

24 March 2020

Dear Families of our Early Childhood settings,

We hope that your children and families are all healthy, and still upbeat. These are very challenging times, and we are all learning as we go along. We would like to reassure you that we are here to support you, give advice and provide practical help when possible.

Parents know what is best for their children. Of course your first priority is to keep you and your children safe.

There is already such a flood of information online which can become overwhelming. So I've prepared this to try to give you a few guidelines.

My main advice for now is: keep things simple! The best thing for children is to have a happy and active time at home with their family.

Structure the day

Create a healthy rhythm for the week and each day. Try to stick to it as much as possible. You will see that you and your children feel happier, knowing what is to come each day.

Look after yourself. Take precautions, but strive to lower fear. The children will pick up on it. Don't get stressed out that you have to do activities with your children. Find what works for you. Kids can get bored! Life is the curriculum. Our children are very creative and playful. They will surprise you!

A simple rhythm for the day could look like this:

- Breakfast
- Walk out in nature (Try to stay on your own, following Government guidelines)
- Mid morning snack (some fruit, oat cake)
- Play
- Lunch
- Rest (sleep or look at a book quietly)
- Activity (baking bread, crafts, drawing)
- Afternoon tea
- Play or help prepare dinner
- Story, light candle, remember all friends from KG, family
- Bedtime

How we can support you

The teachers are exploring ideas for staying in contact without relying on online technology for the children. Obviously it is different for the adults where media and online forums can be part of our communication between teachers and parents.

At this point in time we are considering the following ideas:

- Our teachers will contact each family to support the parents in creating the best possible situation to meet the needs of their children at home.
- We are exploring the possibility of an online platform, through the use of Slack, where Early Years teachers and parents can share information, discuss topics, ideas, crafts etc.
- We may offer weekly parenting classes, perhaps after Easter

Other resources

WECAN has posted a number of helpful articles on the Parents and Families page of their website. <http://www.waldorfearlychildhood.org/family.php>.

The resources include the following:

- How Do I Find and Create Goodness for My Children
- Communicating with Children and Supporting Them in Difficult Times
- Support for Working through Flu (treatments which should help with coronavirus, too)
- How to Talk to Kids about Coronavirus
- How to Stay Sane When Working from Home with Young Children
- Why the Coronavirus (Mostly) Spares Children

Recommended books –WECAN Books at <http://store.waldorfearlychildhood.org>.

The Campaign for Commercial-Free Childhood has many excellent suggestions as we approach Screen-Free Week, in which many Waldorf schools participate. For more information, visit their web page at <https://commercialfreechildhood.org/social-distancing/>

Please be all assured you are in our thoughts at these difficult and challenging times. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you get stressed and need to talk, or simply want to share a lovely story with us. Staying in contact, we can experience gratitude for the tremendous strength, warmth, and resilience of our communities.

Love and health and many blessings to all of you

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