go back to the centre sooner. If this happens, it'll only be two or three days before he has the next infection. And this often goes on for months. These times are a torment to mothers. They feel that my demand to keep a sick child at home is a curse. They are isolated – or feel themselves to be – and the children get on their nerves. And most of these children really are a

strain. They don't sleep much and if they do often only with their parents' help. They seem over stimulated, are accordingly restless, and hardly ever play, at least not on their own.

Why do children have to go to day centres so early? The reason is on the one hand that the parents have to go to work early, and on the other that raising a child is something they feel unable to manage. This feeling of too much being asked sometimes begins as the child is born, with a state of exhaustion reached by the end of the first year. Most women and parents enter into motherhood with an excessively idealized and not very realistic image of being a mother or parent. It is to be 'absolutely lovely' for the child, who is to be happy and contented, and the symbiotic relationship between parents and child should be a kind of paradise on earth. When it then turns out that the child is not always contented, that he cries and is restless, mothers are under tremendous pressure to deal with this 'at once'. They feel responsible for their child's happiness and have the dubious notion that their child will grow neurotic if they do not immediately fulfil their responsibility.

When mothers ask themselves what the problem is with the child, the answer will often be: 'He wants the breast,' and only very rarely, 'He wants to sleep,' and never, 'He's not coping with the vast influx of stimuli.' This faulty assessment is partly because there is the interesting phenomenon that children – and people in general – will often be relatively calm and balanced during exposure to massive stimuli and only react with restlessness in the recovery phase which follows. Many women are unable to tell if their children's crying or screaming is a reaction to over stimulation and to tiredness or if the children are truly sick. That is of course a great worry to them, for it could after all be something really bad. In most cases there is no mother, older sister or aunt nearby to whom they might go for help, and so the women keep going to the doctor in their despair; he or she has to find out what it is, for the child is still screaming, in spite of being given the breast.

The uncertainty felt by the mothers has a direct effect on the children. Uncertainty is of course always part of human relationships, but in this case we are speaking of a permanent state that goes very deep. A mother who is nervous, anxious, in despair, causes tensions in the infant that can actually be perceived in the child's muscle tone. The children react to such tension with vexation.

One explanation for the mothers' uncertainty may be that they have had little experience of being with young children before becoming mothers. There are usually no younger brothers or sisters in families today, nor a family life where dealing with young children is part of everyday life, something that can be observed and learned.

Having no better alternatives, mothers look for contact in groups where they are no longer alone in their uncertainty. Having the positive impulse to do something for themselves and their child they go to groups for baby swimming, early learning, and so on. In fact, however, sharing things with other uncertain mothers will often enough lead to further uncertainty and new worries as to what else might be wrong with their children.

A further reason for the problems of young parents is that more and more young women no longer feel secure and protected in their own bodies. They have great problems with seeing minor problems for what they are and get into a panic if they suffer from flatulence, for example, thinking it might be something serious. This uncertainty in living with one's own body is a problem not only to themselves but is potentiated to become bodily uncertainty in the children. We have a second generation already in which sickness is suppressed and health considered a right, but as a static condition, not something dynamic and alive.

Then there is of course also the fact that the large repertoire of simple home remedies for treating minor ailments and reassuring the child have largely been forgotten. It starts with parents no longer being able to sing, and therefore no longer able to sing and rock their child to sleep. We can't blame them for it, for in the last 50 years the medical profession has done everything it could to make compresses, herb teas and so on look ridiculous, calling them ineffective and amateurish, and at the same time claiming to provide qualified help in all situations. Modern medicine has little to offer, however, when one is 'feeling off colour', which is what we are concerned with here. In real terms it means that women and parents stand there with empty hands – and that is indeed how they feel.

It would seem an obvious solution to help the parents by informing them. This only works up to a point, however, for most of them have read a lot and are therefore only marginally interested in hearing another, further opinion. It is usually when a state of exhaustion has been reached, a crisis, failure, that parents are ready to give more serious consideration to fundamental issues in the study

of man. As a rule people only want quick results; the introduction of rhythm and limitation of stimuli feels intrusive to them, for it would of course also affect their own lives. Their idea is that a child is something marvellous; you take baby with you wherever you go, breastfeed anywhere, and show off your infant; people will admire the child, and he'll see something of life. But perhaps this little creature does not want to see so much of life, and should not do so either, or the child's rhythm may be a different one – but people can't really imagine this.

In the everyday work of a medical practice, the general practitioner or paediatrician is unable to cope with having to explain these educational and care basics over and over again to most of their patients. Some institutions such as Waldorf kindergartens and anthroposophical children's hospitals have therefore established courses for parents. The offer is not sufficiently taken up, however, and it is just the parents for whom it would be most important who often do not come to such courses.

I am convinced that parents are looking for and need an individual approach that is also practical – but not over the internet, in books or lectures. They need an experienced mother, teacher or nurse who visits the family, or what is left of it, and shows and suggests in a practical way how to do an onion compress, how to arrange an infant's room, what a healthy daily rhythm looks like, and so on. Indeed, I am sure that we must offer practical examples and show how one carries and child and holds him in one's arms.

Mother and child. The long road to separation. A look at the first three years of life.

Angelika Dahmen

It is of course during pregnancy that the symbiosis between mother and child is closest. The maternal immune system tolerates the foreign element – a complex process that is not fully understood to this day. Oxygen supply and nutrition function continuously, geared to need, as it were. But the difference in heart rates immediately shows that these are two entities. We know that pregnancy is influenced by inner feelings, individual experiences and sociocultural factors, but every woman who has gone through a number of pregnancies will tell us that every child was wholly individual, even during the pregnancy.

Giving birth – the first parting

A first peak in the interaction between mother and child comes at birth. Only some aspects of this interaction are known today, not the whole of it. We know that the child's physical maturity plays major role, and so do the mother's inner responses. A mother will wait, for example, until the midwife is back again or the father can be reached. But the child's inner feelings appear to play a role as well. When you've known someone for years, you'll often see traits that had also characterized the birth. The individual always has a hard life, or complications come up whatever he does, or he'll generally react spontaneously, and perhaps too quickly, to anything that happens.

People often fail to realize that birth is also a first parting. The child's individual nature, his need structure, emerges much more clearly now. One often has the feeling, however, that young mothers are so suffused with happiness, the wish for closeness, for bonding, and of course pride, wanting to show their infant off to everyone, that they see the child more as a doll than as a separate individual. It must also be mentioned that they are afraid of not being able to understand this small 'speechless' creature or being unable to meet its ceaseless demands. This is where people in our present civilization differ from others. A South American Indian woman may perhaps feel it to be quite natural that she carries her child on her back for 2½ years and shares the room where she lives and sleeps with others. She is much more part of a group. This is also why we cannot insist on making certain maxims in raising children the same for all cultures.

First acquaintance. First problems – hypersensitivity and tensions

The early days after the birth face us with the difficult task of getting to know and understand this new individual. For the mother this means that she needs to take time and listen what her child has to 'tell' her. I could only agree with Emmi Pikler where she writes that soothing the infant too quickly by offering the breast or a pacifier holds the danger of getting monotonous. Things are not made easy for mothers today, however. From the moment they are born, many children no longer have the remoteness, the calm, of which people would speak in the past. They tend to be hypersensitive to stimuli and in a very tense state that shows itself in their muscle tone, drinking and sleep behaviour.

Perhaps there are reasons that lie in these individuals themselves and they have decided to come into the world at this time. We'll not go into this here. The question that concerns us here is whether we can identify the factors in our present life situations and if we can do anything to reduce or change them.

Unrest, feeling driven, noise and being hectic play an important role. Prepartal ultrasound scans have shown the shock reactions of unborn children to noise. We know from the work of Iren Prekop how much the inhibition of labour and keeping the expectant mother in bed affect the child's sensorimotor development. Even Rudolf Steiner suggested in his day that mothers should avoid 'passive movement' – a notion that perhaps did not mean much then but does so now if one considers the research done on sensorimotor development. Blood supply, heart beat, balance, uterine muscle

tone, balance and movement synergetically influence and complement one another. The developing child in his mother's womb has sensory perceptions and sentience. One factor we should not ignore is, I think, that pregnancy and birth have come under a pathological technological influence in modern medicine, and this may sometimes prove highly traumatic.

It can also be very difficult for mothers to find their way through the multiplicity of advice given on child rearing and baby care. Many young women find themselves confronted with a young child for the first time in their life, with countless minor and major hurdles. Families are generally small in our society today and young mothers therefore have little opportunity to learn from other generations. At the same time the (pseudo) choice has developed between 'young, successful, childless' and housewife and mother. Because of the situation in our society today, many young women are utterly inexperienced and unskilled in the domestic sphere, and this hurdle in those first months of a child's life should not be underestimated. If you're not used to preparing regular meals, it will now also be difficult to live in a regular rhythm. The feeling of uncertainty, awkwardness and tension is the sphere in which the young child lives.

Enduring disagreeable situations

The situation is made more difficult because mothers tend to believe themselves to be solely responsible for the contentedness, happiness, progress and mental health of their children. A thesis developed in research work in developmental psychology has become fixed in lay minds in an incomplete form, creating havoc. It is that if my child cries and I do not immediately pacify or satisfy him he'll grow neurotic. Time and time again it is horrifying to see the pressure mothers experience when their child begins to cry and they keep trying, all flustered, offering the pacifier, the breast, and try out different ways of carrying the infant.

Whilst I don't think one should always let children dry, I do believe the infant must gradually learn to live with disagreeable situations and tensions. He needs his mother or someone to hold him and comfort him as he is learning, assuring him that all will be well again and even the worst wind will go away some time or other.

Abdominal compresses, pilules or fennel tea can give relief and provide comfort, but they should not be given too much the character of 'getting rid'. I can certainly see a connection here with later consumption of medicines when there is the least bit of a problem (aspirin for headaches or medicines to bring down a temperature).

Enduring unpleasant situations is something I consider most important. The child is not left alone in this but someone he loves is with him, and to me this means he gets to know the principle of hope. It is a process of development in which the child, who in infancy has practically no tolerance for frustration at all, gradually learns in his early years, until ready for school, to bear failure and wrongs without losing all hope or getting into a rage. The solid foundation in this is his mother's constant inner calm, tranquillity and certainty. At the same time help given from outside gradually gets less and varies depending on the situation. The growing child should be progressively more able to master situations himself by finding this inner calm in himself, for instance when going to sleep, so that a time will come when he no longer needs his mother. The mother's support is essential, but on the other hand account must be taken of the child's innate capacity, his progressive autonomy.

The example shows how subtle and differentiated the dialogue between mother and child needs to be, and the tremendous need for inner calm, tranquillity and ability to enter into dialogue. This is made very much more difficult if there are too many stimuli for the children, lack of rhythm and unrest. The younger the child, the more is alertness, hyperexcitability and tension still bound to the physical body. When we are afraid as adults, the heart tends to beat faster and the breath is held; part of the event is at the level of the psyche, however, and can also be dealt with there. In a child it remains engrained in the physical body. Here we can see what Steiner may have meant when he said that etherically the child is partly created out of the environment. Thus we may have an infant who is enormously tense and startles easily; as time goes on we perceive the anxieties suffered by the mother, who often is not aware of them, anxieties we, too, only come to know little by little.

Research has shown that even very young infants perceive and understand the modulation in their mothers' voice or any depression evident in their facial expression. They will first of all react

with more smiles than usual and if this does not change anything they withdraw and grow passive; physically, their muscle tone grows more flaccid, and the senses of touch, movement and life develop only to a limited degree.

Significance of the four lower senses

The earliest stage of infancy is so important because foundations are laid that remain with us for life, not only psychologically but also physiologically and physically. An infant may have the best of care, but if there's no maternal empathy he'll always feel the lack of something. Yet later we'll see children and adults who struggle with their bodies or sense of life in a way we find difficult to understand. Minor indispositions such as flatulence causing pressure in the abdomen, will upset them; they worry, cannot be consoled, losing part of their integrity. The interplay between physical processes and psyche is upset and they are no longer able to put it to rights. They go from one doctor to another, always needing to be assured that there is no serious problem.

