

Westside Waldorf School

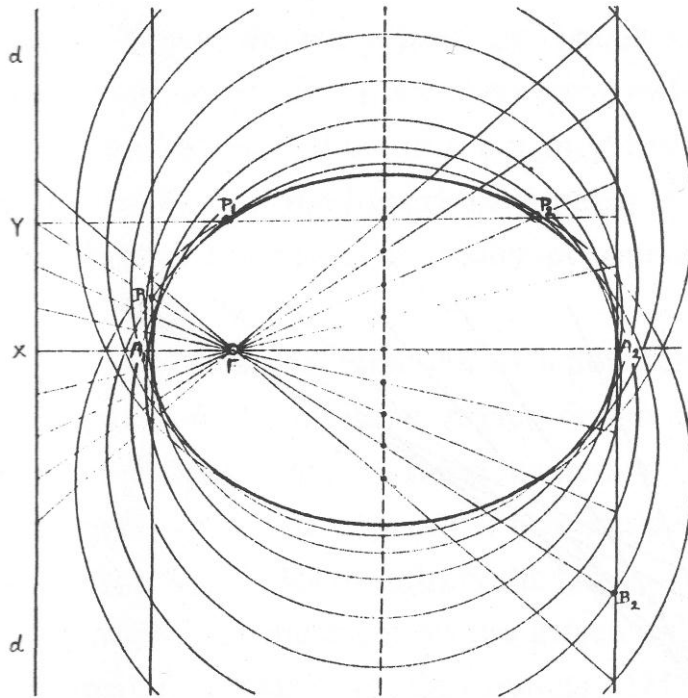


Parent Handbook

One Childhood. Live it Well.

"The need for an effective, truly human education has never been greater than it is today. Our times call out for individuals who can recognize needs and bring right initiatives to the world. To achieve this, children need schools in which childhood is appreciated and allowed to unfold, and where capacities of imagination and intelligence, of courage and fortitude, of practicality and skill are gradually awakened, nurtured and strengthened."

– The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA)



McComb Grades and Early Childhood Center

17310 Sunset Boulevard Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 Ph 310-454-7064 F 310-454-7084

Waldorf Early Childhood Center (WECC)

1441 15th Street Santa Monica, CA 90404 Ph 310-454-7064 F 310-260-2709

Welcome to our Community!

*The healthy social life is found
When in the mirror of each human soul
The whole community finds its reflection.
And, when in the community
The strength of each is living.*
Dr. Rudolf Steiner

The Westside Waldorf Educational Community is made up of families, teachers and staff members with a wide variety of life experiences and geographic, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds.

We all bring to the community the richness of our varied ethnicities, religious and spiritual paths, cultural identities, age, gender, and personal experiences. This diversity is central to the hosting of the many perspectives that Westside strives to foster in a Waldorf community. We encourage an environment that is culturally sensitive, values ethnic uniqueness, and affirms individual lifestyles. The appreciation of a multiplicity of voices is central to a collaborative governing tradition at the Westside Waldorf School.

The extent to which our school community is creative and generative is contingent upon the degree to which it invites, celebrates and nurtures a diversity of people, ideas, and sensibilities. Like any center of excellence, our ability to thrive is predicated on our capacity to adapt, contain a multiplicity of perspectives, and be connected to and relevant for the greater community outside our walls. At the same time, for us to be a vital source of change in the world, we need to do the depth work of questioning convention and listening to voices traditionally silenced. Towards these ends, Westside Waldorf strives to cultivate a community and dialogue that is rich, varied, and complex.

Our teachers bring a passion for Waldorf Education and a wealth of other cultural experiences to the community. The Faculty is committed to creatively implement the educational impulses indicated by Dr. Rudolf Steiner. The teachers support one another through peer mentoring and participate in ongoing professional and self-development. Teachers, members of the Board of Trustees and Parents strive to ensure the mission of Waldorf Education as upheld by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).

Together, we strive to develop and maintain a strong sense of community at WWS and to honor the importance of our relationships with each other. We take our responsibilities seriously and do all we have agreed to do recognizing that we are each individually responsible for our behaviors, decisions, commitments and agreements. We model forgiveness for the action of others. As adults, we set examples for our children, being aware through our behavior, we are worthy of imitation at all times. We strive to hold one another in the light, especially in times of darkness.

Together, we as parents, teachers and staff and board members adhere to and support the living mission of the Westside Waldorf Community out of reverence for the individual spirit and a commitment to the principles of Waldorf Education.

Gita Labrentz, Ph.D. , School Director

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OPERATIONS

310-454-7064

Gita Labrentz	School Director, ext.2	deargita@aol.com
Franziska Utter	Administrative Director, ext. 1	franzi@swaldorf.org
Carol Slick	Reception, Parent Toddler, ext. 0	admin@swaldorf.org
Mike Quishenberry	Business Manager, ext. 3	mike@swaldorf.org
Michelle Plasse	Advancement Manager	michelle@swaldorf.org
Tianna Tekeste	Assistant, Business Office	Tianna@swaldorf.org

FACULTY COUNCIL

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Gabriela Flores-Reck	Special Subjects	gabrielareck@hotmail.com
Annette Parry	Special Subjects	annette_parry@yahoo.com
Gita Labrentz	School Director	deargita@aol.com

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Gita Labrentz*	School Director	deargita@aol.com
(*non-voting participants)		

PARENT COMMUNITY

See School Directory for names of class representatives

WESTSIDE WALDORF SCHOOL FACULTY

2011 - 2012

Grades Teachers

Lisa Profumo	Grade 1	la.profumo@verizon.net
Leda Kozikowski	Grade 2	ledakozikowski@gmail.com
Alexander Marchand	Grade 3	bamxmarchand@yahoo.com
Jessica Breakey	Grade 4	ms.jessicabee@gmail.com
Mari Shintani	Grade 5	shintani.mari@gmail.com
Heather Eisenhardt	Grade 6	heisenhardt@gmail.com
Nelly Ivano	Grade 7	nelly_yes1@yahoo.com
Philip Guest	Grade 8	philip_guest@yahoo.com

Special Subject Teachers

Rachel Schmid	Eurythmy	rachel.schmid@gmx.de
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Truus Geraets	Special Eurythmy	artofliving7361@att.net

Early Childhood Lead Teachers

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Monique LaForge Hart	Parent Child*	3mobutterfly@gmail.com

Early Childhood Assistant Teachers

Ana Munoz	Orchid Kindergarten*	Anarivera2006@sbcglobal.net
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Margarita Sabeva	Rose Kindergarten	margi67@yahoo.com
Maria Alarcon	Lily Kindergarten*	Alarcon9945@sbcglobal.net

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Betty Prang	Lavender Kindergarten	bettermystar@yahoo.de
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Laura Scattergood	Grades 1-5 Afterschool	rorasan@gmail.com
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Betty Prang	Early Childhood Aftercare	bettermystar@yahoo.de

Our Purpose

Waldorf Education is in alignment with findings which have determined that the foundation for human health is found primarily not in the biological realm, but in a person's faculties of soul and spirit necessary for meeting life's challenges. Coherence –the soul-connection with the world—is one of the most important of these faculties, as is resilience—the power to accept and master obstacles. These aspects are not hereditary gifts, but rather abilities for which education first creates a disposition and later in life the adult person can further develop through self-education.

From Developmental Signatures, an AWSNA Publication

The Westside Waldorf School offers children and young people an education that embraces the academic, the artistic and the practical. Waldorf education seeks to awaken the true potential of the human being's clarity and creativity in thought and expression; balance and compassion in feeling and conscience and initiative in action. WWS strives to support families in raising confident, responsible, thinking individuals in a community nurtured by parents and teachers alike.

Our Governing Structure

The Westside Waldorf School is a self-administered, collaboratively led institution. Our approach to governance is meant to provide structure for coming together in service to the children, to the school, and to each other. We aim to achieve consensus in the decision making processes and results through school community. Community is the crucible in which we give form to our aspirations, work to fulfill our mission, and realize our vision for the future.

The key leadership bodies are the **Faculty Council**, the **Administration** and the **Board of Trustees**. Faculty gathers into pedagogical groups, each contributing to collaborative decision making: **Early Childhood, Grades, Special Subjects, All Faculty**.

The **Faculty Council** is responsible for actualizing the mission of the School via curriculum development, teaching, teacher selection, teacher evaluation and mentoring, implementation of pedagogical strategic planning and mission renewal. The group consciously fosters the spiritual impulses of the organization, assures appropriate implementation of the Waldorf curriculum and nourishes collegial relationships among faculty members. The Faculty Council has an active leadership role in the governance of the school.

The **Board of Trustees** is responsible for overseeing the administrative functions of the School including legal affairs, risk management, financial management, fundraising leadership and strategic planning. The Board works through and in conjunction with the administrative and academic staff of the School including (but not limited to) the Faculty Council, the School Director, the Administrative Director and the Business Manager.

The **School Director** works to ensure congruence and coherence in the activities of all bodies in meeting the mission and goals of the School.

The **Administrative Director** is responsible for the general operations of the school, the admissions process, management of student records, facility & site maintenance.

The **Business Manager** oversees the financial operations of the school as well as Human Resources and employee benefits.

Faculty Standing Committees

The Festivals and Assembly Committee plans and monitors the events calendar, determines the dates for all the seasonal, faculty-led festivals, all student assemblies, and work- in- progress assemblies. Their mission is to create the frame that holds the spiritual meaning and essence of the seasons and festivals to ensure proper alignment between the Waldorf Curriculum and its underlying impulses.

The Care Group for Children is composed of teachers and staff who meet regularly to commit to carrying the deeper aspects of the education, growth, and well-being of the students in the school. The group takes on different topics of study which include: child development, pedagogy, child observation, child study techniques, learning styles etc. The group aids in guiding and enriching faculty work and Child Study practices in faculty meetings. The tasks of the Care Group varies depending on the needs of the school.

The Parent Care & Education Group helps strengthen and balance a parent's relationship/interaction with the school. Once a child's needs have been identified by the Care Group for Children, recommendations are made to the teacher and the parent. The Parent Care Group then meets with the parent to help reinforce and support the follow-through of the recommendations. All recommendations will be given in writing to the parent. A copy will go into the student's file.

The Middle School Committee is composed of the teachers in the 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade classes, including Special Subject teachers, the Middle Grades Support Teacher and the School Director. The group is committed to creating a distinct and coherent academic, social and cultural Middle School Program (within the guidelines of Waldorf Pedagogy) that will lead to a confident transition into High School for our graduating students.

Board of Trustees Standing Committees

Board of Trustees Executive Committee

The Board Executive Committee aids the board, faculty and administration in bringing timely, coordinated and effective responses to issues.

The Finance Committee is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees who oversees the Financial Realm in support of the School's mission. The Treasurer and the Business Manager are automatically members of the Committee. The Finance Committee is responsible for overseeing the presentation of the School's annual budget to the Board of Trustees for approval and for ensuring systems and personnel are in place to carry out the school's financial operations.

We all, as a community, with the support and dedication of parent and other volunteers, work together in fulfilling the mission of our school.

IF YOU NEED ANSWERS ABOUT.....