This is something we see more and more frequently today. The condition can only be changed within limits and over a long period and carries a great burden of suffering. It is closely connected with the development of the body image in the lower senses – touch, balance, life and movement. In the first year of life these develop in close interaction with the mother. It is impressive how Emmi Pikler equips her carers with the tool of direct address and constant speech to accompany actions. This helps to develop dialogue and empathy. Listening and looking help to develop calm, quite apart from the high degree of rhythm and equilibrium this gives.

So-called 'boredom'

Today the general attitude is rather different. Parents feel – often as a reflection of their own wishes – that they should offer their children as much variety as possible and that their children should learn a lot as early as possible. One of the most dreaded feelings is that of boredom. The creative potential of boredom, a developmental impulse, for instance when a child in his cradle begins to play with his hands, is disregarded today, for people are always already anticipating the next developmental stage.

This has far-reaching consequences in everyday life, for at some time everyone reaches a point where it gets a strain to be the sole entertainer; parents do indeed feel unequal to the task then and exhausted. Initially the feeling had been that they wanted to keep body contact with the child all the time. But then comes a moment of great disappointment, and that is when this creature still has not had 'enough', still wants to be kept occupied and still wakes up ten times every night. The mothers will then call their kids little monsters, saying they feel as if the kids want to swallow them up. They don't see how this can be possible, seeing that they have given them everything. This is the point when many children are taken to day centres.

I like to describe the situation that leads to this step with the words 'so near and yet so far'; for you are not really in dialogue if you chat with a friend or watch television whilst breastfeeding, nor if you carry your child in a baby cloth tied round you during a party. It is important to note that basing oneself on the psychological trauma concept, which was revised quite some time ago, it is not a once-only event that causes the damage but constant repetition. The particular reasons as to why there is no dialogue are of little account. The absorption of parents and teachers in annual festivals and other events which one can observe among Waldorf people can destroy the process of sharing life experiences just as much.

Role of the father

So far we have only spoken of the mother, for it is generally she who cares for the infant during the first months. We should not, however, underestimate the father's role. In today's small family, he is usually the only other reference person. This means he is tremendously important to the mother in sharing the burden and to the child in broadening things out. Anyone who has ever had to do with children knows the times when 'there's nothing one can do' any more, and the relief if there is someone else who has the necessary calm to save the situation. For the child, broadening comes

because the other person smells differently, holds the child differently, sings differently and stimulates all the senses differently. Familiar things become more familiar in a more 'conscious' way and are also broadened out. Experiences of liveliness, openness, certainty, etc. are of course enriched by this. There is reasonable doubt, however, if fathers are up to this after a long day at work, for it is something entirely new to them as well. Here we see how disastrous it is when there are no uncles, aunts, grandpa or grandma in the family at all.

Being different need not arouse fear, of course, but may perhaps make the child curious, and this means development potential. For a long time psychoanalyst research papers discussed the question as to whether being shy with strangers at 7 or 8 months was a necessary and natural process or if it reflected uncertainty. It is now widely considered that 'securely bonded' children react first of all with curiosity and surprise at this stage, but show distinctly greater reserve than they did at 4 months. They will often seek eye contact with their mothers to be sure she's there to protect them but show definite interest. Again this is a highly unstable process. Apart from constitutional factors (careworn or round), the mothers attitude (anxious or secure) and the child's earlier experiences (e.g. hospital stays or pain caused by early immunization which may lead to traumatization) may have a considerable influence.

Towards the end of the first year fathers grow even more important. Psychoanalysts speak of 'triangulation', a process where the narrow mother-child relationship should expand. The father symbolizes the world and going at things actively. Again and again one sees how hard it is for mothers to cope with this letting-go stage. And surely it is hard if there is no one else who would unconditionally take the part of this little creature in the world. Isn't there also a special quality of experience for the child in running towards someone who is truly expecting one to come?

For fathers it is of course also a moment of genuine happiness when a child enters into relationship on his part, e.g. by running towards dad. It can be a great moment, but there are also many ways in which it can go wrong. Sometimes the mother is unable to cope with this apparent leave-taking – especially if there are problems in the parents' relationship or she's a depressive type. From the children's point of view the most important element is the individual impulse. If they feel that their mother is unable to tolerate their budding independence or wants to push it aside, this may irritate the individual impulse or even change it into its opposite. The impulse to start running can only come from inside, and it develops in the process, it needs its time.

If the venture proves successful, the children are beside themselves with joy at this stage – 12-18 months – which psychologists also call the 'practice stage'. Walking upright and conquering the world can be a magnificent feeling for the child. It is important that the children run and not that the mother moves away from them. The children must be able to reassure themselves all the time that mum is still there and that she sees them. Kohut, an analyst, spoke of the twinkle in mum's eye at this point. To have felt and known this will give the child the satisfaction and certainty he needs on his way.

The mother's inner attitude for the first year may be characterized as 'all will be well'. Now it is 'the world is good and beautiful; look at it; I'll always be there'. Today few people are able to come to this inwardly in a living way. Perhaps they have not been able to experience this themselves in life so far and actually have not yet found their own place in this world. No one is more sensitive than a child in detecting if there is perhaps a 'but' in the statement after all.

Truly a retrograde step?

The first walking stage, when children are overwhelmed with happiness even if they'll often bump into things or fall down, is followed by a period at about 18-24 months that is also called the re-approach period, when the children come back to their mothers more, relating to her, making sure of her, and a little bit giving up the expansive world-conquering attitude they had before. They ask themselves if mum is really there, and will there be room for me on her lap? If that place is secure and mum looks freely out into the world, exploration can continue. It is evident that with siblings born in rapid succession there is a risk for mental problems to develop later.

Many parents get a shock when they see their child taking what appears to be a retrograde step. They will therefore respond with higher expectations, looking for greater independence, but this

will have the opposite effect, with the children beginning to cling more. Again there is of course also the risk of holding on too much, perhaps because of profound distrust and anxieties felt by the mother; or it may be that the children sense that their mother is afraid of being left alone.

I can make things move in the world!

Another important sphere of experience comes at this time. The children find that they move not only themselves but can also move the world. Tables and chairs are pushed around, cups dropped. This feeling of being able to make something happen in the world, and the experience that objects behave differently but in a reproducible way slowly opens up the world to the child. Restricted living conditions and space, and also narrow, rigid styles of child-raising, impede an experience which otherwise can raise a child's spirits so much.

The all-round experience of the process is important. There is an enormous difference between just seeing a chair falling over on television, or mum telling him that a chair could also fall over, or the child discovering in an experiment based on pure will impulse what it is like to move the chair and hear it fall with a loud crash – and that it can then also be put upright again. Today we only offer children segments of the whole learning experience with specialized games and toys, with the emphasis on verbal and visual aspects. The senses of touch, movement, balance and indeed life are neglected, and this will often only show itself later, but then with frightful consequences in the way movement develops and at a different level also in the cognitive, intellectual sphere.

To sum up we may say that locomotor development, growing dexterity and interaction of the senses help the attitude children develop to their own body, whilst actively initiated movement in the world will determine their attitude to the world. Inhibition of either form of movement, for whatever reason, leads to an attitude of hesitation and fear of facing up to tasks in the world right into adult age. It is known from psychotherapy that this need not only mean prohibitions that were voiced and can be remembered. Piaget referred to 'sensorimotor schemata'. Recent research papers refer to 'processual subconscious'. In anthroposophy we would say: Certain attitudes have been imprinted in the ether body and stay with us for the rest of our lives unless they can be resolved and transformed out of the powers of the I.

Aggression?

Every child has a natural curiosity and spirit of discovery and this creates a new area of conflict with parents or adults. Is it scientific curiosity or destructiveness when the child throws a cup on the floor or belabours the new table with his spoon? Is it aggression when he bites, pulls hair or scratches? Parents take this in completely different ways, and it should no doubt also be considered according to the given age and situation. It surely is a terribly interesting question why you can always throw down a plastic bottle but not a cup. What tells me which is which if I don't know the concepts? Here the parent's way of handling the situation is crucial. We might say that it is unfair to accuse a child of aggression when he's acting in a spirit of scientific enquiry; he feels himself restricted and will either get angry or withdraw. Of course, we can't allow china to be broken at will, but it has to be realized that limits need to be set without making any moral judgement. This applies especially also to the social situation in the playground or day centre.

Up to the 18th month, the child's focus is entirely on the toys. The fact that someone else is playing with a toy at the moment or that it is in someone's way is of little importance. What matters is the activity. This is not directed against anyone but just involvement with a particular toy. Expressions of pleasure or annoyance will often also turn immediately into actions. Children who may perhaps bite another child who's in their way, cannot foresee the damage and pain this will cause. They have not yet developed a sufficiently differentiated I-you relationship. The child's own play, conquering the world, is the main driving force.

In developmental psychology, all but a small group of scientists today consider that there is no such thing as a drive for aggression. There is the will to conquer and explore; with a particular constitution and if self determination is restricted over and over again, this may lead to anger and rage, and at some point this will take on a life of its own, so that the rage is not in proportion to the real situation. Here we should mention that we cannot laugh at a baby but only smile at him; but we

can certainly laugh at an 18-month-old and expose him – a very subtle kind of injury that will frequently lead to latent rage and reactions that will later seem inexplicable.

Summing up, we may say that anger, the first stage, mobilizes the energies to achieve one's end after all. The second stage would be giving up, or rage against the source of the impediment. We all know that this feeling can develop a life of its own to such an extent that a child will hit out at the least occasion.

Some observations and studies made on children may be important here. At 18 months, half of all interactions between children are antagonistic, confrontational; by 2½ this has gone down to 20 per cent. In a group of 10 children, 87% came into a conflict situation within a 15-minute observation period. Most of these were due to curiosity and a spirit of enquiry. From the second year onwards, not only the duration but also the frequency of conflicts decreases steadily, whilst the number of interactions the children are able to cope with without adult help increases. Lemp, an experienced child psychiatrist, referred to the constant demand and stress of permanent conflict, saying that learning from models and examples in a mixed-age group is simpler, with the result that conflicts are less frequent.

Adults again play an important role, of course. I liked the way Emmi Pikler stood up for her carers, saying that one can only intensively concern oneself with one child eating a meal, it being impossible to find the necessary time and attention for a second child. This does, of course, raise the question as to how many young explorers or fighting cocks one can reasonably cope with as a teacher.

Potty training

At least brief reference should be made to this subject, for again the sensitive balance between outside and inner impulse plays a key role. With reasonable care, it is of course possible to potty train the child quite early. This has been clearly demonstrated by potty times being standardized for all children at day centres in the former German Democratic Republic. The fact is, however, that the necessary basis – sentience of one's own body and causal comprehension of more complex situations – only exists from about 2½ years, and being potty trained on one's own inner impulse can only be successfully established at that age. This task, not always easy even in the domestic atmosphere, presents as more of a problem in institutions. It is, however, most important that there, too, individual aspects must be considered in potty training.

Essentially one can observe that behavioural changes in childhood that are not sufficiently sustained by personal initiative but largely determined from outside will often result in corresponding disorders in adults. Potty training has special significance here in so far as the behavioural changes are in this case body immanent and can easily assume compulsive character in the adult.

The motto we gave for the first year was 'all will be well', that for the second year, 'the world is beautiful; look at it'. Our motto for the third year might be: 'Welcome to the social world; you'll learn to be with others and know the rules.' It is, of course, far from easy for an adult – teacher or parent – not to ask too much of the child who is trying to find his place, using moral judgements.

Final comment

Starting with the symbiosis of mother and child, which is almost total in the early stage of pregnancy, I have taken you through the first three years in a child's life, trying to show that childhood development, progressing from being wholly bound up with the mother to being an autonomous individual, can only be achieved in small steps. Any urging or anticipation, any putting on of brakes and holding fast can seriously affect the result. The impulse to develop must always come from the child. It is our task as parents, teachers and adults to know and understand the situation and both enable and support the process. Many minor good-byes have to be said along the way; they give the child the magnificent opportunity to develop in freedom and autonomy.

E. Institutions introduce themselves

Crusade for the young child – 'hof' Niederursel Also in memory of Erika Grah

Brigitte Huisinga



A champion of the young child – that was Erika Grah. I'd like to remember her here and let you hear some of the things she said. Taking up the anthroposophical education impulse she developed Niederursel into an education centre for the family. In countless evening and weekend courses she endeavoured to open the eyes of young parents to the needs of the young child.

How can we reach the point again where we can get a feeling for the young child's unconscious longings? This, I feel, is one of the great tasks ahead of us. We should learn to develop new senses, to look behind the senses, so that we may truly see what the child needs.

We should have lots more courage to take the lead. We take the lead, doing it as best we can, and do not try and delegate the responsibility to the young child. One of the first fundamental steps in spiritual education practice is for the adult truly to take responsibility for the child. The child must be able to have his parents 'foot the bill'.

Such pleas were like guiding principles in her courses. At the same time she would speak in a realistic and down-to-earth way of how every life can be shaped to be right for the child. On the one hand her approach came from knowledge of the child's spiritual origins:

Such a child under 3 years of age is blessed with powers which we human beings have lost. He meets us unwaveringly with powers of love that we have forgotten. For us, powers of love are something to do with calculation. The child brings something with him which we have forgotten.

On the other hand she knew of the uncertainties experienced by parents who are looking for really practical help. Going against the stream at the time, she started a mother-and-child group in 1980, inviting parents who were registering in advance for the kindergarten to come with their child. This brought Waldorf education alive for many people. Parents were able to perceive the environment and the way of working with the children, using all their senses; they could see things to copy, ask questions ... For Erika Grah it was an opportunity to experience mother and child together and give many a helpful hint.

Bringing together adult education courses for parents, mother-child groups and individual counselling to assist parents developed into an approach that was to spread well beyond Niederursel when Erika Grah established the 'Counselling Parents' further training courses, to be given in blocks, in 1991 (the 8th course starts in the autumn of 2000). Her aim was to have similar initiatives start or be made stronger in other cities.

This impulse, too, arose from her 'crusade' for the protection and care of young children. She specially loved Novalis' words: 'Where children are born, you have a golden age', putting her own thoughts even more clearly in the following words:

Every child born today – every child who has the courage to come to earth today – is a truly great opportunity for a new world. I would like to tell all parents to leave the stresses of everyday life aside for a moment and watch their child as he sleeps, see how relaxed he is. Enter into this for a moment and you can gain an idea of the sacred gift Jesus Christ, the child of all time, has given to us, to the world, a gift that comes to us again as a great opportunity for the world in every child.

Erika Grah would sometimes feel that she was following a lonely load in her concern for the young child, but she'd never be discouraged. In this spirit she will continue to be with us in our work.

The parent-child group – Report from the School for Parents, Independent Waldorf School, Trier

Christel Knodt

An additional sphere of work developed in our school and kindergarten establishments from the 1992-3 school year – the parent-child group. The initiative serves young mothers and fathers who want to consider educational issues even before their child starts kindergarten and seek contact with mothers and fathers who are in the same situation. The aim is to assist young parents in their not entirely easy task of raising children.

Many parents are raising children on their own today, often quite unprepared, with none of the tradition or established knowledge behind them that used to be shared among earlier generations. Most of these young parents are small or smallest families. A major change concerns the child himself who is no longer seen as a young child but as a young adult, a 'miniature version' of an adult. The child is therefore generally addressed as and treated like an adult. On the other hand people complain more and more that children no longer know how to play properly today, cannot keep themselves occupied and always need an adult or some media or other to entertain them. Is it surprising then if children are shaken increasingly more awake in their 'upper storey' and never really learn to use their little hands to do things. 'What's the matter? Would you like this, or rather that? What do you prefer? Shall we do it now or later?' Questions like these are put to children all the time, asking them to make decisions that are far too much for them and a drain on their vital energies. Quite often people do not even wait for an answer but offer many detailed explanations as to why a hat should be put on, for instance, or a coat – rather than simply to act and lovingly but firmly put on the child's coat and hat. This is a phenomenon of our time, and we clearly need to look for the deeper meaning.



Freedom and acting from insight, out of one's own will intent, have become very important to young people today. And it is perfectly justifiable to bring this impulse also into the raising of one's children. But how might this be done? To begin with, there are questions:

- How can we get to know and understand the child's nature more fully?
- What kind of free spaces made available to the child serve a good purpose?
- How do I guide the child to have greater freedom as the years go on but also personal responsibility?

Once young parents become aware of these issues, we have the basis for a renewal of education. To question traditions, take a critical look at oneself and consider a situation objectively – this is something the young mothers and fathers do not find difficult. Just as one has to know things for one's work, so they find it quite natural to want information on educational issues. It is not always quite so easy in practice, for things written in a book or discussed in a lecture do not always seem to apply to one's own situation. It needs work in progressive stages and also practice.

The School for Parents is designed to offer young mothers and fathers ideas and help in two ways. We have parent-child meetings one morning a week and also parents' discussion evenings without the children.

Parent-child meeting

From 8.30 a.m. onwards, 7-10 mothers and their children gradually come together in a large room. A large work table is in the middle of the room, mainly intended for the grown-ups, who may do their sewing, mending, crafts or fairy wool work there. One adult is preparing a mid-morning breakfast for everyone in the kitchen area. And the children? The littlest ones have their 'crawlers' corner', close to mum, of course; from there they may watch what is going on, or be busy discovering and learning to work with their own world, i.e. their hands and feet. Children who are already able to walk will often watch the babies in amazement, or 'want to offer them toys. Above all they are proud to be among the 'big' ones. The boys also take an interest in the 'crawlers' and are disappointed when their little friend is not there one morning. The bigger children find things to do in the dolls houses, 'making coffee and getting a meal'. Others take the dolls around the room in their pram. Egon, the big rocking horse, is everyone's favourite. It is not always easy to get a ride because he is so popular. Fortunately there's a building corner right next to him, with wooden and string animals, or a small book table where one can look at a picture book with 'mum' – and it need not always be one's own mum. The children discover many new things in this mixed-age group for they have play fellows there and the creative impulses of the grown-ups.



Such a situation also offers many kinds of experiences for parents. Now it is not just one's own child who's the focus of attention; all of them are. This has the advantage that looking at a situation calmly is generally easier with someone else's child than one's own. An example. Children come to say 'no' early nowadays, and the question is if the defiance stage is already beginning. It is not easy to distinguish between powerful early expressions of will and the actual defiance stage, especially with a first child. When parents and children come together for work and play in the mornings, this offers plenty of opportunity to study these phenomena. One discovers that children in their second year are easily deflected from their 'no' and if guided with assurance will soon do as the adults ask again. A child of 3 or more does things differently. He'll know, for instance, that everyone is supposed to remain seated during breakfast, and want to establish if the grown-ups are serious about this. He'll first of all look if the grown-up is noticing that he intends to get up, then he'll turn his small chair around a little and then he's gone. He'll demonstrate success from a safe distance by shouting or stamping. His mother will ask him to come back, but get no reaction. It will only be when she gets up, takes him by the hand and back to his place – that is, when word and deed come together – that he'll accept the situation. Sometimes the defiance has a nuance which shows that anxiety and

uncertainty are also part of this phase. The children then need the comfort and protection of mum's loving arms, even if their outward behaviour says something different at the time.

Questions that live secretly in every child are: 'Does the grown-up mean what she says? Is she a true example?' It can be difficult for adults to have to interrupt their own breakfast all the time for a while, but this may be an investment that will pay off in the long run. It helps the child to develop his powers, something that will not happen if the adult just lets things slide. To have courage, to give the child clear reference points, to cope with difficult situations together – these are some things the mothers learn on those mornings and are later able to apply with greater awareness at home.

Before our breakfast, when the sewing things have been put aside and the room made tidy, everyone gathers for a 'little play and dance'. Simple finger games, riding on knees, and a song that suits the season, texts accompanied with living gestures let children enter into direct imitation with great enjoyment. Doing this together, mothers are given impulses which they can 'take home' with them. Eating together around the big table is also always a special experience, for with today's small families it is only seldom that so many sit around a table. The big bowl at the centre reminds of the tale of the 'sweet porridge', and one can come back for more as often as one wants, for the bowl is 'never empty'. Children who are not or no longer used to such a dish will sooner or later catch the habit of a good appetite from the others.

After breakfast everyone goes for a walk. The bigger children enjoy walking and running, the younger ones use it for a 'morning nap', and the mums for a talk.

In conclusion there's a table puppet play taking 5-7 minutes, with figures and stage kept very simple. Everyone says good-bye then, looking forward to meeting again the following week.

The morning ends at about 12 o'clock, and not everyone stays all the time. In spite of the children's young age, the period is long on purpose. Experience has shown that the rhythmical sequence of the morning, with play followed by breakfast, the walk and then the conclusion, has a beneficial influence on parents and children. Mothers are often surprised how easy the tidying-up process is when there are so many children, and how there's no problem, with children stopping play without complaint to come to the games session. From the educational point of view it is the



most intensive and convincing way of getting to know the health-giving quality of rhythm and repetition.

Another factor in determining the length of the parent-child meeting is that children are often greatly limited in their opportunities for movement today. Being in the group for an extended period, they have enough time to get to know the room and the people and then proceed with their own movement, actions and play.

Parents' evenings

On these evenings, parents consider their experiences and what they have learned in the parent-child sessions and also consider other educational issues. The evenings are held at regular intervals, with parents from several groups. Topics like 'My child won't ... What can I do?' or 'Obstacles in a mother's daily life' are much in demand, and there is a great need to talk and share views. Parents are also more than ready to consider less familiar subjects such as the 12 senses or how to celebrate religious festivals. It is very evident that young parents, especially the mothers, are far from looking at their children in a purely intellectual way. They are quite prepared to see the human being as an entity of body, soul and spirit. Subjects like these are listened to without critical looks or scepticism and no doubt live on in hearts and minds. The book table is certainly used a great deal. The evenings also serve, of course, to encourage and strengthen one another, reinforcing one's child-raising ideals especially in an age where these, and the essential nature of the child, are under attack from many directions. And it is important to realize that one is only at the beginning of a new situation in life that will need a long breath; for it will be many years before the children come of age.



Years of experience with this work show more and more clearly that women take up motherhood as a profession quite deliberately, although this still receives little recognition in society. The social contacts mothers and fathers seek and find in parent-child groups can develop into new human relationships which are similar to the family relationships of earlier times and can be continued on an individual basis outside the institutional set-up. These are the beginnings of new social communities where it is common for friends to help one another in the task of raising children.

Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten in Rheinfelden, Switzerland

Jacqueline Walter

Range of facilities, activities and projects for young children and their parents in and around our kindergarten are

- half-day kindergarten for children of c. 3½ - 7 years
- eurythmy therapy in the kindergarten
- play group with integrated eurythmy for children from c. 2½ years, once a week
- parent-child group for children who are mainly 0 - 4 years of age, with parents, once a month
- family-complementing child care in form of a large family
- parents' discussion group
- reading group
- sporadically also eurythmy for adults
speech formation
public puppet play performances
public talks and educational courses

Rudolf Steiner Play Group, Rheinfelden

Eurythmy for young children followed by a tea break and playtime, had been regularly available in the kindergarten rooms for 9 years. Then parents felt they would prefer a playgroup for their children that was not attended by parents. In response to this request, our playgroup for young children from age 2½ started in the summer of 1998. It is one afternoon a week and is run by a kindergarten teacher and our eurythmist together, so that elementary eurythmy for young children was integrated to prevent undue strain for the teachers.

Time table

- 2.30 p.m. Parents leave, free play, preparing tea
Sometimes a little bit of art work, e.g. drawing with wax crayons
- 3.15 p.m. Eurythmy
- 3.25 p.m. Tea
- 3.45 p.m. Free play, washing the dishes and tidying up
- 4.40 p.m. Simple table puppet play and rhythmical, musical hand gesture game, a song to finish.
- 4.55 p.m. Getting dressed for outdoors and saying goodbye.