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. What's happening in the classroom... | ... Go to... |
| 2. A social incident in the classroom... | ...your teacher |
| 3. An incident on the yard... | ...your teacher |
| 4. A new initiative, program enhancement | ...the teacher on duty |
| 5. All financial and tuition payment questions... | ...the School Director |
| 6. More information about Waldorf Education or training | ...Business Manager |
| 7. Unresolved concerns or conflicts... | ...the School Director |
| 8. Concern about a community member... | ...your teacher or School Director |
| 9. Attending a board meeting... | ...your teacher or School Director |
| 10. Which things/objects to donate to the school... | ... the board president |
| 11. Recommending family for early childhood... | ...the Administrative Director |
| 12. Recommending a family for the grades... | ...the Administrative Director |
| 13. Clarifications about events, celebrations... | ...the School Director |
| 14. Where to take a splendid fundraising idea... | ...your class parent rep(s) |
| 15. How best to participate in an event... | ...your class parent rep(s) |

ANSWERS TO RECURRING QUESTIONS:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Does a parent have access to the Board of Trustees? | Yes. You may visit any time. Register your interest for a visit with the board president. |
| Does a parent have access to the Faculty Council? | Yes. Contact the School Director for procedure and appointment with the FC. |
| Can a parent visit a main lesson? | Yes. Ask the teacher for a date. |
| Can a parent visit a Special Subject class? | Yes. Contact the appropriate teacher. |
| Where do I take a conflict? | Teacher/School Director. |
| How do I learn more about Waldorf Education? | Talk to the School Director |
| How do I express my gratitude for being here? | Invite a neighborhood family to a tour at at WWS |
| Do I get a free lunch after a dozen questions? | There is no free lunch—but know we <u>love</u> questions... |

Curriculum

	Grade									Grade							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Language Arts									Social Sciences								
Writing/Reading Literature	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Prehistory: Ancient Legends	•	•	•	•	•			
Speech Formation/Dramatics	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Old Testament Stories			•					
Spelling/Grammar		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Norse Mythology				•				
Business English				•	•	•	•	•	Greek Mythology					•			
Composition/Creative Writing				•	•	•	•	•	Ancient History					•	•		
Research Skills						•	•		Medieval History/Renaissance					•	•	•	
									American History				•	•		•	•
Mathematics									European History 17th -18th Century							•	•
The Four Processes	•	•	•	•	•	•			19th-20th Century/Current Events								•
Common Fractions				•	•	•	•	•									
Decimal/Percent					•	•	•	•	Foreign Languages								
Business Arithmetic/General Mathematics						•	•	•	Two Languages: Spanish and Japanese	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Algebra						•	•	•									
Geometric Movement	•	•	•	•	•				Music								
Form/Geometric Drawing	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Singing	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Geometry						•	•	•	Flute/Recorder	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
									Stringed Instruments				•	•			
Sciences									Orchestra and/or Band						•	•	•
Nature Study	•	•	•						Choir						•	•	•
Zoology				•	•				Fine Arts/Crafts								
Botany					•				Painting/Drawing/Modeling	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Physiology							•		Form Drawing/Design	•	•	•	•	•			
Anatomy								•	Perspective/Black and White Drawing						•	•	•
Physics: Sound and Light/Color/Optics						•	•	•	Knitting/Crocheting/Sewing/Tailoring Woodworking	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mechanics							•	•									
Electricity/Magnetism						•	•	•	Physical Education								
Hear and Cold/Sound						•	•	•	Games/Sports	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Organic Chemistry								•	Bothmer Gymnastics	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Inorganic Chemistry									Farming/Gardening/Stewarding the earth	▪	▪	•	▪	•	•	•	•
Earth Sciences																	
Geography/Cartography				•	•	•	•	•	Eurythmy								
Geology/Mineralogy						•			A new art form originated by Rudolf Steiner	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Astronomy						•	•										
Meteorology								•									

Summary of the Waldorf Curriculum for Grades 1 through 8

MAIN LESSON

Grade	Mathematics	Language Arts	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences and Literature
First Grade	Geometric forms, Rhythmic movement, Counting to 100, Quality of numbers, Introduction to: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, Roman numerals, Mental arithmetic (word problems), Number sequences and relationships	Letter forms, Form drawings, Phonetic values of letters, Speech: the quality & nature of sound, Oral recitation, Writing & illustration of words, simple thoughts & descriptions, in Individual notebooks, Introduction to reading	Nature study: the kingdoms of nature	Fairy Tales
Second Grade	Form drawings, Number sequences & relationships, Forms for written mathematics, Systems of units: 1s, 10s, 100s Multiplication table through rhythm, choral drill, practice	Phonetic values of letters, Cursive writing, Writing of simple thoughts, Reading: Reading materials Include their own work & fables about animals, Keeping of notebooks of original & copied work (prose & poetry), Oral recitation, Handwriting	Kingdoms of nature, Stories of animals through fables	Fables, Saint legends
Third Grade	Form drawings, Weights & Measures, Use of rulers, Multiplication tables: oral & written, Long division, Applied mathematics: scale models, house building, Mathematics: exercises and problems, Time, Money	Reading, Creative writing, Recitation, Composition & spelling, Poetry, Grammar: Parts of sentence, building sentences, parts of speech punctuation, Notebooks kept & Illustrated, Oral & written work developed out of other Main Lesson topics, Drama	Human in nature: farming, gardening, house building, clothing, Relationships (e.g., plant/soil, man/animal, etc.	Hebrew legends, Comparative cultures form stories & reading
Fourth Grade	Weights and measures, Fractions, Common denominators, Number relationships & sequences, Geometric forms, Continued drill of basic mathematical processes	Reading Composition: Style, Grammar, Spelling, Development of formal communication skills, Letter writing, Grammar & written work in foreign languages, Poetry, Speech, Drama	Human and Animal	Norse myths, Local geography, history & culture
Fifth Grade	Fractions, Decimals, Geometric forms, Continued drill of basic mathematical process, Long division	Composition & spelling, Reading, Recitation, Grammar: Verb forms, punctuation, Speech, Drama	Botany	Indian; Persian; Egyptian-Chaldean and Greek mythology & ancient history, United States geography & cultures, Map making
Sixth Grade	Geometry, Business Math, continued drill & review	Composition & Spelling, Reading, Speech, Grammar, Business English, Drama	Geology: Minerals, Physics: Heat, optics, acoustics, magnetism, electricity, Gardening	Roman history, Medieval history, World geography
Seventh Grade	Algebra, Geometry, Continued drill & review	Composition & Spelling, Reading, Grammar, Speech, Business English, Drama	Physiology, Physics, Mechanics, Astronomy, Chemistry: Nature matter	Renaissance & the Age of Discovery, World geography, Comparative cultures
Eighth Grade	Practical applications of math, Algebra, Geometry: Plane & solid, Graphs, Continued drill & review	Literature, Drama, Poetry, Composition, Grammar & Spelling	Physics & Astronomy: magnetism, electricity, hydraulics, aerodynamics, meteorology, experimental science, Chemistry: organic, Human anatomy	Modern history: 18th-20th centuries, World geography, Economics, Comparative cultures, American history

Our History

In 1988, a Santa Monica based mother with two sons attending a Waldorf school in the San Fernando Valley wished her children could have a Waldorf education closer to home. She met and spoke often with a friend who also became enthusiastic about the possibility of having a Waldorf School in Santa Monica. From this point, a play group was founded “on a Santa Monica park bench” by parents interested in Waldorf education. The grandmother of two of the boys made it financially possible for a lease to be signed with the Good Shepherd Baptist Church at 16th Street and Pearl Street in Santa Monica. In November of 1988, the Westside Waldorf School (WWS) incorporated as The Waldorf School of Santa Monica. In 1989, the kindergarten opened.

Westside Waldorf School’s lead class – the first to complete K through 6th grade, formed in 1995 and graduated in 2002 from the former 4th Street campus, to which WWS moved in 1998. In 2006 WWS made the decision to add a 7th grade and began the middle school program. Our graduates are currently students at several local middle and high schools, private and public.

In May 2005, the Westside Waldorf School signed a letter of intent to lease its Pacific Palisades campus for 25 years. The McComb campus of the WWS is named after the Marshall and Margherite McComb Foundation. The McComb Foundation was created under the will of Margherite McComb. Mrs. McComb was raised in San Pedro, in an Italian Catholic family. She was a modern woman well ahead of her time, supporting herself for a number of years in various capacities, during which she worked for the William Morris Agency. Her life was not without adversity: Margherite’s first husband died one year into their marriage and her sister died soon thereafter in a plane crash. Happily, she remarried Judge Marshall McComb, a Yale educated lawyer who served many years as a Justice on California’s highest court. The McCombs were married for 35 years and kept homes in both San Francisco and Los Angeles. After he died, Margherite created the Foundation in both their names. Following her death, the McComb Foundation has, among other charitable purposes, established a law library at Southwestern University School of Law, and supported research for medical problems of aging including at the Hospital of the Good Samaritan and UCLA. The Westside Waldorf School is forever full of gratitude for the McCombs and is proud to be part of their prodigious legacy.

Westside Waldorf School remains a presence in Santa Monica with its Waldorf Early Childhood Center (WECC), which has a capacity for 72 children and houses two nursery classes, two kindergartens and a parent-toddler room.

Outdoors the property consists of two playgrounds, one that adjoins the nursery building, and one that occupies a whole city lot, which WWS converted from asphalt to a proper Waldorf sanctuary for early Childhood development with the Help of a City Water Conservation Grant.



ABOUT RUDOLF STEINER AND WALDORF EDUCATION

Waldorf Education is an independent and inclusive form of education based on the insights and teaching of the renowned anthroposophist, artist and scientist, Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Evolving from a profound understanding of the human spirit and human development, Waldorf Education is regionally adaptive and has grown to include hundreds of schools worldwide.

Dr. Rudolf Steiner, born in Austria in 1861, was a leading figure in the cultural life of central Europe. He lectured and wrote on a variety of topics, linking philosophy, religion, history, economy, science, agriculture and art. He gained international reputation for unique and advanced perspectives in a world shattered at the end of World War I, including a proposal for social renewal which he brought to the political table at the treaty of Versailles.

When Emil Molt, entrepreneur and owner of the Waldorf-Astoria industry, asked Steiner to create a school that would educate individuals who would be able to create a peaceful and just society, Steiner enthusiastically accepted. In the autumn of 1919, the first Waldorf school opened in Stuttgart with 12 teachers and 175 pupils, mostly the children of Emil Molt's employees.

In this first "Freie Waldorfschule," Steiner created a school ahead of its time, offering education to both boys and girls from varying social classes. It was a school in which art, music and handcrafts were as important as reading, writing and arithmetic; in which each day included activities for the hands and heart, as well as for the head; in which the teacher and class remained together for the first eight years. The Waldorf School's explicit purpose was to allow free, independent, creative, moral, happy human beings to develop and unfold their gifts and capabilities.

Interest spread rapidly, and Waldorf schools were soon founded in Holland, England, and other parts of Europe. The first Waldorf school in North America, The Rudolf Steiner School of New York, was opened in 1928. Today there are approximately 200 schools throughout North America. Each Waldorf school is independent, and together they form the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). AWSNA's mission is to strengthen and support the schools and to inform the public about the benefits of Waldorf education.

Internationally, the Waldorf school system is rapidly expanding, with more than 900 schools and 2000 early childhood initiatives in more than 40 countries. Schools exist in Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Sweden, Israel, Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Russia, Japan, Romania, and Hungary.

During this spring season of 2010, a first major retrospective of Rudolf Steiner's *Gesamtwerk* opened in Wolfsburg, Germany, giving a vivid portrait of this visionary philosopher, scientist, and teacher. The retrospective features are jottings about Steiner in Wassily Kandinsky's diaries, fan mail from Piet Mondrian, notes from Franz Kafka, an invitation from architect Richard Neutra. Nobel laureate Saul Bellow was a devotee of Steiner.

Steiner's concepts fascinated his contemporaries and continue to awaken creative individuals today across the scientific and aesthetic spectrum today.

*The true aim of education is to awaken real powers
of perception and discernment in relation to life and living.
For only such awakening can lead to true freedom.*

Dr. Rudolf Steiner



Standards we expect from our students, staff, teachers and parents

The adults in children's lives are their role models, their mentors and their guides. This is true physically, emotionally, intellectually, and morally. Children imitate and emulate the adults around them, and rely on them for gaining a sense of truth, goodness and beauty. These three virtues are the foundation of Waldorf education. We strive to help children experience the truth, goodness, and beauty in themselves and in others and in the world.

WWS faculty, staff and parents are expected to behave in a professional manner with students at all times. This means upholding the qualities of good role models in action, word and thought.

The principle of **right action** requires that we are safe and we keep the children safe. Undue risks are not to be taken.

The principle of **right speech** requires that we use good judgment about what we say to the children and community at large.

The principle of **right thought** requires that we maintain a sense of responsibility of our inner intentions. Actions are nearly always preceded by an intention or thought, no matter how quick or "thoughtless".

Behavioral Guidelines for our students

The following rules and guidelines will contribute to a desired atmosphere of respect and peaceful cooperation and shall therefore be followed. Violation of these expectations will lead to **consequences** imposed by the school and to **suspension** in repeated, severe cases.

1. We expect all students to act with respect and show courtesy to all people and property.
2. We expect all students to listen to and mind the guidance provided by teachers, staff and parents realizing that the adults are responsible for the well-being of all the school's children.
3. We expect a willingness to avoid anything that might harm others or oneself.
4. Aggressive or threatening physical behavior, such as pushing, hitting, kicking, fighting, swearing, talking back, spitting, bullying or throwing things (other than game equipment) are prohibited.
5. We do not tolerate malicious or spiteful attitudes, nor rudeness, teasing, mimicking or lying, nor foul or abusive language.
6. Pocketknives, weapons, matches, lighters and magnifying glasses are prohibited on campus and on field trips.
7. Roller-skates, roller blades, skateboards, scooters and bicycles are not to be used on school grounds.
8. Cellular or smartphones, including iphones, ipods, itouch or mp3 players, beeping watches, electronic toys, CD/tape or radio players, or personal video games consoles are not allowed at school. If parents deem it vital, that their child have a cell phone for after school communication, please know the following: **Any cell phone that is brought to school by a student must be kept off and in a backpack while on campus. Disregarding this policy will result in the cell phone being held in the office until the child leaves school or the after school care program that day, and a call will be made to the child's parent.**

9. Students need permission from their teacher before bringing pets to class.
10. All students are expected to keep bathrooms, classrooms and play yard free of trash.
11. Students are expected to stay on the school campus and in view of a teacher/supervisor at all times during school hours until picked up to go home. Under no circumstances are children to go beyond school property onto private property surrounding the school. If arriving before 7:45 a.m., parents/drivers must supervise the students.
12. Students expecting to leave the school by their own means must have a written waiver on file in the office and a copy must be kept in the classroom.
13. Competitive games must have a teacher/supervisor at all times.
14. Shoes must be worn at all times outside as required for games & sports.
15. All playground equipment must be returned to its proper storage place after use.
16. No student is to climb onto the roof of the school building. If a ball is unreachable, or it goes onto the road notify a teacher immediately who will supervise its return.

Field Trip Behavior Guidelines

All school rules apply to Westside Waldorf School students while on a field trip. Students are our ambassadors in the public eye and should represent their school accordingly. Students must be polite, considerate of others and use proper manners at all times. They must treat chaperones with respect and obey them as they would their teacher.

Substance Use on Campus

Westside Waldorf School is a drug-free workplace.

The school intends to provide a drug-free, healthy, safe and secure environment for all employees, students and community members.

Tobacco and alcohol use is prohibited during all school days.

Unlawful possession, distribution, or use of a controlled substance on school premises is absolutely prohibited. Employees or students found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, termination or expulsion.

Harassment Policy

Harassment in any form of religious, racial, cultural, or sexual form by any student, teacher, parent, administrator, or other school personnel, which create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment in our school community, will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Westside Waldorf School is committed to identify and act upon instances of sexual harassment as defined by current standards of the public educational code. We understand and respect that values differ when it comes to the socially acceptable expression of human sexuality. While WWS expects that the parents set the standards for their own children, the school is obligated to act upon instances of sexual harassment as defined by current standards of the public educational codes.

Consequences and School Response to Infractions

The Westside Waldorf School is committed to striving to secure an educational environment for all students free from bullying, harassment, taunting, prejudicial or threatening behavior, physical or verbal, among students, staff and parents.

The school will enact this commitment in its supervision of students and in its education of students in values of anti-bias, acceptance of diversity, and personal self worth, and in its education of students in problem-solving social/emotional skills.

While educating students in problem-solving methods including council process, Westside Waldorf School will intervene in violations first by stopping the incident and assuming a no-blame approach, intervening as necessary and moving to the extent of suspension if deemed necessary.

The school retains the right to determine whether or not the student's continued enrollment is in the best interest of the student or the school. The school cannot anticipate or list all the possible reasons why it may be necessary to terminate enrollment, but they include behavioral problems, academic deficiencies, and disruption by either the student or the student's parent or guardians. The school retains the exclusive right and has the discretion to determine what procedures to follow and to decide what reasons justify termination of the enrollment or any other discipline.

The goal in applying any form of discipline is to bring about correction of a behavior that does not meet the standards set forth above. The philosophy on discipline emphasizes a positive approach, in which the student is gradually led towards an experience of self-discipline.

The Westside Waldorf School reserves the right to apply discipline that, in the judgment of the faculty, is most appropriately measured to fit the student and to accomplish the right goal. Each case will be approached individually and worked out with respect of the child's developmental stage and environmental influences as references.

Among the responses the school may make and apply are the following types of discipline approaches:

- Student is approached and reminded of appropriate behavior
- Behavioral contracts are formulated for student and signed by parent
- Compensatory actions of some kind are established
- Recommendations for additional professional help may be offered
- Conflict resolution conversation/peer mediation for the Middle School students with all concerned may take place
- Notification of parents and a plan of action is formulated
- Probation might be imposed
 - Detention. This is a 40 minute period from 3:30pm -4:10pm on a Thursday, during which the student will be assigned specific work. The child will be given a detention slip that has to be signed by a parent or guardian to acknowledge the reason for the detention, as well as the time and date on which detention is held. After 3 detentions the students will have to miss the next field trip.
 - Suspension (when a child is sent home during the school day and/or is asked to stay home for one or more days)
- Expulsion (when a student may no longer remain at or matriculate from Westside Waldorf School.

Westside Waldorf School Dress Code and Student Clothing

It is important that younger children be as free as possible of an excessive consciousness of their outward appearance, as this awakens vanity, insecurity, and the compulsion to conform. Older children necessarily and properly awaken to their inner identity and its relationship to their outward appearance.

The ability to explore these parameters, within the bounds of good taste and class decorum must be made possible. In Waldorf education, we surround the children with living, beautiful images and objects. For this reason, we ask your thoughtful cooperation in maintaining, among other things, certain standards of dress at school and at all school functions.

Therefore:

Clothing worn by the children should not be distracting to themselves or their classmates. Children should dress in a thoughtful manner recognizing that school attire is not the same as weekend or casual attire.

Any time children appear in a performance situation, whether it is a Strings Presentation or an All-School Performance, they must be dressed commensurate with the fact that they now are representatives of Westside Waldorf School; formal attire should be suitable. Dress pants (no denims), dress shirts, dresses or skirts..

Clothing or shoes with media characters, pop images or symbols that refer to drugs, tobacco, alcohol, sexual connotations, gangs or violence are considered inappropriate.

Extreme fashion fads, such as pierced body parts, exposed bellies, bare midriffs, dragging pants, mini shorts, mini skirts, tight clothes, unnatural hair colors and extreme hair styles, heavy makeup, nail polish etc. are prohibited on school grounds.

All students are expected to wear appropriate footwear for the activities that they participate in, e.g. sports, gardening, etc. Clean indoor house slippers or shoes may be necessary for use in the classrooms, please check with the teacher. Games lessons require sweat pants or shorts (two hand width above the knee) and athletic shoes.

Corrective Measures

It is understood that consequences for not meeting our dress code can be sensitive to individual children and family situations. If a student is found not following these standards, the following will occur:

- The child's teacher will ask him/her to wear the shirt inside out for the day and a call will go home to the family.
- If inappropriate footwear is worn to school, the child will be omitted from that particular activity until proper footwear is worn.
- If a child arrives at school with no shoes, the family will be called to deliver appropriate footwear.
- If a pattern of inappropriate dress occurs, the class teacher will call for a parent conference to address the situation.
- WWS reserves the right to send a child home in cases of extremely distracting appearances.
- All teachers and administrative staff who observe a student wearing unacceptable attire will speak to that child's class teacher. The class teacher will then follow the steps outlined above.

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE

Working With Your Child's Teacher

It is essential that a congruency exists between the home and school environments so that the child/student is not experiencing conflicting messages.

It is therefore imperative that parents and teachers communicate openly. Call your child's teacher if you have a concern. **WWS expects at least one parent per family to attend each class meeting.** We expect parents to attend open houses, educational lectures, workshops and all class meetings.

Home Rhythm and Sleep

A crucial factor in supporting the education we provide at school is the rhythm that a child/student experiences at home. Please allow your child to enjoy 8 to 10 hours of sleep a night. Help your child sleep with a peaceful bedtime story, some soft music or singing, or some quality time with the family.

The intimacy at bedtime of telling a story by candlelight, or looking at a beautiful picture together and discovering its story can smooth away the rush of the day's work. A prayer, said by both parents, the child joining in as he/she becomes familiar with its words, is something that can be looked forward to. Then with the candle blown out by the child and the light from the hallway glimmering, a flute or song can lead the child over to sleep. Similarly, waking in the morning can be helped if music or chimes are heard in the home, instead of the radio or news. The right sounds produced by Father and Mother lead the child into a happy relationship with his day-waking consciousness. This is a stern self-discipline for the adults, but one that helps both child and parents to form a community of life together.

From Audrey E. McAllen, **Sleep**

Timely Arrival and Pick-Up

The opening of each school day is a special moment for the teachers, children and students of the Westside Waldorf School. If morning exercises are interrupted by a late arrival, the whole class is affected and it is uncomfortable for the late comer. **We feel that it is essential for the well-being of the children and their class that they arrive on time. Grades students** who arrive late must go to the office to pick up a late slip, then wait outside the classroom until the teacher determines that their entrance will not disrupt the class in progress. In cases of repetitive lateness, the school may determine that your student's experience is at risk and the school will set up a meeting with the parent.

In **Early Childhood**, if consistently tardy, the parent may be asked to take the child home for that day.

It is equally important that children and students be picked up promptly at the end of the school day. Any child remaining at school 15 minutes after dismissal time will be assigned into our Aftercare Program and parents will be charged accordingly.

Absences

In order for your student to have a successful school experience, absences must be kept to a minimum. The school has the right to call for corrective measures in cases of excessive absences.

Communication With Your Child at School

Messages for a child will only be delivered during breaks unless it is an emergency. Please make every effort to arrange for all after-school activities with your children **before they arrive at school in the morning**. The office phone is not meant for students to arrange play dates with their classmates.

Parents are requested **not** to call the school with messages for students.

The school is not staffed to accommodate the delivery of messages, and the disruption of class when messages are delivered is a problem for students and teachers. Important messages will be given to the class teacher during breaks.

Emergency calls will be delivered immediately to the class teacher.

Lunch and Snack

Lunch time and snack time is a special event for the children. Plain, simple baskets and cloth napkins for Grades 1-3 create an enjoyable atmosphere.

For students Grades 4-8 , backpacks are also acceptable.

Food should be nutritious and balanced. Sugary snacks or desserts and candy as well as soda are not acceptable.

If your child/student is in Aftercare, please be sure to send an additional snack.

Lost and Found

Items left at the school are stored in a lost and found bin for one month, outside on the play grounds in a protective bin. We encourage you to instruct your child to retrieve his/her items weekly out of a sense of respect for clothes you afford them.

Unclaimed items will be given to a charitable organization.

Health Care Guidelines

Your child's health is important to all of us. Each morning we pay special attention to how each child is doing. If we see that your child is developing signs/symptoms of illness during the day, we will be calling you to pick up *your* child and take him/her home. It is very important that you have your current contact numbers on file in the office and that we know where to reach you. We also need a backup phone number and person to contact in case we are not able to reach you.

Please keep your child at home, for his/her own sake and the sake of others if the child:

- Has a fever, or has had one during the previous 24 hours.
- Has a colored or excessive discharge from the nose.
- Has a constant or productive cough.
- Has a skin rash of unknown origin.
- Has vomited within the last 24 hours.
- Has pinworms, head lice or nits, ringworm, impetigo, and pinkeye.
- Displays symptoms associated with communicable disease, such as
Sore throat, reddened eyes, headache, abdominal pain, fever or skin rash.