14 children currently attend, 9 of whom will join the kindergarten in the summer of 2000. The children are familiar with the teachers and the premises, and the parents have already got to know each other and the teachers. This is a great help to everyone and has a positive effect on the children's play culture and their entering the kindergarten.

Parent-child group

Taking up an impulse from the conference held in October 1999 at the Goetheanum, the kindergarten has been offering a parent-child group for 1½ hours one afternoon a week from January 2000. This open group offers interested parents and their children (age 0 - 4, older siblings may also come along) opportunities to meet, share views, play, and also introduces parents to Rudolf Steiner education.

Whilst the children are playing, the adults are able to talk, discuss and do things together. Different materials are made available each time, inviting parents to make a small object for a child's hands or for the seasons-of-the-year chest.

Order of events

- free play, conversation, craft work
- sharing a little something for tea
- free play, conversation, craft work
- clearing up
- rhythmic and musical hand gesture and other games, children's rhymes, singing a cradle song (always using the simplest form of puppets) to conclude.

7 – 9 mothers and fathers are currently attending with their children. The meetings are run by the kindergarten teacher and a colleague (also Waldorf trained).

Family-complementing child care

Since January 2000, a Waldorf kindergarten teacher with two young children of her own is offering large-family style child care in her home, working closely together with the kindergarten. Two working mothers of kindergarten children are at present using the facility for three children.

The above-mentioned Waldorf kindergarten teacher has also been offering a parent group meeting from January 2000. The aim is to enable parents and teachers of children aged 0 – 7 years to meet and share views, working together on subjects relating to the raising of young children which they have chosen themselves. Practical work (e.g. producing something for the seasons-of-the-year chest), singing children's songs, etc.

At present four mothers meet on two evenings a month.

Our kindergarten, established in 1983, uses rented premises and only has a large group room and a separate cloak room available. This does limit our possibilities. Ideally we'd like to combine all our activities and the facilities we offer under one roof.

Nokken kindergarten in Copenhagen

Helle Heckmann

It is customary for children to spend their whole day in an institution in Denmark. When I was looking for a day centre for my own child I found that every time he'd fall ill and did not want to go to the centre any more. Why wasn't there a Waldorf day centre? I was told that children should be at home for the first three years. This did not meet the reality of life, however, and there was a demand, even for very young children.

I therefore decided to take the 3-year training in Copenhagen and started my own day centre – Nokken. My own children, aged between 6 months and 2 years were the first, with others soon joining them. The basic rule is that children first come when they are able to walk and they stay until they start school at age 7. A child needs his mother as a reference person whilst he is breastfeeding in his first year, until he is able to come upright and walk, when he can move away from her. The group functions like a sound large family, with no classification according to age. Brothers and sisters can thus stay together.

We had about 14 children in the first year. Now there are 26. Parents are expected to take the centre seriously. When they take their children to a centre they take them into a social environment, not a baby-sitting service. Parents need to be responsible and think not only of their own child but of all the children in the group. Nor can they come and go as they like. The children establish relationships amongst themselves; they cannot simply just come two days a week.



In the meantime there's a long waiting list and so we need selection criteria. What kind of child do we need in our kindergarten? A boy or a girl? A child from a problem family, a blue-collar or white-collar worker? Having selected a child we visit the home. We meet the parents in the evening, asking that the father be present. We talk to them about how the child came to them. What it 'planned', an 'accident', did they have to wait a long time? Parents usually like to talk about these things and are very open to questions. In thus meeting the parents we also learn how to relate to

them and about the child's position within the family. We also talk about the birth of the child and his or her development up to that time. It is also necessary to clarify how problems are to be dealt with. Cooperation must be assured. The children come from widely differing homes; single parents, alcoholics and drug addicts are also among the parents.

The centre is open daily from 8 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. The parents need to adapt to these times, not the other way round. The child is thus with us for 6 hours a day, with his own family for 6 hours a day, and has 12 hours in which to sleep. This is a definite statement and there is no discussion. Parents generally appreciate having a clear-cut situation.

Parents have to change their way of life so that they may collect their children at the right time; or they have to ask friends or grandparents to collect them. Grandparents thus share in family life, which is an advantage, with the children able to experience their nearness and love. For our centre, they are an important part of both family and society. The teacher always is the 'reception committee'. She shakes hands with everyone as they child is handed over, a sign of trust and responsibility. Family members are not admitted to the centre itself; they hand the child over at the door.

A special feature of Nokken is that the children spend most of their time, 5 or 6 hours a day, out of doors. They do not only play outside but also sleep outside, which is not very uncommon in Denmark.

The adults are always busy with their work. Thus the first thing we do every morning is the laundry. We also look after the animals together with the children. We have chickens which are fed on left-overs. This means we can give back something to the earth which we have received from it. This give and take is an important aspect throughout the year. In cities, too, we should do everything possible to bring the children close to nature.



Het Kleine Rijk day centre, Rotterdam

Christien Hellinga

An initiative group started in 1987 with the aim of establishing an anthroposophical day-care centre in Rotterdam. The occasion arose because a number of parents in the general practice of Dr Aart van der Stel were looking for a crèche run on anthroposophical principles. Initially, monthly meetings were held at which the basic educational principles were developed under the guidance of the physician.

We worked and planned for 7 years, twice asking the local authority for financial assistance, without success. A third attempt proved successful and we were finally able to start in Kipstraat, at the centre of Rotterdam. Much had to be organized – establishing a Foundation, getting permissions, making budgets, annual reports, work plans, determining parents' financial contributions and, last but not least, finding teachers. We wanted to have 3 groups of 12 children each within a few years in Kipstraat, which seemed to be a tall order.

The first children came to the crèche with their parents on 1 February 1994. The first day was one of tense expectation – would all these children come back the next day? Fortunately that proved to be the case.

Oral propaganda soon increased the number of children, and we started our second group in September that year. The third group started in April 1995, and Het Kleine Rijk was full. The waiting list kept growing, and in 1996 we were able to expand, having a 4th group in the same building.

A financial system which included automatic invoicing was set up. Such things must run properly, for only then does one have sufficient time to give the right care to non-material things.

Meanwhile we have a second centre in Parklaan, which is also at the centre of Rotterdam. The total number of groups is now six. 120 children come to us every day, and new ones have their names put down almost every day.

Parents who are interested are first of all given a brochure which also includes an application form. Applications can also be made over our own homepage on the internet. Then comes an admission interview. 90 places are funded by the parents' employers, 30 have some financial support from the city; these are parents who cannot manage to pay or want to study.

Young parents often do not know what anthroposophy is. It is usually the atmosphere at Het Kleine Rijk that appeals to them. But they gradually also take an interest in the background and make enquiries about what are called 'independent' schools.

The groups at Het Kleine Rijk are vertical, i.e. four babies, four toddlers and four young children per group. The ages of group leaders also range. Preferably one who is over forty per group, one who is about 30 and one who is very young, about 20. There is also room for a trainee doing her practical work. These students often gain a permanent position with us later on.

We are out of doors with the children every day, irrespective of the weather. In Kipstraat we have a large roof terrace with large planters, sandbox, wheelbarrows and so on. In Parklaan the garden is rather small, but there's a large park nearby where we can go for walks.

We are always pleased to see visitors in Rotterdam.

Awhina Day Nursery and Kindergarten Havelock North, New Zealand

Bernadette Raichle

The Day Nursery and Kindergarten were established 4 years ago, just 10 minutes from Hastings Rudolf Steiner School. Having worked as a kindergarten teacher for 10 years, I felt there was need for a new approach in the care of young children.

Awhina offers whole-day and part-time care for infants from the age of 6 months. After just 12 months we had a waiting list which continues to grow. We talk daily to the parents and provide a monthly newsletter and parent workshops on subjects like annual festivals, parenting, doll-making, and so on. Awhina has a large garden where herbs, vegetables and fruit are grown by the biodynamic method. A family of bantams are most marvellously cared for and looked after by the children and provide eggs we use in baking.

Awhina is accommodated in a large house, with play room, kitchen and dining room, art room, a bathroom, office, nursery and entrance hall. In response to consistently great demand, a second Awhina opened in Havelock on 11 October 1999. Our motto: 'Look after the child, and you nourish the family' speaks for itself. We like to create a protective space around today's family, taking their part and above all supporting modern women in their different roles and tasks.

Pressure created by society but also by people themselves means increasing stress on modern families. Awhina uses a model based on anthroposophically orientated comprehensive care for young children and their families.

The second Awhina is also accommodated in a large house with a beautiful garden. From now on courses given for parents will also provide for mothers who stay at home with their young children and their role as housewives in the present age.

Awhina has the services of an anthroposophically orientated mother/child nurse and an osteopath. Members of the team have had different forms of training in the care of young children. All permanent staff have a connection with anthroposophy. We have grandmothers who come once a week, and students who do their practical work with us. We'd be happy to have students from Europe; practical work should be for a period of 3 - 6 months.

Awhina has government recognition, a licence, and government support, like all kindergartens and schools in New Zealand. The remaining costs are met by parents' contributions.

F. Tasks now and for the future

Worldwide initiative for early childhood care

Describing the task, mode of working, and current situation of the group

The international group for early childhood care opened up at the Dornach conference and found new active members. The new group includes more countries and spheres of work. It met in Berlin in January 2000, when it set itself the following tasks and established its modes of working. What follows is essential an extract from the minutes of that meeting.

The group feels responsible for the whole sphere of work connected with young children up to 3 years of age. This covers education, therapy, family education (social work), medicine and nursing. Out task is to do research and deepen quality aspects, collecting and processing experiences. We also intend to disseminate and publish the work done on these subjects. We hope to collaborate with one another in the different areas and also with the organizations that 'surround' us, e.g. the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association, the Medical Section at the Goetheanum, and the anthroposophical curative education association.

The group will be progressively more interdisciplinary and international as it develops, to meet the different needs of young children and their families in the best possible way in many countries.

At the meeting in January 2000 we made a list of projects relating to the direct and indirect needs of young children for healthy development in body, soul and spirit. The list includes projects where work is already in progress and others where it will be needed. We have divided the work into 8 fields. Some of these overlap or complement one another.

List of projects

(Figures refer to the 8 subject areas)

- daytime care (sick child) 2, 5
- early intervention 3, 5
- play groups 2, 3
- crawler centres 1, 2, 3
- parent-child work 1, 3
- young children – courses on offer 1
- cradle centres 2, 3
- kindergarten with good age mixture (1 – 7 years) 1
- shuttle service 4
- 24 h care 2, 3
- weekend care 2, 3
- public relations, publications, bazaars 4
- coaching (education vouchers for parents) 1, 3, 4
- parent counsellors 1, 3
- training for play and crawler group leaders 3
- parent-child holidays/leisure time 1, 2, 3
- counselling on separation and conflict 3, 5
- courses for fathers 1, 3, 5
- work with parents (theory and practice) 1, 3
- self help groups 1, 4, 5
- medical advice / health services 3, 5
- ethics 3, 6
- curative education for young children / crèches 2, 3

Questions we shall have to consider

- In which areas has development progressed well already independently of our initiative?
- What can then be taken up and deepened by us to good purpose?
- What form of organization should work in this fields have?
- Who may be invited to join in this area?
- Where is plenty of experience available and where is there lack of experience, etc.

The eight fields of work

1 Family education

Claudia Grah-Wittich, Christel Knodt, Probably also Brigitte Husinger, Petra Thal and Ursula Middelkamp. Petra Thal takes the mandate of the group.

2 Work with the children

Gabriele Claus, Angelika Knabe who will probably take the mandate.

3 Training and further training

Stefan Krauch takes the mandates. Others are Petra Thal, Angelika Knabe, Ina von Mackensen, Claudia Grah-Wittich, Zilla M. Pedersen Margrid Leinweber, Aniela Bockemühl, perhaps others as well.