The teacher will contact the parent to pick up his/her child if, in the teacher's opinion, the child is unable to participate fully in a normal day, whether due to illness, fatigue, or unusual distress. Children should be kept at home if they are not completely well and rested.

If a student becomes ill or is injured

The teacher or office staff will treat the student as follows:

- a. Take his/her temperature
- b. Apply bandages
- c. Use ice packs

If the illness or injury is severe, the office staff will notify the parent or guardian who is expected to come and take the child to a physician or home.

Communicable Diseases

If your child has contracted or been exposed to a communicable disease, the parent needs to notify the school as soon as possible so that we can notify the rest of the school families about the situation.

Medications

Our school is not staffed with medical personnel but our teachers and office staff are trained in CPR and First Aid. If your child needs to take medicine during school hours, the teacher or a staff member may administer this when an authorization note is completed and kept in the child's file.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Westside Waldorf School endeavors to provide our children, faculty and staff with as safe a learning environment as possible. WWS has taken precautions to mitigate potential natural hazards with staff and faculty training as well as equipment. The following sections are an outline of what actions can be expected in the unlikely event of a disaster.

Parents Responsibilities

1. Parents are responsible for the collection of their student(s) from the school's care *as soon as it is safely possible to do so*. It is not the responsibility of WWS to arrange or coordinate the transport of students to parents. WWS will only provide a safe and orderly location for their retrieval.
2. Parents should **identify alternate routes** to and from the school campus, as normal traffic patterns may be disrupted by large events. The school **cannot provide directions**, outside of the student pick-up location.
3. *It is the parent's decision whether or not to bring their child to school* if there is a perceived threat to the transportation to or from the school campuses. The school will provide no decision other than if the school property itself is unsafe for operation. At such a time WWS will make every effort to communicate the event of school closures to the school community.

The Faculty and Staff urge all families to prepare an emergency response plan for home and work. The knowledge that parents are prepared for such an emergency will go far to mitigate the trauma children might face having to be away, perhaps overnight from their family.

Disaster Preparedness

Teachers are instructed in drill and emergency procedures and the children practice fire and earthquake drills regularly during the school year. In the case of an earthquake, children will be released only to their parents, legal guardians or designated emergency contacts.

First Aid

ALL faculty and staff are certified in First Aid and will provide and supply medical attention to the extent of their training, until EMS can arrive after a disaster occurs. All physically challenged students and staff will have another student or staff member assigned to assist them during drill, an evacuation, and emergency situation.

Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake, after the initial shock and as soon as it is safe to do so, children will follow the fire drill procedure for evacuation. They will assemble in the assigned meeting areas. There, the Emergency Command Team will delegate all pre-assigned tasks to pre-arranged teams of faculty, who will form and follow their individual team procedures. A copy of the Fire Drill/Evacuation Procedures is available in the office. The School provides each child with an earthquake kit which supplies food and water for three days.

Structure Fire

In the event of a structure fire, the school body will proceed according to the standard Fire Drill/Evacuation Procedures approved by the Fire Marshal. Everyone must observe the posted evacuation routes and proceed to the pre-determined Assembly Area.

Tsunami

The LA County has issued information regarding tsunamis in our location. Though the McComb campus lies outside of the suggested “inundation area,” the school has identified routes to evacuate to higher ground should such a threat exist (please see Off Campus Assembly Area section). Upon a credible threat to the campus, the school body will evacuate via the standard Fire Drill/Evacuation Procedures, then be routed by the Command Team to the appropriate Off-Campus Assembly Area.

Wild Land Fire

The McComb campus lies close to rural areas where there is a possible, but unlikely threat of wild fire. The school has identified routes to evacuate off-campus should such a threat exist (please see Off Campus Assembly Area section). Upon a credible threat to the campus, the school body will evacuate via the standard Fire Drill/Evacuation Procedures, then be routed by the Command Team to the appropriate Off-Campus Assembly Area.

Off-Campus Assembly Areas for the McComb Campus

Off-Campus Assembly Areas are *only* to be used when the location of the school itself is unsafe. The primary location will be the campus parking lot unless *communicated otherwise*. There are three locations for Off-Campus Assembly for the McComb campus:

- ⤴ **Self-Realization Center** – located directly behind the McComb campus [this location is to be used in the event of tsunami]
- ⤴ **Los Lions** – located directly across the street from the McComb campus, and directly behind the Fire Station [this location is to be used in Structure Fire, or Tsunami]
- ⤴ **Beach Parking** – located at the bottom of Sunset Dr. [this location is to be used in the event of a Structure or Wild land Fire]

Where the severity of the disaster is great enough to interrupt telephone communication throughout the area, or significant enough to disrupt transportation on major highways, or where a disaster situation warrants it, parents, legal guardians or designated Emergency Contacts are requested to pick up their children as soon as possible. **Parents must make arrangements without calling the School.** The School will release a child to the first person who arrives listed on the Emergency Contact Information. The pickup place for all children at the McComb campus is in the parking lot.

The pick-up place for all children at WECC is the parking lot.

As soon as possible following a disaster, a status report will be communicated to the American Red Cross by phone or other available means. **Again, please do not call the School.** In a post-emergency situation, there will be no one available to answer your call. Calls to the School tie up the lines needed to get emergency help.

Out-of-State School Contact

In case of an actual disaster where phone lines are disconnected, we have established the **Shining Mountain Waldorf School, Boulder, Colorado as the out-of-state contact for Westside Waldorf School.** WWS parents and families can contact the Shining Mountain Waldorf School to find out the status of the children, staff and faculty in this emergency situation. Westside Waldorf School will likewise contact them and update their information on our condition and health of everyone at our school.

Their contact information follows:

Shining Mountain Waldorf School 303-444-7697 999 Violet Ave, Boulder, CO 80304
E-mail: info@smwaldorf.org

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

To enhance communication and facilitate constructive problem solving within the Westside Waldorf School Community, the school put into place the OMBUDS (conflict resolution) Group whose purpose is

- ◆ to facilitate problem solving by providing a designated space and time for the resolution of serious issues and concerns;
- ◆ to provide mediation/conflict resolution services as needed;
- ◆ to render other school forums relatively free of complaint/conflict conversation in favor of positive, collaborative community energy;

Confidentiality

In order to provide safety in discussing sensitive concerns, it is the policy of the OMBUDS Group to hold all issues in strict confidence within the group.

Intended Results are a healthy community that strives to communicate clearly, directly, and honestly, and that values the ability to manage resolutions gracefully.

Membership

The OMBUDS Group will assemble appropriate representing from each of the three main bodies of the school: board, faculty, and parents. It meets as needed over issues which have arisen. Concerns can be channeled through the School Director, extension 2.

The OMBUDS Group

- 1) meets as needed
- 2) aids in clarifying the real issue or ‘bottom line’ of your concern;
- 3) aids you in deciding what, if any, action you need to take to feel more resolved;
- 4) facilitates one or more discussions between you and other community member(s) to help clarify and resolve issues and feelings;
- 5) helps recommend a solution
- 6) reports the solution to the Faculty Council & Executive Board Committee as appropriate.

Parent Participation

Our school was started by a parent initiative and literally would not exist without it. Now, when you join Westside Waldorf as a parent, you continue in their footsteps by committing yourself to 50 hours of service to your child's school. Your input, enthusiasm, ideas and energy are welcome and truly needed, but it is also an opportunity for you-to involve yourself with the other families, get to know your teacher, find your sense of community and build a sense of purpose for yourself. It also accomplishes something intrinsic to the Waldorf way, **models stewardship of your community to our children**. We have all come to Waldorf looking for a deeper way to raise our children, and your volunteer hours are part of that change.

There are many channels through which a parent can participate: class meetings, festivals, committee participation, parent education meetings, class projects, lectures and campus tours, field trips, being a class parent, office support, attending school functions, donating to fundraising campaigns, giving your time to help beautify the school or preparing for a festival.

A teacher may designate or a class community may choose one or two representative(s) (**class reps**) at the beginning of the school year. The class reps facilitate communication between parents in the class and the goals and aims of the class activities, the school's Festivals and Fundraising events. Class Reps guide their families into good fits for their community hours and ensure that everyone in their class feels recognized and included.

Westside Waldorf School Festivals

Autumn Festival, October:

Intended to introduce our schools innate creativity to potential new families. We need all hands on deck for set-up, staging, decorating, script writing, acting, break-down and clean-up. This is a great introduction for you, the new families, on to how we celebrate our community, our families and how to create something amazingly creative with our own two hands (perhaps a staple gun or two).

Silent Auction Dinner, March:

An adults only, elegant evening fundraising event. This will include class baskets, which derive their inspiration from things the children make in their classes, and are brought together by crafty class parents into one of a kind handmade objects for the auction.

May Faire, Saturday, May:

A traditional, festive day celebration for the whole family welcoming spring and summer filled with music, Maypole dancing, and community connection. We will celebrate May Faire as a beautiful community picnic, and thereby getting back to the primary purpose of the community festivals, meaning, reconnecting with one another while celebrating our families, our children in welcoming the spring.

STANDING PARENT COMMITTEES

Enrollment/Marketing/Outreach Support

Works closely with the School Director in support of the school's enrollment drive; inspires and trains Westside parents to be ambassadors for the school. Organizes lectures and panel discussions to promote Waldorf education to the community at large.

Hospitality/Practical Support for Enrollment

Helps in set-up (hospitality table, display of outreach material, display of student works on tables and walls, greeting of incoming visitors)

Buildings, Grounds, Beautification of Site

Works together with the Administrative Director, teachers, and parents in maintaining and improving both campuses. Supports health and safety issues on the sites, and helps organize community hands-on workdays.

Scrip Coordination

Scrip brings additional revenue to the school without incurring any additional and is administered by dedicated parents. Essentially, Scrip is a way for businesses to donate a percentage of the sale to the school. This is accomplished in two ways: (1) with the purchase of gift-certificates/pre-paid debit cards in advance or (2) electronically from your credit/debit/grocery cards (escrip).

Diversity Committee

This committee is dedicated to becoming a resource for the Westside Waldorf School on diversity/emotional safety issues, to foster inclusion and connection, to create a safe space as our community strives to release judgment when met with differing viewpoints, to be open and inviting to all teachers and parents, and to positively influence our community to become increasingly more culturally conscious while never losing sight of our appreciation for the Waldorf curriculum, the teachers who impart this to our children, and the richness of the diversity we share together.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA (in alphabetical order by last name)

Ms. Heike Adamsberger-Kosta (Rose Kindergarten). Having had the good fortune to spend a large part of her childhood with her Austrian grandparents Ms. Heike has always been attracted to professions that involve nurturing and healing (in Heike's own words). Ms. Heike received a Bachelor of Science from the Klinikum der J.W. Goethe University in Frankfurt/Main, Germany. Her love for children lead her to teaching in 1996. Following her educational pursuit in California, Ms. Heike received a Certificate in Early Childhood Education from UCLA with a particular emphasis in the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia, Italy. Ms. Heike completed her Waldorf Teacher Training at WISC this past academic year while serving as a full-time early childhood assistant at Highland Hall for the last two years. Ms. Heike joined our early childhood faculty in the fall 2010.

Mr. Severin Behnen's, (Ph.D), professional musical career spans teaching musicianship, music appreciation, music theory at university levels, composing for, performing in and directing a variety of theater projects in New York and Los Angeles. Mr. Behnen earned a Ph.D. in Music Composition at UC, Los Angeles, a Master of Arts in Music Composition from the California Institute of the Arts, L.A. and a B.A. from the Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, MN.

Ms. Cheryl Bommarito Klein (Sunflower Nursery) has held lead Kindergarten positions at the Singing Winds Waldorf School and at Avalon, Chicago. Prior to her studies at the Arcturus Rudolf Steiner Education Program, Ms. Klein worked as a main class teacher of 26 Kindergarteners in the Chicago Public School System following the completion of her K-8 Teaching Certification at the Dominican University. Ms. Klein is a graduate in Anthropology from UC Santa Barbara (Magna Cum Laude). Ms. Cheryl has been a member of our early childhood faculty since the fall of 2008.

Ms. Jessica Breakey (Class Teacher) holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education and a BA in Social Science from the University of Cape Town. She completed her Certificate in Steiner/Waldorf Education in 1990 and began her teaching career at the Constantia Waldorf School, Cape Town, South Africa. In the Fall of 2001, the Greenwich Steiner School in London, offered her the position of class teacher and Faculty Chairperson; she held both positions for six years. Ms. Breakey came to WWS in September 2008, took on our then First Grade with the commitment to guide these children through Grade 8.

Born in Australia, **Ms. Luisa Burgess'** (After School Program Manager) Waldorf teaching career began in London, September 2005. Ms. Burgess holds a certificate of completion in Anthroposophic Studies from the Parsifal College, Sydney Australia, and a Diploma in Waldorf Teaching from the London Teacher Training Seminar. Prior to her teaching career, Ms. Burgess was an actor with New Zealand Television. Ms. Burgess accepted WWS' invitation to shepherd our then Sixth Grade (September 2008) to their graduation in 2011.

Liis Edwards, Lavender Kindergarten Teacher, has served in the capacity of Early Childhood Lead Teacher at Highland Hall for seventeen years. She has served in many roles at Highland Hall: Kindergarten Chair, Leadership Team member, College of Teacher member, CARE committee and Buildings and Grounds group. Ms. Edwards received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Illinois and her Waldorf training from the Waldorf Institute of Santa Monica in 1993. Ms. Edwards joined WWS in September 2011.

Ms. Heather Eisenhardt (Class Teacher) earned her MA in Geography at the Eastern Michigan University where she also applied her knowledge by teaching undergraduates in World Regional Geography and Earth Sciences from 2000 – 2006. Following her transition to California, Ms. Heather has been teaching her academic specialties (Natural Environments, Urban Geography, Introduction to Human Landscapes) at Santa Monica College and most recently served as High School teacher of Economics at the Highland Hall Waldorf School. Since beginning her studies (July 2008) at the Waldorf Institute of Southern California, Ms. Heather has sought out opportunities to observe Waldorf teachers in elementary classroom settings and consequently fell in love with the younger child. She joined our WWS faculty in the fall of 2010.

Ms. Kristen Green (Daisy Nursery Teacher) completed her Waldorf Teacher Training the Rudolf Steiner College in San Francisco. Ms. Kristen holds a B.A. in Apparel Design from the Mount Mary University in Milwaukee, WI. She was a Kindergarten teacher at the Boulder Waldorf Kindergarten in Colorado and has been at WWS since 2002 in the capacity of Kindergarten and Nursery teacher.

Mr. Philip Guest (Class Teacher) has a degree in Fine Art from the Gwent College of Arts and Design and a Diploma in Waldorf Education from the University of Plymouth. Prior to teaching he worked as both a performance artist and a technical consultant in corporate interior design. He began teaching at the Waldorf School of Orange County where he guided his first class from fourth through eighth grades, graduating a class of twenty-two students in 2005. Mr. Guest relocated to the WWS in 2006/07, stepping in to lead the Third Grade who are completing their WWS journey as the class of 2012.

Ms. Nelly Ivano (Class Teacher) holds an MA in elementary school education and a BA in Journalism from the Sofia University, Bulgaria. Continuing her *studies abroad* in Boston, Massachusetts, Ms. Nelly received a Masters of Arts in Movement/ Dance Therapy from the Lesley University in Boston and is certified in Homeopathy from the London College of Classical Homeopathy. During her 22 years of teaching movement, mime and dance in colleges and theatres, Ms. Nelly also worked with Marcel Marceau, and taught at Comedia del'Arte. Ms. Nelly is presently completing her anthroposophical studies at WISC. She has been at the Westside Waldorf School since January 2001.

Ms. Jessica King, Strings Teacher, received her MA from the Boston Conservatory following her graduation from Florida State University with a B.A. of Music in Violin Performance. Ms. Jessica studied Suzuki Method for seven years in Kinston, NC. From 1993 to the present, she was awarded nearly one dozen Instrument Accolades amidst a plethora of professional touring performances in England, North Carolina, Florida, Massachusetts, and California. She has been a **violin and cello instructor** in various Music Studios in Santa Monica, Burbank and Hermosa Beach as well as in private practice.

Ms. Leda Kozikowski (ClassTeacher) is a graduate of the Waldorf Institute of Southern California. Prior to graduating from WISC, she earned an AFA with honors from the Delaware College of Art & Design where she majored in photography. Ms. Leda has been teaching and assisting in Waldorf classrooms both here and at Highland Hall and recently abroad in the Duesseldorfer Waldorfschule, Germany. She has also taught high school clay sculpting, English and Art. Considering herself as a life-long learner, Ms. Leda lists education, spirituality, community, yoga and hiking among her perpetual pursuits. Ms. Leda is joining WWS for the 2010/11 school year as the class teacher of Grade One.

Ms. Gita L. Labrentz (School Director) For the past twenty-three years, Gita has developed, administered and taught in four Waldorf Schools. During her academic teaching career, Ms. Gita taught at Stanford University, the University of UC, Irvine, and served as Dean of Humanities at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Born in Germany, Ms. Gita studied at the University of Heidelberg and Berlin where she earned her MAGISTER ARTIUM. She holds an MA from UCI and a Ph.D. from Stanford University. She also succeeded as a free-lance writer/director of documentary dramas for German Television, ZDF and as writer, director and co-producer of the Santa Barbara Madwomen Repertory Theater. Ms. Gita came to WWS in August 2006.

Mr. Alexander Marchand (Class Teacher) began his teaching career in Theater Arts in 1992 in Houston, TX, then transferred his career to California, teaching writing and critical thinking to High School students (LAUSD) and College students at the California Institute of the Arts. As Head of the Theatre Arts Department and Humanities at the Academy of Liberal Studies in Los Angeles, he directed theatre production programs for grades 9-12. Mr. Marchand earned an MFA in Critical Studies & Writing from the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia after completing a BA in Asian Studies at Connecticut College in 1989. Mr. Marchand joined WWS in 2008 while also working towards the completion of his Waldorf Teaching Certificate at WISC.

Ms. Gergana Minkova (Petunia Nursery) joined the early childhood faculty at the Westside Waldorf School in 2003. She brought with her a M.A. in elementary and preschool education from the Sofia University in Bulgaria, with special emphasis in Audiology and Speech Therapy in addition to a two year study of the Tao Buddhist Tradition at the New Bulgarian University in Sofia, Bulgaria. Following her transition to America, Ms. Gergana completed a three-year training in Waldorf Community Counseling at the Antioch University in New England.

Anjum Mir, (Parent/Toddler Program) Many years ago, Miss Anjum began her own schooling with one forgotten year in a Waldorf kindergarten in Ann Arbor Michigan. She went on to get a degree in Literary Journalism and Anthropology from Boson University and a Degree in Education from the University of Texas at Austin. A published writer, she has worked as an associate editor of a small national magazine, freelanced for a number of publications, and authored a non-fiction book. Prior to her work as an early childhood teacher, she has taught both high school and middle school in public and private schools. Now a mother of four, she was lead back to Waldorf Education through a desire to find beauty for her first child.

Ms. Mariko Okoshi (Japanese Teacher) graduated from Miyagi Gakuin Women's Junior College in Japan with a Diploma in Childhood Education. Following a ten year teaching period in Kindergartens, both in Japan and the United States, she taught Japanese to children and adults at Westwood Academy, Los Angeles, for two years. Ms. Mariko completed her Waldorf teacher training at WISC in 2006 and joined WWS in September 2003.

Ms Annette Parry (Games Teacher K - 8th) joined Westside Waldorf in 2009. She brought with her a wealth of movement experiences, including Spacial Dynamics, Bothmer Gymnastics, as well as the experience in various sports and coaching positions she held. After fourteen years in the Royal Navy, Ms. Annette went into Sports Education, developing programs for the community, schools and colleges. She started her Waldorf training in 2001 with the Foundation Studies Course and completed her certificate in Spatial Dynamics in the summer of 2011.

Alessandra Lisa Profumo is beginning her third cycle of shepherding children from Grade 1 through Grade 8. She completed two cycles at Highland Hall Waldorf School in Northridge. Her long teaching career includes Nursery and Kindergarten lead positions in Los Angeles, Santa Monica, at Wildwood Elementary, Guest Teacher/Lecturer at WISC, Workshop Facilitation with AWSNA, N.A.E.Y.C., the Jewish Education Federation, among others. Ms. Profumo's holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education, a Master of Arts in Educational Psychology and the Waldorf Education Certificate from WISC/WISM.

Ms. Tina Quirino (Educational Support Teacher) has an M. Ed in Non-Formal Education from the University of the Philippines and a BS in Psychology from Assumption College. She worked as a research assistant for non-profit groups and as an illustrator for women's groups prior to teaching. She assisted in the Kindergarten in the first Waldorf school in the Philippines. In 1999 she moved to the US and continued her Waldorf teacher training at the Center for Educational Renewal in Santa Rosa. She earned her certificate in 2002 and completed her California Teaching Credential in 2006. She began teaching in Waldorf-methods charter schools in 2001. She continues her studies for Extra Lesson (a therapeutic approach to learning difficulties) at the Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks.

Ms. Kimberly L. Raine (Orchid Kindergarten) brings with her 15 years of experience working at the Waldorf School of Orange County where she taught Kindergarten and Grades 1-3. She completed her Early Childhood Teacher Training at the Rudolf Steiner College in Sacramento. Ms. Kimberly has a degree in Interior Design from The Interior Designers Institute in Newport Beach, CA. She joined the Westside faculty in the fall of 2009.

Ms. K.T. Reilly (Woodwork Teacher) spent a lot of time in her grandfather's woodshop as a child. The sawdust must have gotten into her bones. She grew up in Pacific Palisades and

Santa Monica. She got a B.S. in accounting from Loyola Marymount University in 1986. After working for years in accounting she knew it was time for a new direction and took an apprenticeship with a furniture maker and got to weld for the first time. That lit a fire to becoming a metal fabricator/welder for many years, making furniture and art installations. That led to teaching welding to adults, which led to teaching kids woodworking on the woodworking bus. In 2006 she received her Masters in Spiritual Psychology from the University of Santa Monica and the day after graduating she started with WWS.

Ms. Maria Ripoll (Handwork Teacher) was born in Argentina, and graduated in Buenos Aires with an equivalent of a BA in Fashion Design, after which she moved to Singapore where she graduated also as a Graphic Designer and worked there for a period of eight years. She spent one year in Europe during a transitional move with her family, prior settling in Los Angeles, CA. In 2004, after a year of having her daughter in the nursery at WWS, she was offered the Handwork Teacher position, for which she trained during three summers with her mentor Elizabeth Seward. She has attended the San Diego Summer training, for Therapeutic Teaching, Biodynamic Gardening and Teaching through the Crafts conferences at the Rudolf Steiner College.

Ms. Rachel A. Schmid (Eurythmy) teaches the in Nursery, Kindergarten and all Grades. She studied Eurythmy in Dornach Switzerland at the Lea Van der Pals Academy and in Hannover Germany at the Merz Theater. After the Waldorf teacher training in Stuttgart she collected profound teaching experience during seven years at the Christian Morgenstern Schule, Wuppertal, for lower and middle elementary as well as High School. Six years of stage work followed, during which she was a member of the Goetheanum Buehne, Ensemble E chore and various independent stage productions. In addition to her mother tongue German she learned basic Italian and French during her travels through Europe. She also studied flute, piano and singing and continues her study of movement as well as the history of various dance styles.