4 Public relations

The mandate question will be taken care of by Michaela Glöckler. Contacts will be made with Felicitas Vogt and Joan Almon, perhaps also Hanne Looij (for the Dutch language area) and Irmgard Molina. Karsten Bauer may do some of the office work.

5 Therapies

Aniela Bockemühl takes the mandate. Others are Margrid Leinweber, Stefan Krauch, Claudia Grah-Wittich, Michaela Glöckler, probably also Martin Kliewer.

6 Research

Mandate question still unresolved. Helle Heckmann probably, perhaps also Angelika Dahmen. Edmund Schoerl, Machteld Huber, Christoph Meineke, Joan Almon, Susan Howard.

7 Quality development

Claudia Grah-Wittich takes the mandate. Others are Angelika Knabe, Helle Heckmann, Ina von Mackensen, Irmgard Molina, Janet Klaar.

8 International coordination

Helle Heckmann takes the mandate. This comes naturally, as her work has international orientation. The aim is to have at least one coordination centre in each country which will then be in contact with the international coordination centre. Also Zilla Morch Pedersen, Hanne Looij, Christel Knodt, Janet Klaar.

The group feels responsible for all 8 fields.

Individual projects will however be considered in small, specialized groups. Each field has a contact person, the coordinator, who takes the mandate for the field for a year. To some extent others will also serve as contact persons for individual small groups. The task of the group will be to bring the individual projects together in an overall picture again. This should happen after about one year. The results will then be brought together in the plenum and considered by the large group.

The responsibilities of the 8 coordinators (people who have the mandates) are to be the contact persons for their fields, maintain communications within the group and formally with the International Association and the Medical Section, issue invitations to meetings, and initiate and maintain the

work within the field. It is hoped that they will have established contact as far as possible within their field by Whitsun 2000 and that agreement will have been reached then how people will work together in the field.

The original initiative group (of IVW international group for early childhood care) has merged with the new group. The aim is to work on the newly formulated themes under the aegis of the International Waldorf Kindergarten Association and in collaboration with the Medical Section.

Considering the dimensions in which provision of care for young children outside the family home exists in many countries today, we may say that a new field is opening up in education, and much development work is needed. The International Waldorf Kindergarten Association supports this field of work, among other things by making a secretary in the Stuttgart office available.

A change in the statutes to be asked for at the Whitsun 2000 conference in Hanover concerns changing our name to International Waldorf Kindergarten and Early Childhood Care Association (reg. charity). This will clearly register the fact that the work now also covers work with the very young, up to the age of 3.

Training is a major issue today. The younger the child in the educational where, the fewer qualified people and qualified training facilities are available, also on the basis of Waldorf education.

We must succeed in 2000 in contacting and listing all establishments in the world where work is done with very young children, crèches, parent-child facilities, and so on. For the time being this work will continue to be done at the Medical Section. Please let them know of all establishments for young children that were not listed during the 1999 Dignity of the Young Child conference in Dornach.

In principle, the size of the group will be limited to 25. Some people will still be joining it.

In future the main group will meet once a year in different locations (countries).

A central theme or question will always be considered at our meetings. It will be made known beforehand. The meeting serves to share information and experiences, bringing all fields together. Decisions are made in the main group, which also sets the tasks for the following year. The project groups meet in between times, making their own arrangements. In the long term, it is hoped every country will have its own coordinator who knows all the institutions and training centres. In larger areas this may be on a regional basis. The aim is to have a transparent, differentiated information network to maintain contacts and share addresses.

Conferences in 2000 and 2001

IVW Whitsun 2000 Conference in Hanover

Speakers include Helle Heckmann, Angelika Knabe, Petra Thal, Michaela Glöckler and Aniela Bockemühl.

Congress in Brussels on 11 - 14 October 2000

Our group has made a number of offers to the organizers. Public relations work in Brussels: Our group is to have an information stand, with furnishings, photographs, prospectuses, etc.

Next big early childhood conference in Dornach on 30 September - 3 October 2001

The following have offered to help in preparing for the conference:

Michaela Glöckler, Hanne Looij (programme/contacts in NL, PR in Holland and Belgium); Ina von Mackensen and Irmgard Molina, Claudia Grah-Wittich and Stefan Krauch, Angelika Knabe and perhaps also Gabriele Claus.

Dates

Individual project groups will meet to work on their own subjects this year.

The next main group meeting will be in England on 2 - 4 February 2001.

Berlin, 7 April 2000

For the Group, Ina v. Mackensen

G. Appendices

Bibliography

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 - Suse König: *Singspiele und Reime für altersgemischte Gruppen.*
 - *Rhythmen und Reime.*
 - Freya Jaffke: *Tanz und singt! Rhythmische Spiele im Jahreslauf.*
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- Brunhild Müller: *Bilderbücher mit beweglichen Figuren*. Anregungen und Anleitungen zum Selbermachen.
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(Publishers in Great Britain: Hawthorn Press, Floris, Rudolf Steiner Press, Gaia Books; Publishers in USA: Celestial Arts.)

Baldwin: *You are your child's first teacher*. Celestial Arts, Berkeley, California.

Carey / Large: *Festivals Family and Food*. Hawthorn Press.

Cooper / Clinton / Rowling: *The Children's Year*. Hawthorn Press.

Coplen, Dotty: *Parenting for a Healthy Future*. Hawthorn Press.

Drake, Stanley: *The Path to Birth*. Floris.

Fitzjohn / Weston / Large: *Festivals Together*. Hawthorn Press.

Goebel, Wolfgang / Glöckler, Michaela: *A Guide to Child Health*. Floris.

Haller, Ingeborg: *How Children Play*. Floris.

König, Karl: *The First Three Years of the Child*. Floris.
– *Brothers and Sisters*. Floris.

Large, Martin: *Who is bringing them up?* Hawthorn Press.

Salter, Joan: *The Incarnating Child*. Hawthorn Press.

Strauss, Michaela: *Understanding Children's Drawing*. Rudolf Steiner Press.

Thompson, John: *Natural Childhood*. Gaia Books, London.

Should it be wished these books and more can be obtained through

Elmfield School Bookshop
Love Lane
Stourbridge
West Midlands DY8 2EA
England

Telephone +44 1384 394633
Fax +44 1384 393608
e-mail: ElmfieldSteinerSchool@compuserve.com

List of Institutions

Deutschland

Ort	Einrichtung	Art der Kleinkinderarbeit	Verantwortlich	Was fehlt uns?
Albbruck	Kindergarten Sonnenblume Alte Landstr. 55 79774 Albbruck	Mutter-Kind-Gruppe 16 Monate – 3 Jahre	Anja Grimbichler	
Aschaffenburg	Tagespflegestube Schweinheimer Str. 72 63743 Aschaffenburg Tel. 06021 960390	Tagespflegestube	Bettina Schwind	Zuschüsse zur Finanzierung von Mitarbeitern; Erweiterung der Räumlichkeiten
Bamberg	Waldorfkindergarten Bamberg	Spielgruppe Kindergartengruppen	Annerose Neuwirth	
Benefeld	Waldorfkindergarten Cordinger Str. 35 Benefeld Tel. 5161 4217	Spielkreis	Christine Neubauer	
Biberach	Waldorfkindergarten 88400 Biberach	Eltern-Kind-Gruppe 2 – 4 Jahre	Susanne Schraivogel	
Berlin	Elterninitiative für Waldorfpädagogik Berlin-Schöneberg Kindertagesstätte Forum Kreuzberg e.V. Eisenbahnstr. 21 10997 Berlin Waldorfkindergarten Kreuzberg e.V. Alte Jacob Str. Berlth-Kreuzberg Waldorfkindergarten Prenzlauer Berg e.V. Lychenerstr. 66 10437 Berlin	2 Kindergartengruppen Hort Schülerladen 1 Kleinkindgruppe 1x pro Woche Eltern- Kind-Kreis Kleinkindgruppe 4 Kindergartengruppen Kleinkindgruppe 1 ½ - 3 Jahre 3 Gruppen 3 – 7 Jahre	Ariane Fedtke Christine Kaune Claudia Brix Stefanie Blume Ina von Mackensen	Anthroposophisch arbeitende Tages- mütter Elterngespräche; Heilpädagogie/ Therapeut zur Früherkennung und Unterstützung in den großen Kin- dergärten Professionelle Hilfe bei Eltern- und Kollegiumsarbeit; bessere Integration der Kleinkind- gruppe im Kiga; Material zur Förde- rung des Bewe- gungs- und Gleich- gewichtsinns Beratung, Austausch, Infor- mation für Eltern mit Kindern 0-3 J.
Bremen	Waldorfkindergarten Bremen-Nord Grohner Bergstr. 17 28759 Bremen Tel. 0421 629298	2 Spielkreise 3 – 4 Jahre 3 Kindergartengruppen	Johanna Lütt	
Chemnitz	Waldorfkindergarten Chemnitz Katharinenstr. 3a 09119 Chemnitz	1 Kleinkindgruppe 1 – 3 Jahre 2 Kindergartengruppen	Kathleen Riessig	
Dietzenbach	Waldorfkindergarten An der Vogelhecke 1	3 Kindergartengruppen 4 Spielgruppen	Teresa Beckermann	

	63128 Dietzenbach Tel. 06074 4009430	1 ½ – 3 ½ Jahre		
Dortmund	Waldorfbildungswerk e.V. Mergelteichstr. 45 44225 Dortmund Tel. 0231 777316	4 Eltern-Kind-Gruppen Kleinstkindgruppe Stillgruppe „Stillcafé“ Schwangerschafts-gymnastik Elternarbeitskreis mit pädagogischen Themen Seminar zur Leitung einer Spielgruppe Seminar zur Leitung einer Wiegegruppe	Ursula Middelkamp	Tagesbetreuung; Begegnungsstätte Für Eltern; Ausbil- dung für Eltern- partner, Eltern- berater
Dresden	Waldorfkindergarten Heideparkstr. 6 Dresden	Kleinkindgruppe 2 – 5 Jahre 2 Gruppen 3 – 7 Jahre	Kerstin Lohse	
	Waldorfkindergarten Radebeul	Kleinkindertagesgruppe 2 Kindergartengruppen Eltern-Erzieher-Lesekreis zum kleinen Kind	Gabriele Claus Claudia Süs	
Emmendingen	Waldorfkindergarten Wiesenstr. 72 79312 Emmendingen	Spielgruppe 2 – 3 Jahre	Mareike Ohlms	
Engen	Waldorfkindergarten Goethestr. 4 78234 Engen	2 Kindergartengruppen	Andrea Böhner- Schmidt	Schwierigkeiten, Gruppen zu füllen; evtl. Krabbelgruppe
Eschwege	Waldorfkindergarten Bahnhofplatz 2 37269 Eschwege	4 Eltern-Kind-Gruppen 1 – 4 Jahre Eltern-Kind-Gruppe 0 – 1 ½ Jahre Stillgruppe 2 Kindergartengruppen Öffentlichkeitsarbeit Elternarbeit	Hella Blum Martina Zindel	
Esslingen	Waldorfkindergarten 73728 Esslingen	2 Mutter-Vater-Kind-Gruppen	Margarete Fichter	Kleinkindbetreu- ung, Elternseminar
Fellbach	Förderkreis Waldorf- pädagogik Fellbach e.V. Wernerstr. 39 70736 Fellbach Tel. 0711 5766 142	4 Krabbel- und Spielgruppen	Gaby Derrez Waltraut Maier	
Filderstadt	Müttergespräche, Elternberatung in der Filderklinik Ebene 4 Unterrichts- Filderstadt Tel. 0711 77036121 Filderklinik Station 1/3 Im Haberschlag 9 70794 Filderstadt Tel. 0711 77031350	Müttergespräche: Information, Beratung, Austausch für Schwangere, Eltern und Pflegende Praktische Abende Behandlung chronischer Erkrankungen wie Epi- lepsie, Neurodermitis, Essstörungen, Begleitung sterbender Kinder Stationäre Betreuung von max. 6 Kindern mit einem Elternteil, Individuelles Thera- pieprogramm wie Heil- eurythmie,	Inge Heine Wolfgang Gerber Fatemeh Jacobi	

	Waldorfkindergarten 70794 Filderstadt	rhythmische Massage, äußere Anwendungen 2 Mutter-Kind-Gruppen 3 Kindergartengruppen	Susanne Knebel	
Frankfurt/Main	Freie Bildungsstätte „der Hof“ Alt-Niederursel 51 60439 Frankfurt Tel. 069 57 50 78	-Geburtsvorbereitung Stillgruppe Kinderstube: Krabbelgruppen als Eltern-Kindergruppen, „Lass mir Zeit ...“, Kinderfrühstück, „Bei jedem Wetter raus“ Gesprächsrunden zu Erziehungsfragen Elternwoche Fortbildung „Eltern beraten“ Ganztags- Kindergartengruppe Frühförderung „Haus des Kindes“	Carla Andereya Brigitte Huisinga Claudia Grah- Wittich Marianne Tschan Stefan Krauch	Wiegestube Tagesmütter-Fort- bildung Überregionale Zusammenarbeit
Freiburg	Spielgruppe Tautropfen Engelbergstr. 47 79106 Freiburg Kindergarten Im Vauban Rahel um Hagenstr. 23 79100 Freiburg Kinderkrippe St. Georgen Innsbruckerstr. 58 79111 Freiburg Spielgruppe Wildtal Vorstädleweg 3 79194 Freiburg-Wildtal	Spielgruppe 2 – 3 Jahre Spielgruppe 2 – 3 Jahre Spielgruppe 2 – 4 Jahre Spielgruppe 2 – 3 Jahre	Ursula Novak- Sticht Kerstin Bondjenah Gismara Idler Margot Hammann	Zuschüsse zur Finanzierung von Mitarbeitern, größere Räum- lichkeiten Zuschüsse zur Finanzierung der Mitarbeiter
Friedrichshafen	Waldorfkindergarten Ailingenstr. 38/1 88046 Friedrichshafen	Spielgruppe 2 ½ - 4 Jahre Stillgruppe		Mutter-Vater-Kind- Gruppe
Geldern	Waldorfkindergarten Geldern	2 Spielgruppen Eltern-Kind-Gruppe	Ute Krapohl- Leppers	
Gera	Freier Waldorfkindergarten Gera Rathenastr. 14 07548 Gera Tel. 0365 810914	Kleinkindgruppe 1 – 3 Jahre	Steffi Röder Bärbel Haubenreisser	
Gernsbach	Waldorfkindergarten „Murgtärer Wichtel“ Hepplerstr.4 76593-Gernsbach	Ab Januar 2000 Kleinkindgruppe ab 2 Jahren	Sonja Hucher	
Göttingen	Waldorfkindergarten Stargarder Weg Göttingen	Eltern-Kind-Gruppen	G. Harjes, W. Hempel	Es fehlen Elterngesprächskreise, Mitarbeiter zur vorübergehenden Begleitung in d. Familien

	Michael-Kindergarten Weende Waldorfkindergarten Bovenden	Eltern-Kind-Gruppen Eltern-Kind-Gruppen	G. Nawabi G. Auerbach W. Hempel	
Gottmadingen	Waldorfkindergarten Morgenstern Nelkenstr. 17 78244 Gottmadingen Tel. 07731 71616	Mutter-Kind-Gruppe Kindergartengruppe	Anne Marie Ruhl	Öffentlichkeitsarbeit
Halle	Waldorfkindergarten Lauchstädter Str. 28 06110 Halle	Kleinkindgruppe 2 - 3 ½ Jahre 2 altersgemischte Kindergartengruppen	Dorit Dressler	Kinderharfe
Hamm	Waldorfhaus Hamm Hesslerstr. 59065 Hamm	Kleine altersgemischte Gruppe 1 - 6 Jahre Spielkreis 1 ½ -3 Jahre 2 Kindergartengruppen Tagesstätte 3 - 6 Jahre		Geplant: Krabbelgruppe für Eltern mit Kindern 0 - 2 Jahre
Hannover	Freier Waldorfkindergarten Michael Hannover Döhren Waldorfkindergarten-Seminar Rudolf von Benningsen Ufer 70 b 30171 Hannover Tel. 0511 884033 Elternseminar Hannover Rudolf von Benningsen Ufer 70 c 30171 Hannover Waldorfkindergarten Celle und Hannover Alt Buchholz Podbie 374 Hannover Tel. 0511 649355	Eltern-Kind-Gruppe 1 - 3 ½ Jahre Tagesmütterausbildung Fachseminar für frühkindliche Erziehung 6 Mutter-Kind-Gruppen 1 ½ - 3 Jahre Gesprächsgruppen Künstlerische Kurse 2 x jährlich Vorträge Elterngespräche Feste feiern mit Kindern Puppenspiele	Frauke Zücker Elke Runge Cosima Heidrich Marion Schade	Krabbelgruppe Gruppe 0 - 7 Jahre
Hamburg	Waldorfkindergarten Bergedorf Hamburg	Mutter-Kind-Gruppen Spielgruppe	Hildegard Harries Angela Meylahn	Bessere Elternbetreuung; Krippengruppe
Heidelberg	Kindertagesstätte Freie Waldorfschule Mittelgewannweg 16 69123 Heidelberg Tel. 06221 820123	3 Vormittagsgruppen 3 Nachmittagsgruppen Mittagessen Elternabende/-frühstück Sprechstunden Hausbesuche Erziehungsberatung	Doris Weidenhammer	Betreuungsmöglichkeiten für Kinder unter 3 Jahren
Heiligenberg	Heimonderschule Föhrenbühl 88633 Heiligenberg-Steigen	Integrierter Kindergarten Beginnende Frühförderung	Gabriele Scholz	
Holzkirchen	Waldorfkindergarten Holzkirchen/Bayern	Mutter-Kind-Gruppe 2 Spielgruppen		

Immenstadt	Praxis für ganzheitliche Krankengymnastik/ Physiotherapie Risthof/Ratholz 2 87509 Immenstadt Tel. 08325 9751	Bobath Säuglings- und Entwicklungsgymnastik Psychomotorik Sensorische Integration Haltungsturnen Hippotherapie	Maria Rist Elke Häussler	Anthropo- sophischer Kinder- arzt
Kassel	Rudolf Steiner Institut für Sozialpädagogik Kassel e.V. 34131 Kassel Tel. 0561 9308830	Fortbildungen für Erzieher und Heilpädagogen Vorträge und Seminare über Sinnesentfaltung, Pflege, Bewegungs- entwicklung, Auffälligkeiten	Almuth Voges	
Künzell	Waldorfkindergarten Loheland 36093 Künzell Tel. 0661 32923	Spielgruppe 3 – 4 Jahre 2 Kindergartengruppen	Anna Halbig	
Künzelsau	Waldorfkindergarten Jahnstrasse 7 74653 Künzelsau	Mutter-Kind-Gruppe Elternabende	Heidrun Kux	Intensivierung der Elternarbeit, u.a. im künstlerischen Bereich
Lemgo	Waldorfkindergarten Sterntaler Liebigstr. 140 32657 Lemgo Tel. 05261 7444	Kleine altersgemischte Gruppe Regelgruppe Tagesstättengruppe	R. Terborg B. Brand-Dersen	
Lübeck	Die Wiege Lübeck Tel. 0451 6112242/ 606532 Christophorus-Kindergarten Jürgen- Wullenweverstr. 3 23566 Lübeck	Schwangerschaftsvorsorge Haus- und Praxisgeburten Stillberatung Säuglingspflege Elternberatung Elterntreff mit Kleinstkindern Mutter-Kind-Gruppen 3 Gruppen 4 – 7 Jahren 2 Mutter-Kind-Gruppen 3 – 4 Jahre	Gertraud Hering Erika Radszat	Mutter-Kind-Gruppen; Elternarbeit mit den Eltern von Kleinstkindern
Lüneburg	Waldorfkindergarten Walter-Bötcher-Str. 4 21337 Lüneburg Tel. 04131 861019	Eltern-Kind-Kreis 1 – 3 Jahre Spielkreis 2 – 3 Jahre	Beate Pliester	
Mannheim	Freizeitschule Neckarauer Waldweg 145 68199 Mannheim Tel. 621 856766 Rosengärtchen Neckarauer Waldweg 131 68199 Mannheim Tel. 06236 39253	Kursangebot: Schwangerschaft, erste Lebensjahre, Erziehungsfragen, christliche Jahresfeste, Märchen, Gesprächskreise Waldorfpädagogik, Familien- beratung, Tagesmütter: Qualifizierung, Beratung, Vermittlung Gruppe mit 2 ½ -4-Jährigen	Henriette Net	

Marbach	„der Raum“ Bewegung und Kultur Wiesbadener Platz 6 71672 Marbach Tel. 07144 18120	Krabbel-/Spielgruppe Therapeutische Einzelarbeit	Dorothea Steidl-v. Andrian	
Marburg	Waldorfkindergarten Waldorfschule Marburg	4 Kindergartengruppen Ganztagesplätze Elternarbeit für Eltern mit Kindern unter 3 Jahren	Christiane Pfitzenmaier	Ausbau der Eltern- arbeit für Eltern mit Kleinskindern
Meppen	Waldorfkindergarten Feldkamp 9 49716 Meppen	2 Spielgruppen 2 ½ - 4 Jahre	Elke Tecklenburg	Gute Form und gu- tes Maß für Eltern- abende; Evtl. Wie- gestube
Neusäss	Kindergarten Neusäss Hammeler-Landstr. 24 86356 Neusäss Spielgruppe 3 – 4 Jahre	2 Mutter-Kind-Gruppen 1 – 3 Jahre Kindergartengruppe Geplant: Stillgruppe ab Winter		
Neustadt/ Weinstraße	Spielgruppe Christine Bauer Karolinenstrasse 25 67434 Neustadt/ Weinstrasse Tel. 06321 33189	Mutter-Kind-Gruppe 0 – 4 Jahre Elternabende Heilpädagogische Förderung	Christine Bauer	
Oldenburg	Waldorfkindergarten e.V. Schützenweg 25a 26129 Oldenburg Tel. 0441 75550 Harfe e.V. Frühförderung und Elternberatung Schulweg 51 26121 Oldenburg Tel. 0441 8850303 Waldorfkindergarten „Sonnenweg“ Huck bei Oldenburg	Eltern-Kind-Gruppe 2 – 3 Jahre Heilpädagogische Früh- förderung für Säuglinge, Kleinkinder und Vorschul- kinder Elternarbeit, Elternberatung Kunsttherapie Eltern-Kind-Gruppe ab 2 Jahre 2 Spielgruppen Kindergartengruppe	Bettina Pietsch Rita Bauer Gisela Gabriel Andrea Hufeland Dagmar Weiss	Geplant: Begegnungszeit für Eltern mit Kleinst- Kindern; Themenab- ende; Einzelgesprä- che Integrativ arbeiten- de Kinderkrippe für Kinder mit El- tern, die Probleme mit der Lebensbe- wältigung haben
Prien	Waldorfkindergarten Prien/Bayern	Spielgruppe		
Ravensburg	Waldorfkindergarten Königin-Katharinenstr. 88213 Ravensburg	Kleingruppe 3 – 4 Jahre Mutter-Kind-Gruppen 2 Kindergartengruppen	Helga Farian	
Rosenheim	Waldorfkindergarten Rosenheim/Bayern	Mutter-Kind-Gruppe 2 – 4 Jahre	Astrid Haimerl	
Schopfheim	Kindergarten Auenland Schopfheim-Fahrnau	Spielgruppe	Corinna Boettger	Mehr Räume, Elternschule
Schwäbisch- Gmünd	Waldorfkindergarten Schwäbisch-Gmünd	2 Mutter-Kind-Gruppen Elternsprechabende Elternabende	Elvira Rosenberger Sylvia Sommer	
Schwerin	Waldorfkindergarten Hauptstr. 13 19055 Schwerin	Kleinkindgruppe 1 – 3 Jahre 2 Kindergartengruppen	Ines Baustian	