Ms. Mari Shintani (Class Teacher) was born in Japan and raised in the Republic of Panama where she attended the Canal Zone College until her move to Hawaii where she completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Horticulture Technology and minored in the Marine Option Program. Halfway through her masters program in Horticulture, her heart led her to Education. Ms. Mari completed work towards the International Diploma for Early Childhood from the London Montessori Centre. Following her return to Hawaii, she pursued her interest in the Waldorf education and became the First Grade Class Teacher at the Honolulu Waldorf School in 2002. She guided this class through the Fifth Grade. Ms. Mari joined the Westside Waldorf School community as a class teacher in 2007.

Rich Smith (Eurythmy Accompanist) studied piano with Bob Winter at the Boston Pops Orchestra. He holds a Diploma in Songwriting from Berklee College of Music, Boston. Mr. Smith served four honorable years in the United States Air Force, including one and a half years touring as pianist in the Air Force's renowned "Tops in Blue," performing with Bob Hope. Mr. Smith is a composer, bandleader, producer, recording engineer, piano technician, and graphic designer. Mr. Smith has been accompanying the Eurythmy classes at WWS since 1999.

Ms. Ines van Gelderen Camano (Violet Nursery Teacher) completed her Waldorf training at WISC in Early Childhood and Foreign Languages. She taught Spanish (Grade 1-10) for ten years at Highland Hall. She has mentored Spanish teachers at HH, Pasadena and WWS and taught courses in Early Childhood. She has been a Nursery teacher at WWS for nine years.

Waldorf Reading List For Parents

www.WhyWaldorfWorks.org (A web site, rich in information & resources)

www.awsna.org (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America)

www.rsc@steinercollege.org (Bookstore and Teacher Training)

www.waldorfworld.org (Resource, Networking)

Overview of Curriculum and Philosophy:

Waldorf Education: A Family Guide, by Pamela Johnson Fenner and Karen L. Rivers. An overview and deeper understanding of the Waldorf curriculum from 1st grade through high school, a peek into early childhood and the Waldorf kindergarten, the how and why of specialty subjects such as knitting, sewing, eurythmy (a form of dance movement unique to Waldorf) a look at rhythm, festivals and special celebrations.....and how does this fit with your family's lifestyle?

THE WAY OF THE CHILD by A. C. Harwood. An excellent introduction to Waldorf education; particularly valuable for its clear explanation of how Waldorf education is integrated with the fundamental stages of child development.

EDUCATION TOWARDS FREEDOM by Frans Carlgren.

This sumptuous volume, filled with color and black & white images, is the perfect introduction to Waldorf education. Following an opening section, entitled "Rudolf Steiner and His Ideas on Education," the evolution of the child from the preschool to high school years is described in detail in terms of psycho-spiritual development and curriculum.

THE KINGDOM OF CHILDHOOD by Rudolf Steiner.

A lecture series given by the founder of Waldorf education in 1924, which is full of insight on the developing child, especially in relation to classroom work.

THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS, BY Rudolf Steiner. Steps towards Imaginative Knowledge. Published by Rudolf Steiner Press.

ALL YEAR ROUND BY Ann Oruitt, Christine Fynes-Clinton, Marije Rewling.

Brimming with stories, poems, activities, things to make and songs, All Year Round offers a friendly guide to the seasonal round of festivals. It contains wealth of experience that can help families find their own way around the year. As the authors say, "the words are ours, the festivals are yours."

Early Childhood:

Beyond the Rainbow Bridge by Barbara Patterson and Pamela Bradley. Find out more about how your child grows and learns about the world, what are the 12 senses and how you can nourish them, creating balance in your family life and how Waldorf education supports the whole child.

You Are Your Child's First Teacher by Rahima Baldwin Dancy. Out of her research and her experience as a Waldorf early childhood teacher, she answers the question: "What can parents do with, and for their children from birth to age six that will enhance their development without having negative effects at a later age?"

How Children Play by Ingeborg Haller. Imaginative play is a vital element in the growth of the preschool child. A child's freedom to play lies at the root of a happy and well balanced attitude to work and responsibilities in later life.

STORYTELLING AND THE ART OF IMAGINATION BY Nancy Mellon Published by Element Books.

Elementary Grades:

School as a Journey: The Eight Year Odyssey of a Waldorf Teacher and his Class by Torin Finser. A lively, colorful and absorbing account of one class teacher's journey from Grade 1–8 in a Waldorf School. Filled with pedagogical gems, tips and resources, it will also be invaluable to current class teachers.

The Measure of Our Success: A Letter to My Children and Yours by Marion Wright Edelman. A compassionate message for parents trying to raise moral children and a message of hope and purpose for everyone.

RHYTHMS OF LEARNING -WHAT WALDORF EDUCATION OFFERS CHILDREN, PARENTS AND TEACHERS BY Roberto Trostli, Selected Lectures by Rudolf Steiner. Trostli, an experienced Waldorf teacher, has selected lectures by Steiner that best illustrate the fundamentals of this unique approach to children and education. In each chapter, Trostli explains Steiner's concepts and describes how they work in the contemporary Waldorf classroom. This collection is the clearest introduction to the ideas of Waldorf education currently available.

WALDORF EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM RESOURCE GUIDE.
Published by Rudolf Steiner College Bookstore. www.rscbookstore.com

Additional recommended Readings

ENDANGERED MINDS BY JANE HEALY

EVOLUTION'S END BY Joseph Chilton Pearce
These two books document recent mainstream research into the crisis of modern education, the effects of television on child development, and what we can do about it.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE BY Daniel Goleman. Why it can matter more than IQ. (A Coast-to-Coast Bestseller). Published by Bantam Books.

FRAMES OF MIND BY Howard Gardner. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Published by BasicBooks.

THE CHILD AND THE MACHINE BY Alison Armstrong & Charles Casement. Why computers may put our children's education at risk. A thoroughly scientific and scholarly best-seller in Canada. Published by Key Porter Books, Canada.

GROWING UP TOO FAST TOO SOON by David Elkind (author of *The Hurried Child, The New Family Imbalance*). Makes a detailed examination of the world of today's children to see where the hurrying occurs and why. He gives parents and teachers insight and hope for encouraging healthy development while protecting the joy and freedom of childhood.

THE CHILDREN OF CYCLOPS BY Keith Buzzell. The Influence of Television Viewing on the Developing Human Brain. Published by AWSNA.

Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling by John Taylor Gatto. In his 26 years of award winning teaching in New York City's public schools, Gatto has found that independent study, community service, large doses of solitude, and a thousand different apprenticeships with adults of all walks of life are the keys to helping children break the thrall of our conforming society.

RENEWAL. A Journal for Waldorf Education. Published quarterly by The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA) www.awsna.org

LILIPOH. A Magazine dedicated to living a life enhanced through understanding. A practical guide to holistic living. (published by Lilipoh, P.O.Box 628, Phoenixville, PA 19460) www.lilipoh.com

***Behold the flower:
It is a butterfly
Bound to the earth.
Behold the butterfly:
It is a flower
Set free!***

(Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Introductory Verse to Grade 5 Botany)

Westside Waldorf School Media Guidelines

***Updated 2011**

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Introduction

Why did Westside Waldorf School create media guidelines?

For some time, the pitch of parents' and teachers' requests for the school to make a clear statement about media use has been rising. We embarked on this project in response to requests from parents and teachers who are trying as best they can to provide a healthy environment for the children. Many people know that the deleterious effects of television and media are far ranging, from the obvious (the encouragement of gross consumerism), to the more subtle (the impact on neurological development). We can only touch upon a few issues here. However, publications, websites and other resources are listed for those who wish to do further research on the subject.

Why media guidelines? Why not a policy?

When preparing this document, we solicited input from the entire Westside Waldorf School community. We received suggestions ranging from, "People should make their own choices." to, "The school should make parents sign an agreement about media use, and not renew contracts of those who will not do so."

But we are all striving human beings and in the end, the input we received convinced us to lay out the logic and reasoning behind the media issue. Hopefully, this will give parents an opportunity to come in freedom to a position of enthusiastic support of the school's position. We have stated our recommendations as goals, recognizing that parents are starting this journey with differing attitudes and rules about media use in their homes. We begin talking about our position on media from the moment parents begin conversations with us about enrolling their children. If you find that your family has a fundamentally different point of view, it is probably not just about the media issue, and it is possible that we are not the right school for you. That said, it is our fervent hope and wish that after you have read the compelling reasons behind our media guidelines, you would decide to adopt them in your own family.

Who created this document?

An Ad Hoc Media Guidelines Committee was formed and comprised by parents and teachers from a number of Southern California Waldorf schools. Our goal was to gather input from across the entire school community, find what consensus we could around the issue of regulating media use among our students and produce guidelines that reflected that consensus. These guidelines were respectfully compiled, written, edited and produced by the committee.

What are other schools doing?

As a Waldorf School, we are part of a worldwide movement dedicated to supporting the healthy development of children. Many other Waldorf Schools across the globe have such guidelines or policies; in fact, our committee researched those produced by some twenty other Waldorf schools from across the United States and Canada. While some have worded their documents more stringently as policies, all have found that guidelines such as these go a long way to support parents in keeping their children as healthy as possible.

Pedagogical Background

Intentional community

Families come to Waldorf education actively seeking developmentally appropriate experiences so their children might grow into interested as well as interesting people who one day might contribute something to the world. In that sense, Waldorf schools are intentional communities populated by people who have discovered that schools based on Rudolf Steiner's philosophy and pedagogy not only provide the support parents have been looking for but also answer quite beautifully the educational needs of children.

Thus, when enrolling our children in Westside Waldorf School, we commit not only to the school's mission and educational philosophy, but also to a home life that complements and supports these values. We join like-minded parents in tacit agreement to uphold them. The success of our community depends partly on the degree to which each individual's actions resonate with and confirm these goals. The consequences of differing levels of parental commitment fall largely to the children, who must live with the results of their parents' choices.

Children tend to self-select friendships and/or play groups at school partly based on what they are exposed to outside of school. If several children see a particular movie or TV program, or listen to a particular kind of music, or are allowed to IM each other well into the evening, then their conversations and/or play at school reflect those experiences. Any child who has not shared those experiences cannot participate. So, here we have social exclusion based on media exposure, an unfortunate criterion, indeed, for choosing friends or playmates. Parents who have made a choice for less media exposure want to know that they can count on the other parents to have similar values, so that when the children go to school, they will be safe from media influence..

In every Waldorf school the parents grow in partnership over the eight or more years they spend together. They experience developmental challenges together, compare notes, and offer one another helpful suggestions. Parents do this best when they are operating from common understandings and agreements. It is possible for significant differences in family media choices to create an environment of mistrust, and somewhat erode the efficacy of the community of adults who should be coming together in support of the children. When the parents agree to work from the same assumptions and ground rules, their collective wisdom can create an even more supportive environment for their children.

Westside Waldorf School's *Mission and Educational Philosophy* begins:

In our work with children, we strive to:

- ❖ Educate each child to embrace the wonder and challenge of the world while achieving academic proficiency
- ❖ Nurture each child's imagination while educating the intellect and encouraging the development of a healthy body and social life
- ❖ Teach so that each child might become a confident, capable person with integrity and a sense of social and environmental responsibility

In our educational program we:

- ❖ Recognize the spiritual nature of the human being, and therefore present a Waldorf curriculum designed to cultivate the child's unfolding and awakening capacities, based on Rudolf Steiner's view of child development
- ❖ Educate children from early childhood through eighth grade so that they arrive at concepts through imaginative, artistic, and experiential activities.

Our media guidelines are meant to outline some principles for nurturing physically, emotionally and spiritually healthy children while navigating the terrain of modern life. The ideals in our mission statement inform everything we do, including our media guidelines.

The wonder and challenge of the world

Challenges are the vehicles through which human beings grow emotionally and socially, develop self-worth, and discover who they really are. Any time a child is not actively engaged in the world itself, she is not busy encountering its wonder and challenge. Even the root of the word "media" connotes something coming between. Passive (mediated) experiences cannot help us grow in the same way as direct, first person experiences. Children need to be *in* the world, not watching it on a screen; they must chafe against real human beings, and laugh with them, not observe actors or pre-recorded representations of people. Even "educational" programming removes the child from the real world, preventing her from experiencing firsthand its miracles, puzzles, jubilation, and unbearable heartache.