Siegen	Integrierte Kindertagesstätte Rosengarten Kilchweg 12 57074 Siegen Tel. 0271 554455	Altersgemischte Gruppe Insgesamt 4 Gruppen, davon 1 Hortgruppe	Rosemarie Zimmermann	
Staufen	Spielgruppe Wettel St. Vitusstr. 3b 79219 Staufen	Spielgruppe 2 – 3 Jahre	Pia Morshäuser	Intensiverer Austausch mit anderen Spielgruppen; Zuschüsse zur Finanzierung der Mitarbeiter
Stuttgart	Kindergarten der Freien Waldorfschule Am Kräherwald Rudolf-Steiner-Weg 70192 Stuttgart Waldorfkindergarten Kaltental Waldorfkindergarten Sillenbuch Himbeerweg 19 70619 Stuttgart Waldorfkindergarten Kremmlerstr. 1 A Stuttgart Fundevogel e.V. Verein zur Frühförderung Seelenpflegebedürftiger Kinder auf anthroposophischer Grundlage e.V. Heubergstr. 15 70188 Stuttgart Tel. 07142 61322/343249 Häusliche Kinderkrankenpflege e.V. Teichstrasse 7 70186 Stuttgart Tel. 0711 486153	4 Kindergartengruppen Ab Oktober voraussichtlich Familiengruppe 1 – 6 Jahre Spielgruppe 2 – 3 Jahre Mutter-Kind-Gruppe 2 Kindergartengruppen Ganztagsgruppe Hort 3 Mutter-Vater-Kind-Gruppen 4 Kindergartengruppen Elternarbeit Altersgemischte Kleinkindgruppe Familienorientierte Kleingruppe 4 Kindergartengruppen Mittagstisch Kleinkindeurythmie Frühförderung Elternberatung Sensomotorische Schulung Rhythmisch-sprachlich-musikalische Förderung Spezielle Therapien Betreuung nach Krankenhausaufenthalt/operativen Eingriffen Pflege von Neugeborenen/ Risikokindern Säuglingspflege	Monika Wagner Ksenja Samide Barbara Eisenblätter Birgit Meyer Petra Neisse Astrid Schmidt Frau Holbein, Heilpädagogin Frau Huss, Heileurythmistin Frau Schwarz, Sozialpädagogin Carola Edelmann	
Sulzburg	Spielgruppe Sulzburg Bahnhofplatz 3 79295 Sulzburg	Spielgruppe 2-3 Jahre in Privatwohnung Mittagstisch	Anne-Katrin Persicke	Intensiverer Austausch mit anderen Spielgruppen; Zuschüsse zur Finanzierung der Mitarbeiter
Trier	Elternschule der Freien Waldorfschule und Kindergarten Trier Montessoriweg 7 54296 Trier	Eltern-Kind-Gruppen Elternabende Eurythmie Elterngespräche	Christel Knodt	Eingliederung ins Kindergarten-Kollegium; Klärung finanzieller Fragen; Geburtsvorbereitung / Stillgruppe

Überlingen	Heimsonderschule Brachenreuthe 88662 Überlingen Kleinkindertagesstätte „Goldbachhaus“ Goldbach 29 88662 Überlingen 07551 970223	Frühförderung (sonderpädagogische Beratungsstelle) Integrierter Kindergarten Gruppe ½ - 4 Jahre Mittagstisch	Angela Walz Christine Rose	Tüchtige Kinder- gärtnerin Austausch mit anderen Gruppen, auch über Ad- ministratives; evtl. Gründung Wiegestube (Infor- mation fehlt); Bera- tung vom Initiativ- kreis für das Klein- kind
	Waldorfkindergarten Rengoldhauserstrasse 88662 Überlingen	Gemischte Kleinkind- gruppe 2 – 4 Jahre		
Ulm	Kindergarten der Freien Waldorfschule Römerstrasse 97 Ulm	2 Krabbelgruppen 2 Spielgruppen 4 Kindergartengruppen	Ingrid Pössett	Evtl. altersge- mischte Gruppe oder Kleinkind- gruppe für 1–3-Jäh- rige
	Kindergarten der Waldorfschule Am Illerblick Ulm	Gruppe für 1 – 3-Jährige ab 2000 3 Kindergartengruppen	Susanne Glöckle	
	Waldorfkindergarten Römerstrasse Ulm	Eltern-Kind-Gruppe Krabbelstube	Susanna Gelli	
Vaihingen	Waldorfkindergarten 71665 Vaihingen/Enz	Spielgruppe 2 – 4 Jahre 3 Kindergartengruppen Elternschule „Erziehung im Gespräch“	Karin Raith- Kintner Martina Maurer	Neue Räume als „Haus“ für Kinder- gartenkinder und Kleinkinder
Waldsee	„Sonne und Erde“ Akazienstr. 7 67165 Waldsee 06236 51938	Eltern-Kind-Wald- Spielgruppen (1 – 4 Jahre) Spielstube für Kinder mit Eltern (0 – 1 Jahr) Pädagogische Werkstatt für Eltern	Jutta Schröder	
Weimar	Waldorfkindergarten Weimar Gutenbergstr. 1a 99423 Weimar Tel./Fax 03643-901918	Kleinkindgruppe 2 – 4 Jahre 5 Gruppen 2 – 7 Jahre, davon zwei Gruppen mit Integration Elternabend, Elternberatung	Angelika Knabe	Anthroposophisch orientierte Hebame für Schwangers- chaftsvorsorge und Säuglingspfle- ge, Heilpädagoge für Einzelförderung
Weinheim	Waldorfkindergarten 69469 Weinheim	Mutter-Kind-Kreis	Sabine Bamberger	
Witten	Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten Witten e.V. Helfkamp 14 58454 Witten Tel. 02302/48169	2 Kindergartengruppen für 3-7-Jährige Bald kleine alters- gemischte Gruppe (4 Mte. – 7 J.)	Petra Weiss	Kontakte zu beste- henden Einrichtun- gen in der Umge- bung von Witten (Austausch)
	Rudolf Steiner Kinder- garten Witten e.V.	Kindergartengruppe	Marita Menküe	Mutter-Kind-Gruppe (Nachfrage groß)

	Gerdessstr. 23 58454 Witten Tel. 02302 48096			
Witzenhausen	Waldorfkindergarten Am Nordbahnhof 2 37213 Witzenhausen Tel. 05542 999 550	Integrierende altersgemischte Gruppe in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Jugendamt Witzenhausen Kindertagesgruppe	Judith Pilz	Zusätzliche Erzieherin oder Heilpädagogin
Wolfsburg	Waldorfkindergarten Masurenweg 9 38444 Wolfsburg	Eltern-Kind-Gruppe Spielgruppe 2 ½ - 5 Jahre Elternabende		
Wuppertal	Waldorfhäus e.V. Friedrich Wilhelm Str. 7 42285 Wuppertal Tel. 0202 80169	Spielgruppe 2 - 3 Jahre Gesprächskreis für Eltern Kindertagesgruppe 3 - 6 J. Altersgemischte Gruppe 3 - 14 Jahre	Birgit Berrisch Irene Stöber	Dreigruppige Einrichtung mit Gruppe 0-3 Jahre oder Aufnahme von 0-3 Jährigen; Elternberatung

Dänemark

Kopenhagen	Nokken Stövnaes Allé 41 2400 Kopenhagen NV Rudolf Steiner Børnehaven Kongensvej 2000 Frederiksberg Spiren Bispebjerg Bakke 8 2400 Kopenhagen NV	Kindergarten 1 - 7 Jahre Kleinkindgruppe 0 - 3 Jahre Kleinkindgruppe 0 - 6 Jahre	Helle Heckmann Christine Christensen	
Odense	Børnehaven Blangstedgard Blangstedgaards Allé 100 5220 Odense SØ	Kleinkindgruppe 0 - 3 Jahre	Susanne Hansen Dorte Hansen Irene Lykke	
Svogerslev	Alfely Lyngbakken 3 Svogerslev 4000 Roskilde	Kleinkindgruppe 0 - 3 Jahre	Rie Skovgaard	
Vejle	Vuggestuen Stjerneblomsten Vardevej 263 7100 Vejle	Kleinkindgruppe 0 - 3 Jahre	Barbara Paulsen	
Vordingborg	Rudolf Steiner Børnehaven Vuggestuen 4760 Vordingborg	Kleinkindgruppe 0 - 3 Jahre	Marianne Lange Margareta Hansen Susanne Jelding-Dannemand	

Finnland

Tampere	Steiner Kindergarten Sinilintu Hallilantie 24 M 33820 Tampere Tel. 358 3265553	Gruppe 1 - 3 Jahre Gruppe 4 - 6 Jahre	Jaana Tuulivaara Tina Ristolainen	
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Frankreich

Les Milles	Jardin d'enfants 385 ch. Barthélémy-Verr 13290 Les Milles	Gruppe 2 ½ - 6 Jahre Arbeit mit Eltern und Kindern	Evelyne Charlemagne	
Lyon	Jardin des Touts-Petits de l'école R. Steiner 5 ch. De Sanzy 69230 St Genis Laval bei Lyon	Gruppen 2 - 3 ½ Jahre	Monique Ducord	Schlechter Ruf der Anthroposophie in Frankreich („Sekte“) schadet: Probleme, Gruppen zu füllen; Schlechte Finanz- lage
Strasbourg	Beate de Barry 101 rue de la Ganzan 67100 Strasbourg	Eltern-Kind-Begegnungs- stätte Eltern-Kind-Spielgruppe 1 - 3 Jahre in der Waldorf- schule Strasbourg	Beate de Barry	Grenzüberschrei- tender Garten zur Sinnesentfaltung; Eltern-Kind- Zentrum zur indivi- duellen und sozialen Entwick- lung; Mitarbeiter

Grossbritannien

London	Working Mums Daycare & Pre-School Centre Former Green School Lower Richmond Road Mortlake, London SW14 7HJ Tel. 0181 392 9969	Tagesbetreuung Verschiedene Gruppen 3 Monate - 5 Jahre	Catriona Nason Rena Osmere	
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Kirgisien

Bischkek	Kinder-Rehabilitations- zentrum Ümüt-Nadjeshda Waldajskaja 37 720047 Bischkek Tel. 00996 312484485	Kinderzentrum Integrative Waldorfschule 2 Kindergärten, Gruppen 1 - 7 Jahre, Gesunde und Behinderte	Karla-Maria Schälke Anara Ainekenowa	Sehr schlechte Finanzlage, angewiesen auf Spenden aus Deutschland
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Litauen

Vilnius	Kindergarten „Pasaka“ Zirmunu, 110 Vilnius	Gruppen 2 - 7 Jahre	Roma Turcnaviciene Egle Caplikiene Raminta Januliene	Lange Warteliste; schlechte Finanz- lage; Eltern-Kind- Wochenenden; Vor- tragsabende für El- tern; kleines Gebäu- de für Kindergarten
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Niederlande

Emmen	Jacoba van Looyengoed Ruinerbrink 24 7812 RJ Emmen	3 Gruppen 2 - 4 Jahre	Jacoba van Looyengoe Marinka Bloemendaal Henny Veltman	Garten-/Spiel- material, Musikin- strumente; Aus- tausch; Eurythmist(in)
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Leiden	„De Gouden Paart“ J de B Kemperpad 16 2331 NA Leiden	Spielgruppe	Anneke Velthuijren Vera van Vliet-Leehnen	
Rotterdam	„Het Kleine Rijk“ Parklaan 36 3016 BC Rotterdam Tel. 010 4367511 „Het Kleine Rijk“ Kipstraat 52 3011 RT Rotterdam Tel. 010 2331372	2 Kindertagesstätten für insgesamt 120 Kinder	Christien Hellinga Anna Labadie Anke Stroucken	Möchten weitere Tagesstätte eröffnen, da lange Warteliste (über 120 Kinder)
Utrecht	Gezondheidscentrum Therapeuticum Utrecht	Therapeutikum mit Ärzten, Krankenschwester und verschiedenen Therapeuten	Regine Bautz	
Zeist	„De Kroost“ Crosestein 14-02 A 3704 NE Zeist Tel. 030 6948246	1 Gruppe 0 – 1 Jahre 1 Gruppe 2 – 3 Jahre		