The imagination

One of the seminal directives in Waldorf education is to nurture the child's imagination. Why? During the school day, teachers articulate the curriculum in vibrant, lively, compelling images, leaving the child free to create her own internal pictures. But a child who has already seen someone else's pictures, even if these images are beautiful, has been robbed of the opportunity to form her own. These pre-formed images not only impact a child's ability to use her imagination, they also have the effect of deadening the imaginative space. This precious space is where all of the child's lessons and social interactions are processed, allowing her the ability to draw conclusions and form concepts, to understand mathematics, to build reading skills and to work out social challenges. Thus, the wondrous work that the Waldorf curriculum continues to perform on children *after* they leave the classroom can be seriously compromised if media has been allowed.

Young children are vulnerable in that they do not separate themselves from what they experience, including what they see. They internalize what they are shown as their own pictures and take all of what they view as real. Older children are vulnerable in that media exposure often tends to encourage them to become cynical, closed, and diffident, and many then feel compelled to pursue an early path to adolescence. If we consider each of a child's experience as literal "food for thought" then we can begin to appreciate that a diet of content which has been pre-digested and fed to our children could not possibly be as healthy and enlivening as one in which our own stories present food for the imagination. In this way, we are providing opportunities to digest living content and shaping the stage upon which the young person creates the play of his or her own life.

Healthy body

Medical studies attribute the epidemic of obesity in this country partly to sedentary lifestyles. But as we hardly need this evidence to conclude that active play is more helpful to children's developing bodies than sitting in front of a screen. Further, the pace of media today increases distractibility in children and reinforces the need for instant gratification. Children *need* rhythmic, carefully paced activity in order to develop and learn properly.

Healthy social life

TV and film require difficulties to be settled in pre-determined, unrealistic increments and give children few possibilities to see true problem-solving skills modeled. Media often exposes children to a great many character traits we do not wish to see them mirror such as sarcasm and rampant disrespect of self, of others and of property. In addition, children need live interaction with other children to learn how to work out social challenges. Children who lack social skills are much more prone to exhibit anti-social behavior such as teasing and bullying.

Confident, capable people with a sense of social and environmental responsibility

With few exceptions, the representation of people in the media is designed to cultivate viewership. Conflict must occur and be fomented in order to keep viewers coming back for more. People of exceptional character, quality personal interactions, and positive human attributes rarely get airplay. The way people treat each other, the way they speak to on another, even the way they conduct themselves when no one is looking all present a picture of human behavior. Children often become what they see. Certainly we do not want our children to aspire to be the negative role models they so often experience on the screen. Moreover, stereotyping is rampant in the entertainment industry. Pre-formed images of races, cultures, genders, whole categories of people overwhelm the inimitability of individuals and their unique roles in the world. Environmental responsibility requires that we understand how our actions impact the world beyond our own doorstep. The culture of materialism promulgated by media is directly at odds with this philosophy. Our youngest children have become the new darlings of marketing tactics, the goal of which is to grow brand awareness and loyalty even before the target, the preschool child, ever sets foot in school.

The spiritual: Whom are we educating?

The human being is, at its very essence, a spiritual entity. If we encounter the child before us as much more than just a physical being, we begin to conceive that all of the child's experiences, and our every interaction with her, have far greater impact than we could have ever imagined. Therefore, our task is to provide healthy spiritual food. Not only are artificial, vicarious, virtual experiences not healthy, they actually dull the organs critical to healthy spiritual growth. Steiner admonishes teachers to remember three paramount elements in the education of the school-age child: truth, beauty, and goodness. It is difficult to imagine almost any form of media conforming to any one of those, much less all three.

The child's unfolding and awakening capacities

While teachers do not teach anthroposophy *to* the children, they do teach from the anthroposophical view of the human being. Rudolf Steiner indicated that the child develops in stages and with each phase, new capacities are born. For healthy development each stage must be addressed at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way. While a child can outwardly seem intellectually capable of processing all kinds of information, introducing particular content before the child is ready to receive it, or presenting it as one would to a child at a different developmental phase, sets up a very real impediment to the proper processing of the information at the appropriate developmental time.

Arriving at concepts through imaginative, artistic, and experiential activities

Another core element in a Waldorf curriculum is that we do not begin with concepts but with a series of multi-faceted activities that lead the children to arrive at concepts themselves. This active process ensures that children internalize what they are learning, and are far more likely to understand and retain the information. Passive exposure, even to the same information, will have a far different effect. Abstract, intellectual approaches to learning are not developmentally appropriate until after puberty. The beauty of nature cultivates a deep, soulful connection to the stream of creation that gives a child the proper background to focus later on developing intellectual faculties.

Who is providing commercial content?

We really do not know, do we? We are careful about choosing play date companions, but we give our children up to TV programming, films, commercials, music content, and video games created with the goal of selling something to them. The billions of dollars spent by advertisers to manipulate consumers, especially children, dwarf parents' efforts to counter marketing techniques after the fact.

What do teachers see at school?

Granted, this is subjective. But of the children who return to school on any given Monday or on the heels of a vacation, the teachers find that they can fairly easily identify those who have had a diet of media. It manifests in many arenas: physical demeanor, attention, interest in encountering the lesson, quality of work, social issues in class and on the playground. What do we tend to see in healthy children who are supported at home in being media-free? We encounter children who are alert, interested, active, industrious, have longer attention spans and do not need to be entertained to stay engaged. We also see children who are excited about learning, who participate enthusiastically, who are less likely to judge and criticize others, who persevere, even when a task gets challenging and finally, children who see their teachers as authorities and their peers as partners.

Research and Resources

Imagination

The child is developing the faculty to form her own mental pictures, her internal mechanisms for imagery. In imposing others' images, television stunts the child's critical development of imagination. The child begins to rely on external sources rather than calling up her own internal pictures.

Visual System

The development of certain visual skills is critical to a child's capacity to focus and pay attention and later, to read. "The ability to search out, scan, focus and identify" what enters the visual field is impaired by watching television and movies. When children watch television, they do not dilate their pupils and have little eye movement at all. A lack of use of the eye muscles can cause a weakening which will negatively impact the ability and effort required for reading. Dilation of the pupils and tracking and following are part of the reticular activating system, which is the gateway to the right and left hemispheres of the brain.

Hearing System

The hair-like cells in the inner ear convert sound waves to electrical impulses that get sent to the brain. These cells, which do not regenerate, can be destroyed by loud sounds. The type of hearing loss once common in aging adults is showing up in younger and younger people. Newer ear bud-style headphones which are placed directly into the ear and can boost the sound signal by as much as nine decibel (dB), are even more likely to cause hearing loss than the older muff style. Not only do children listen at a more intense sound level but also with the longer battery life and storage capacity of modern music players, they are listening longer. Students at Wichita State University had the output of their MP3 players' signals measured, and on average, they were listening at 110-120 dB- the equivalent of a rock concert. This level is high enough to sustain hearing loss after only one hour and fifteen minutes of listening.

James Battey, Director of the National Institute of Health's National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders said, "All of these devices (portable MP3 players) have maximum sound output levels that range from 115 to 130 dB, which is comparable to the sound level of a jet engine." Apple Computer Inc. has recently introduced a software update for iPods that lets parents set a maximum volume limit on the device.

Health Concerns (Obesity, Diabetes)

Obesity and type II diabetes are epidemic in the United States. One in ten children in the United States is obese. American children spend an average of four hours per day watching television, not only an inherently sedentary activity but also one which stimulates a desire for, and consumption of unhealthy food. Studies showed that approximately seventy-five percent of advertising during children's programming was for junk food, such as sugary cereals, candy, and highly processed sugary snacks. Television promotes unhealthy eating and an unhealthy lifestyle.

Body Image/ Anorexia nervosa/ Bulimia nervosa

In 1995 television was introduced to Fiji. Prior to the introduction of TV, only three percent of young girls in a survey by Anne Becker, anthropologist at Harvard Medical School, reported using vomiting to control weight. Three years later, fifteen percent of girls did it. Becker believes the sudden influence of Western Cultural images and values is changing the way Fijian girls view themselves and their bodies. In a 1994 survey of female undergrads at a large Midwestern university, a researcher found fifteen percent of the women met the criteria for eating disorder. The study, recently published in the *Journal of Communication*, shows that watching TV as well as reading magazines that depict and promote thinness, significantly predict symptoms of women's eating disorders. "We... found an undeniable influence of mass media in the genesis and maintenance of these [life threatening] disorders." To prevent the observed increase in prevalence and incidence of eating disorders among adolescents, it is appropriate to control the messages, myths, and falsehood propagated by media, TV in particular."

Neurological Development/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ("ADHD")

Television viewing, even educational shows and videos, is rewiring our children's brains. The quickly changing images and sounds of the television prevent our higher-thought brain (neocortex) from becoming involved. According to Ron Kaufman, "[as] time is cut up, the brain is conditioned to change at the expense of continuity of thought." A 2004 study in the *Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics* shows a correlation between hours of television viewing and subsequent attention problems. Watching television or videos can cause permanent changes in the developing neural pathways, putting the child at increased risk for ADHD. The study showed that for every hour per day of television viewing at ages one and three, the child has an almost ten percent higher chance of developing attention problems by age seven. "Educational" programming is also problematic. Yale University Family Television Research and Consultation Center reports, "Sesame Street creates a psychological orientation in children that leads to a shortened attention span, a lack of the ability to reflect and an expectation of rapid change in the broader environment." In addition, some psychologists point to the possibility that viewing is literally addictive, that it changes brain function in the same way chemical dependency does.

Disrespect and Vulgar Behavior

Approximately eighty percent of respondents in a poll in April 2002, believed not only that a lack of respect and courtesy is a serious national problem but also that it continues to worsen. Behaviors such as increased aggressiveness, lack of consideration of others, and public vulgarity are normalized by increasingly vulgar and rude television shows. Experts believe that television has shaped and accelerated this trend. Children watch these shows, see the behavior as normal, and can no longer judge when they are socially inappropriate.

Violence/Desensitization/Culture of Fear

According to the American Psychiatric Association, by age eighteen, an American child will have seen 16,000 simulated murders and 200,000 simulated acts of violence.

Countless studies show that children watching television or playing video games are at risk for learning to behave violently. In July, 2000, the American Medical Association and the American Pediatric Association made this joint statement to Congress: "Well over 1,000 studies point overwhelmingly to a casual connection between media violence and aggressive behavior in some children." The majority of these studies reach the same conclusion: television and film violence can lead to real-world violence. A study of population data for various countries showed homicide rates doubling within ten to fifteen years after the introduction of television, even though the introductions occurred at different times in each site examined.

Some research also demonstrates that cumulative exposure to media violence can desensitize the viewer to real-life acts of violence. According to the American Psychological Association, children who regularly watch violence on TV are more fearful and distrustful of the world, less bothered by violence, and slower to intervene or call for help when they are fighting or involved in destructive behavior.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder ("PTSD")

"Media viewing of tragic events is sufficient to produce PTSD symptoms in vulnerable populations such as children. Given the links between PTSD symptoms and viewing habits, parental monitoring of media exposure may be important for younger children."

Notes

1. Buzzell, K. (1998). *The Children of Cyclops: The influence of Television Viewing on the Developing Human Brain*. Fair Oaks, CA: AWSNA
2. Ibid.
3. Johnson, S. M.D. (1999). "Stranger in Our Homes: TV and Our Children's Minds," Inform, *The Newsletter of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America*.
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10. Christakis, D.; Zimmerman, F.; DiGiuseppe, D.; McCarty, C.; *Pediatrics*. 2004 Apr; 113(4):708-13. Retrieved April 25th, 2007 from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/113/4/708>
11. Jackman, J. Changing the Channels. Retrieved April 25, 2007 from <http://www.changingchannels.org/effects4htm>
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13. Centerwall, B.S. (1989). Exposure to television as a cause of violence. *Public Communication and Behavior* (Vol.2, pp. 1-58). New York: Academic Press.
14. Otto, M.; Henin, A.; Hirshfeld-Becker, D.; Pollack, M.; Biederman, J.; Rosenbaum, J.; *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*. 2007 Jan 10. Retrieved April 25, 2007 from http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi?db=pubmed&list_uids=17276653&cmd=Retrieve

Resources

These publications and websites may also be of interest. Of course, this list is in no way exhaustive, and Westside Waldorf School does not necessarily endorse any of these resources.