Norwegen

Arendal	Stjerneglimt Steinerbamehage P.b. 902 Birkenlund 4859 Arendal	Altersgemischte Gruppe 1 – 6 Jahre	Eldbjoerg Gjessing Paulsen	Neuer Raum für 2. Gruppe (1 Kinder- gartengruppe, 1 Gruppe unter 3 J.)
Hamar	Family Kindergarten Hverven Villa 2312 Ottestao	Gruppe 1 – 3 ½ Jahre Ganztagesbetreuung	Pernille Kristiansen	
Oslo	Binna Waldorf Kindergarten Oslo	Gruppe 1 – 7 Jahre	Elna Thurmann- Nielsen	Größere Räume nahe der Waldorf- schule, 2 Gruppen (Warteliste), gute Mitarbeiter

Österreich

Wien	Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten Mauer Marktgemeindegasse 42 1230 Wien Tel. 1 8880647	Spielgruppe Mutter-Kind-Gruppe	Judith Naisar	Krippe, Eltern schule, Familien gruppen
	Freie Waldorfschule Wien-West Schruthagasse 51-53 1130 Wien	Spielgruppe 2 – 3 Jahre	Susanna Wacha Barbara Balzer	Geplant: Umzug in neues Gebäude mit 3 Gruppen und evtl. Krippe

Schweiz

Bern	Kindertagesstätte Röseligarte Reichenbachstr. 3 3004 Bern Tel. 031 302 90 02	Gruppe 1 ½ - 6 Jahre	Regula Schmid	
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Biel	Waldorfkindergarten Rudolf Steiner Schule Biel	Eltern-Kind-Gruppe 0 – 3 Jahre Spielgruppe 3 – 5 Jahre	Katrin Schudel Ursula Brunner	
Gempen	Schulheim Sonnhalde Gempen	Heim für vorwiegend autistische und wahrneh- mungsgestörte Kinder, Jugendliche und Erwachsene Frühförderung Einzelförderung Wohnbereich mit Über- nachtungsmöglichkeit Heilpädagogischer Kinder- garten Integrativer Kindergarten	Claudia Hessen	
Genf	Jardin d'enfants Rudolf Steiner 15, chemin des Ouches 1203 Genève	Kleinkindgruppe 2 ½ - 4 Jahre	Irène Durand	Informationen zur Gründung einer Gruppe für die Kleinsten
Neuchâtel	Tageskindergarten Rue de l'Ecole 27 2000 Neuchâtel	Kindergarten für 3-6-Jährige	Betty Santos	Eine Krippe in der Stadt
Rheinfelden	Rudolf Steiner Spielgruppe und Kindergarten Haldenweg 21 4310 Rheinfelden Tel. 061 831 12 79	Spielgruppe ab 2 Jahren Eltern-Kind-Gruppe 0-4 Jahre Kindergarten Familienergänzende Betreuung 0-7 Jahre Elterngesprächskreis Öffentliche Puppenspiele Bazar, Markt, Öffentliche Vorträge	Jacqueline Walter Marie Christine Ruff Eva Maria Fahrni Claudia Simcic	
Sissach	Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten Steblikerweg 2 4450 Sissach	Spielgruppe Kindergartengruppe Bazar Markt Vorträge	Maja Seebeck	Kinderhüte-Nach- mittag für Kleine, Kinderkrippe, Tagesbetreuung
Steffisburg	Rudolf Steiner Schule Asterweg 1 3612 Steffisburg	Kinderstube für 2 – 4 ½ -jährige	Michaela Reichert Christine Fiechter	
Wetzikon	Kindertagesstätte Pan-Jö Dorfstr. 29 8620 Wetzikon	Kindertagesstätte Elterngespräche Elternabende Leseabende für Eltern Filzkurs für Eltern	Verena Deiss	Großes Haus mit Gärten; 2 Gruppen mit professionellen Mitarbeiterinnen; Raum für Eltern; Eurythmie; thera- peutische und künst- lerische Möglichkei- ten
Will	Rudolf Steiner Schule Will	1 Spielgruppe 1 Kindergartengruppe	Anita Lüchinger	
Wolhusen	Heilpädagogisches Kinderheim Weidmatt Weidring 1 6110 Wolhusen	Entlastungsheim für behinderte Kinder im Vorschulalter 0 – 7 Jahre - Heilpädagogische Einzel- förderung - Physiotherapie	Nicolette Segaar	Heilpädagogin/ Hei- pädagogin für die Einzelförderung
Zürich	Spielstube Wurzelchind	Spielgruppe Mittagstisch	Sylvia Bondolfi- Waeber	Es fehlt Geld für größere Räumlich-

	Veilchenstr. 2 8032 Zürich Tel. 1 262 44 13	Altersgemischte Gruppe Kleinkindgruppe	Sunnhild Koch	keiten und mehr Mitarbeiter; Anthroposophisch geführte Kinderkrip- pe in der Stadt Zü- rich
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Spanien

Alicante	Asociación Escuela Libre Waldorf C/Rafael Albert Rodríguez 10 03112 Villafranqueza/ Alicante	2 Gruppen 2 – 6 Jahre	Beate Scheffel	Gruppe für Kinder von 1 – 3 Jahren
Barcelona	Grupo de Juego „Rosa d’Abril“ C/Sant Salvador 88 08024 Barcelona	1 Gruppe 3 ½ - 6 Jahre 1 Gruppe 2 – 3 ½ Jahre	Matilde Bo	Grösserer, zahlbar- er Raum
Madrid	Escuela Infantil „Hermanos Grimm“ Colonia Buena Vista „finca Hestia“ Collado Villalba Madrid 28400 Tel. 1 8502244	Spielgruppe 1 ½ - 3 Jahre 2 Gruppen 3 – 6 Jahre Eurhythmie	Pilar Dotor Maria Martín- Artajo	
Mallorca	S’escoleta Waldorf C/Bernat de Sta. Eugenia 90 07320 Santa Maria (Mallorca) Tel. 971 140554	Gruppe 2 – 5 Jahre	Laura Pla	Gruppe für Kleinst- kinder; Austausch, da auf Mallorca nur sehr wenige Mitglieder

USA

Charlottesville	Waldorf School Charlottesville, VA	Tagesbetreuung 3 – 7 Jahre Eltern-Kind-Gruppe Elternbildung Elterngespräche Einführung in Waldorf- erziehung	Helen Covington	
Great Barrington	Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School Early Childhood Center 35 West Plain Road Great Barrington MA 01230	Eltern-Kind-Gruppe Spielstube 2 ½ - 3 ½ Jahre Elternbildung 3 Kindergartengruppen	Michelle Kuzia	
Santa Cruz	Santa Cruz Waldorf School Santa Cruz/California	Externe Betreuung von Kleinkindgruppen durch Tagesmütter Eltern-Kind-Gruppe	Stephen Spitalny	
Spring Valley	Waldorf Early Childhood Association Sunbridge College 285 Hungry Hollow Rd. Spring Valley NY 10977 Tel. 914 425 0055	Kindergarten Training Center Tagungen Workshops Publikationen (Waldorf Early Childhood Newsletter, Gateways)	Susan Howard Joan Almon	Dringend notwen- dig: Ausbildungs- möglichkeit 0 – 3 Jahr

Australien

Randwick	„Once upon a time...“ Children's centre 80 Botany Street Randwick 2031	Verschiedene Gruppen 2-3 Jahre und 3-6 Jahre Mittagstisch		
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Neuseeland

Havelock North	Awhina 18 Te Aute Road Havelock North Tel. 06 877 5056 37 Duart Road Havelock North Tel. 06 877 1401	Tagesstätte für Kinder ab 6 Monaten Kindergarten Mittagstisch Eigener Garten mit biodynamischem Anbau Beratung in anthroposo- phischer Medizin Workshops, Seminare, Diskussionsgruppen	Bernadette Raichle	
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Südafrika

Kapstadt	Centre for Creative Education P.O. Box 280 Plumstead 7801 Kapstadt		Ann Sharfman	
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Argentinien

Buenos Aires	Escuela Juana de Arco Araoz 1027 1414 Buenos Aires 11 4778 0769	Kleinkindgruppe ab 2 J. Altersgemischte Gruppen	Elida Suárez	
	Cuarto Creciente Güemes 1747 1602 Florida 11 47181140	Kleinkindgruppe 3 Kindergartengruppen	Ana María Fierro	
	Waldorf Kindergarten Rudolf Steiner Schule O'Higgins 1235 1602 Florida 11 47978253	4 altersgemischte Kindergartengruppen ab 2 ½ Jahren	Margarita Kratsch Mónica Naneder	
	Escuela San Miguel Arcángel José María Moreno 1221 1607 Villa Adelina 11 47664157	3 altersgemischte Kindergartengruppen ab 3 Jahren	Marta Rocca Ana Marta Alegre Belén Brinnand Olga Moreira María Dos Santos	
	Kindergarten Luz del Sol Entre Ríos 1912 1640 Martínez 11 47170834	Gruppe ab 2 ½ Jahren	Carmen Zulinakis	
	Escuela Waldorf Clara de Asís Independencia entre Itatí y el arroyo 1623 Ing. Maschwitz 3488 443706	3 altersgemischte Kindergartengruppen ab 2 ½ Jahren	Matilde Wedeltoft	

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La Cumbre	„El Amanecer“ Pte. H. Irigoyen 68 5178 La Cumbre Sierras de Córdoba	Altersgemischte Gruppe ab 3 Jahren	Shirley Anderson	
Villa de las Rosas	„El Trigo“ 5885 Villa de las Rosas Sierras de Córdoba 2544 494556	Altersgemischte Gruppe ab 2 ½ Jahren	Frank Smith	
Villa General Belgrano	„El Rinconcito“ Los Manantiales 64 5194 Villa General Belgrano Provincia de Córdoba 3346 461334	Altersgemischte Gruppe ab 2 ½ Jahren	Patricia Vinks	

Brasilien

Sao Paulo	Escola Livre Manacá Kindergarten R. Joao Carlos da Silva Borges 280 04726 000 Sao Paulo	Gruppe 4 Monate – 6/7 Jahre	Martina Mecklen	Finanzielle Unterstützung für eine bessere Ausbildung zur Waldorfkinder-gärtnerin und für den Kauf von Kleinkinderziehung; gebrauchte Kleider und Spielsachen
	Jardim Margarida Rua Irineu Marinho, 135 04739 040 Sao Paulo	Krippe mit 2 Gruppen Kindergartengruppe	Christiane Ammermann	
	Escola Waldorf Rudolf Steiner de Sao Paulo R Job Lane 900 – Sto Amaro Sao Paulo	Kinder 2 – 7 Jahre	Marly Barcellos	
	Jardim de Infancia Arethe Rua Demóstenes 79 Campo Belo Sao Paulo	Kinder 4 Monate – 6/7 Jahre	Shalimar N. Prats	
	Jardim Colibri Rua Jaime do Espírito Santo, 77 CEP 04671 210 Sao Paulo	Kinder 1 – 6/7 Jahre	Rosemeire Oliveira Resende Laviano	
	Associacao Comunitaria Monte Azul Avenida Tomas de Souza 552 05836-350 Sao Paulo 0055 11 5851 5370	17 Gruppen ab 4 Monaten bis 7 Jahre	Ana Santos Padilho Maria Natália Silva de Jesus	

Chile

Santiago	Escuela Rudolf Steiner José Tomás Rider 1654 Providencia	Gruppe 3 – 6 Jahre	Pauline Edwards	Austausch mit anderen Erziehern weltweit; finanzielle Schwierigkeiten
	Pequeñalolen Kindergarten, Santiago	Gruppe 2 – 4 Jahre Gruppe 4 – 6 Jahre		
	Limache Kindergarten Santiago	2 – 4 Jahre		



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