Publications

Alliance for Childhood. *Tech Tonic: Towards a New Literacy of Technology*
Buzzell, Keith. *The Children of Cyclops*
Chilton, Pearce, Joseph. *Evolution's End: Claiming the Potential of Our Intelligence*
Everett, Miles. *How Television Poisons Children's Minds*
Healy, Jane. *Endangered Minds: Why Our Children Don't Think*
Johnson, S. M.D. "Strangers in Our Homes: TV and OUR Children's Minds,"
Fall/Winter, 1999 issue of *Inform, The Newsletter of the Associate of Waldorf Schools of North America*.
Kelman, Lawrence. *To Kindle a Soul*
Large, Martin. *Who's Bringing Them Up?*
Mander, Jerry. *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*
McClendon, Marie. *Where are the Children? In a TV World or in a Tree House?*
Self-published.
Postman, Neil. *Amusing Ourselves to Death*
Sanders, Barry. *A is for Ox*
Schwartz, Eugene. *Development of Eye and Ear*
Winn, Marie. *The Plug-in Drug*

Web Resources

www.tvturnoff.org
www.turnoffyourtv.com
<http://www.whitedot.org>
<http://www.aap.org/family/tv1.htm>
www.tvfa.org
<http://www.healthyminds.org/mediaviolence/cfm>
www.ftc.gov/reports/violence/Appen%20A.pdf
<http://www.simpletoremember.com/vitals/tvkelemen.htm>
<http://tv-addiction.blogspot.com>
http://www.cursor.org/stories/television_and_violence.htm

Other Resources

For more reviews and ratings
www.yahoomoviesmomreviews
For internet safety
www.isafe.org

For blocking cable channels
Consult your cable provider

Moving Toward a “Media-Less” Lifestyle

How do I start?

Let us begin by *re-orienting our thinking*. What if we perceive curtailing media use not as depriving our families, or taking something away from them, but instead, as providing wholesomeness? Then making a shift might feel different to us. We have stated that our ultimate goal is creating a media-free lifestyle for our children. Some families just go cold turkey and eliminate media completely. Because they find it simpler when the option is not even there, they remove all screens from their homes. The children watch no television, videos, or films, use no computers, and listen only to live music.

However, lots of people who are not ready for that dramatic step have found extremely creative and thoughtful ways to begin: they simply curtail media usage. Many decide to implement the changes not just for the children but also for the entire family. Often they discover benefits to family life.

Some families *reduce the amount of time of exposure*. They have pre-arranged times when media will be allowed and set a timer as a signal when the time is up. As an example, a parent might decide to prohibit media altogether on school nights, but allow a (parent- previewed) movie at home on the occasional weekend. Some families discontinue subscribing to cable, leaving only one screen on which to view carefully- chosen movies. Other families *limit the types of media* they allow: for example, no computer, no TV, but one video every other week. Or, some families use it only very occasionally, as a special shared media experience.

If you have not yet taken the step but want to do *something, just try one thing at a time*. We have a community of teachers and parents to support you in your efforts. Seek out your child’s class teacher and other parents for their ideas. Share with one another.

Play dates

See if you can get the parents in your class to agree to make all of your play dates media-free events. Remember, if the children are watching a screen, they are not playing! Plan, clearly express the rules and review them with your child and the other parent **ahead of time** to avoid any surprises.

Why go media-free? How much is too much?

For the young child, *any* media is too much. Most people agree with that. But, as children get older, parents often begin to split hairs about how much media is all right. Sometimes children whose parents have cut back continue to dwell on media-related topics, which can maddeningly recur as topics for conversation. For this and other reasons, some families have chosen to adopt a completely media-free lifestyle. Some of the benefits to children include: freedom from advertising aimed at them, time to engage in appropriate childhood activities, availability for ongoing human interaction, and protection of childhood innocence. Some children do continue to ask for media from time to time. However, the parents of media-free children see such dramatic results in their families that most never go back. They never get tired of saying, “Different families do things differently. In our house, we don’t watch.”

How do I deal with a hostile middle school child when I turn off the screen?

This is never easy. The most helpful thing is probably to establish ground rules up front so there are no surprises. And, we have to get used to the fact that almost all middle school students say to their parents, at least once, “I hate you,” or something even less complimentary. But this is like anything else we do to limit our children’s experiences. We just have to know that we are doing the right thing for the right reasons.

What about when my child is home sick? Isn’t this a perfect time for a video?

Actually, anthroposophical doctors and nurses tell us that this is the most perfectly *horrible* time to show a video. When a child’s etheric (life) forces are depleted by illness, media exposure can prevent her body from directing its healing powers to where they are needed.

What do I do when another parent in my child’s class tolerates more media?

Open, non-threatening, safe, friendly, compassionate communication is the best way to navigate any subject that may find parents on a different footing. Try asking lots of questions and using “I” statements. You could go for coffee and talk together; you could get together to take the kids to the park and talk there; you could ask your class teacher to allot some time at a parent meeting for conversation and comparing notes. If you are planning a play date, you would probably want to have an agreement up front about the media issue. If you cannot come to such an agreement, then you may have to decide whether to forego play dates with that family. But remember that everyone is striving and we must make every effort to refrain from making assumptions and judging others.

What can I do about other people (extended family members, neighbors, other parents) who do not understand, and offer a television show or movie to my child?

Over and over, explain the choice you have made as a family and why. Offer to have their children over to your house to play. Talk to the other parents about why you have made this choice. Offer them a copy of our guidelines.

But, won’t my child be stigmatized and behind in high school if she does not become computer-literate now?

No. This same logic could be applied to driving or any number of other activities that we have determined to delay until a certain level of development has been reached. Almost all high schools now require a keyboarding class in the freshman year of high school and teach students how to navigate the computer. Our graduates have successfully made this transition.

How do I handle media restrictions when I have children of different ages in my home?

This is one of the hardest parts of parenting. But you already have different bedtimes for younger and older children in your family. Privileges always increase with age. This can simply be an extension of that idea. “When you are fifteen, you can listen to an iPod, too.” The more difficult issues come when you have a screen in your home that an older child is watching with a younger child in the area. One solution is to wait with the video until the younger child goes to bed. Older children need to understand that it is equally important that younger ones do not see or hear anything inappropriate just as they do not eat or drink anything inappropriate. Of course, there have to be consequences if the older ones fail to honor your house rules. In many cases, this is one reason that families simply decide to give up media completely.

Media Alternatives

Healthy activities you can do....

..... instead of these media-related

Set an activity out the night before: craft table, art table, & modeling beeswax. Make breakfast together, play games.

weekend morning cartoons

Read a story, visit the park, ride bikes, play in water, ride scooters, Go swimming, take an afternoon bath.

mid-afternoon doldrums

Have family read-aloud passing the book, family game night, family sing-along, instrumental music night (bring out those super-simple percussion instruments or even the pots and pans). Go on evening walk in the neighborhood, or a moonlight hike with the Sierra Club or local parks and recreation groups. Tell stories around the fireplace, look through old photos and/or assemble a photo album.

Family movie night

Visit Museums, see a play, visit historical sights, and attend free-community-musical concerts. Visit gardens and arboretums, swim, go camping, go hiking or rock-climbing. Attend fairs and festivals, visit farmers' markets, visit neighbors, and play with other children. Plan a party or get-together, take a trip.

Summer/Holiday

Commercial Films

Have a Friday Media-Free Pitch-In Night with other families, including a barbeque or a read-along party or progressive dinner...use your imagination!

Friday night video

Alternative activities by age and grade

Early childhood: Do domestic work alongside the parent: dishwashing, gardening, laundry, carpentry, polishing shoes or tables. Play with simple toys and objects made from natural materials, listen to stories, watch and create puppet shows, dress up, bake.

Grades 1-5:

Parents, read to your child. Always have books available at his or her reading or pre-reading level. Tell stories, visit the library, do chores around the house, clean, keep craft and art supplies on hand, arrange areas in the yard outside where a child can garden, dig, and/or build. Visit the park, climb trees, ride bikes, jump rope, skate, go on walks and hikes, build and fly a kite, draw. Take your pet for a walk. Do simple cooking and mixing activities, make a lemonade stand. Practice musical instruments, have a family band. Play cards, start a photo album.

Middle School, Grades 6-8

Go to the beach or other family outings. Participate in after-school sports or community sports activities. Play your musical instrument, sing, start a band, write a song. Visit friends; visit museums, do community service work, travel, and hike. Start a cottage industry, sew, knit, crochet, cook, and bake. Dance, workout, go horseback riding, clean or redecorate your room. Draw, paint, build, model, sketch, write a letter, journal. Write a story or even a book. Ride bikes or skateboards, rollerblade, ice skate, ski or snowboard. Read to a shut-in, visit a nursing home, clean your closet and drop off charitable items.

Parent Education and Ongoing Support

An integral part of the WWS Media Guidelines is providing parents with ongoing education and support for their efforts in making appropriate media-related choices.

- Parents should first direct their questions to the child's Class Teacher. Class Teachers will periodically have the Media Guidelines as topic for parent meetings so that parents can compare notes, discuss their experiences, and support one another in a positive atmosphere without shame or blame. Parents could talk about their challenges, what has worked for them and what is problematic and not working for them. They could also share what would be helpful to them in sustaining their commitment to the media guidelines.
- Parents can draw upon the success of other community members. Other parents can be a valuable resource for ideas that work.
- An interested member of the community could gather and update relevant research and information, including studies on the effect of media, as well as other Waldorf schools' policies and guidelines. These can be included in the Parent Reference Library. Anyone interested in doing this task may contact the School Director.
- A small community-wide parent education committee could be formed with parent and faculty representatives. Its primary goal would be to help keep these issues on the school's radar screen.
- Short excerpts of the *Media Guidelines* could be published occasionally in the *WEEKLY UPDATES*, so that by the end of the school year, we would have covered most of the document.
- The community could periodically sponsor parent-education events. This may best be done in collaboration between Faculty, School Director and Parent Reps.
- Parents who have "lost focus" could recommit to the objectives outlined in the *Media Guidelines*.
- The *Media Guidelines* should be addressed in all admissions events, so that entering families understand what we are working towards and why.

Media Guidelines

***Updated 7/2011**

These media guidelines are meant for pre-school and elementary school age children. For our purposes, we define media to include:

- **Television, DVD, video, film**
- **Computers, internet, cellular phones, PDA's**
- **Recorded music, radios, iPods, MP3 and other portable music players**
- **Video arcade, and computer games such as Nintendo, PlayStation, Xbox, Wii, handhelds**

Our goal for students in Early Childhood through Grade 5

- **No media, particularly on nights preceding and following school days. The younger the child, the more vitally important that is.**

Our goal for students in Middle School, Grades 6 through 8

- **Parents, if you decide to introduce media usage, do it slowly and judiciously.**
- **Put the computer in a public place in your home and use a password for access.**
- **Provide rules for computer and/or Internet usage, and stick to them.**
- **Prohibit media exposure on any evening preceding a school day, including instant messaging and emailing.**
- **Prohibit access to websites where your child may post his or her personal information.**
- **Encourage regular study habits in a quiet environment, without a backdrop of recorded music and/or video.**
- **Limit time spent listening to iPods and other portable music players.**
- **Review all media content beforehand and discuss it afterwards.**
- **Censor anything that runs counter to your values, or may be developmentally inappropriate. Screen music for content of lyrics.**
- **Observe PG-13 and R ratings for movies.**
- **Discourage your child from *face book* participation until age 13.**