

WECAN | NEWS

2019–2020 ANNUAL REPORT FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS

2019-20 was a unique and challenging year, marked by the 100th Anniversary of Waldorf Education, the arrival of the pandemic and social justice protests. We began the new school year, looking forward to celebratory events that would culminate in a festive Waldorf 100 Conference celebration in June 2020. However, in late winter, with the arrival of the pandemic crisis, we faced new challenges as we worked to support our WECAN Members in meeting the changing needs of the children, families and colleagues in their communities.

We are deeply grateful for the resourcefulness, flexibility, initiative, creativity, and steadfastness of our colleagues, friends and donors during this challenging year. We would like to provide you with a picture of the highlights of the work of our Association in 2019-20.





Highlights of the Year 2019-2020

Communications and Collaboration among Waldorf Early Childhood Educators

Despite the suffering, disruption and uncertainty caused by the pandemic, we have never been so actively engaged with one another as we have been this year. Through the conversations and resources that were shared on the new WECAN Community Hub online platform, and the many zoom calls that WECAN hosted in the final months of the school year, our work with one another became stronger and more collaborative than ever before.

Out of this collaboration, a new WECAN Early Childhood Research Group was formed. The goal of the group is to serve as an organ that can observe and help distill what early childhood educators are learning as we try to navigate the unusual circumstances in which we find ourselves.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access

The Board has identified work on inclusion, diversity, equity and access as an essential component in ensuring that Waldorf education can fulfill its mission and truly be an education towards freedom for all people. We continue to carry questions about what is in the way of diversity, equity and inclusion in Waldorf early childhood education. While the pandemic made it impossible for us to fulfill our commitment to attend in-person trainings, opportunities opened up for online activity that many of us took part in, including a Racial Equity Institute workshop, a DEI series for WECAN teacher educators, The AntiRacist Table 30-Day Challenge, and AWSNA webinars on What Steiner Actually Said, Reimagining Waldorf Pedagogy, and White Supremacy in Waldorf Schools. These experiences were transformative and deeply appreciated by the participants.

In the spring, the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (IDEA) Committee completed and the board approved WECAN's Diversity Statement and began to work toward bringing together a wider diversity of voices interested in supporting WECAN. This is essential work which we look forward to continuing.

Teacher Education

The Teacher Education Committee amended the Statement of Expectations for Early Childhood Training to reflect 450 in-class hours, including additional hours in areas such as incarnational support for children, working with parents, colleagues and the school and birth to three. There are also more explicit expectations for practicums, mentoring and observation. Birth to Three curriculum and teacher education expectations were finalized in consultation with the B-3 Group and Full Member Institutes.

Great Lakes Waldorf Institute became a WECAN Associate Member Institute and the West Coast Institute for Studies in Anthroposophy renewed its Full Membership.

Regular zoom meetings with Full Member and Associate Member Institutes fostered much goodwill and the possibility to consult and share skills about EC educator training.



Membership

Processes for 25 renewals and applications were completed in the fall and winter of the 2019-20 school year. In March, site visits came to a halt as campuses closed in response to the pandemic. In the interest of giving programs space and time to focus on emergent issues, the Membership Committee made decisions to postpone all renewal processes due in 2020-21, extend renewal deadlines for all programs by a year, offer the possibility of maintaining membership for up to a year to programs that had to close temporarily, and create a remote application process for programs wishing to join as new Associate Members.

In support of the membership office and members in 2019-20 was a circle of 20 volunteer regional representatives. They provided direct support to their regions by following up with programs in membership processes and assisting them in finding site visitors, reviewing membership documents, initiating regional gatherings, collaborating with AWSNA, and providing regional virtual/remote support via the hub and in Zoom meetings when campuses closed in the spring. We are deeply grateful for the support regional reps provided to WECAN Member programs and for their flexibility during a difficult time.

WECAN's organizational membership increased slightly in 2019-20. We ended the year with 38 Associate Members and 139 Full Members and 12 Teacher Education Institute Members. The number of Registered Initiatives in Mexico, Puerto Rico and on tribal lands grew to 20. The total number of organizational members and affiliates was 209, compared to 204 in 2018-19.

The following programs joined as new members or affiliates in 2019-20:

Full Members

- Honeybirds Playschool in Brooklyn, NY
- Nevada Sage Waldorf School in Reno, Nevada
- Wishing Well Children's School in Los Osos, California

Associate Members

- Merrohawke Nature School in Newburyport, MA.
- Rowan Tree Children's School in Peterborough, Ontario
- Mojave Springs School in Las Vegas, Nevada
- Eastside Community School in Bellevue, Washington

Registered Initiative Affiliates in Mexico:

- Comunidad Educativa Calli in Veracruz
- Comunidad Educativa Elhilar in Huxquilucan
- Casa Umai in Monterrey

Individual membership grew to 547 during 2019-20. We are very grateful for the growing support and interest among our members.



Birth to Three

The Birth to Three Working Group, in collaboration with the Teacher Education Committee, developed the new WECAN Birth to Three Training guidelines. In October 2019, the Birth to Three Working Group and the Birth to Three Advisory Circle met in person for the first time and held the first-ever WECAN Birth to Three conference at Sophia's Hearth in Keene, NH. The sold-out conference worked with the theme, "Rudolf Steiner, Emmi Pikler and the Very Young Child". A new WECAN book is being created to share the wisdom and research of the four keynote lectures.

Collaboration with AWSNA and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education

Collaboration among the three organizations grew in 2019-20. In August, a small group of representatives of the three associations spent several days in Longmont, Colorado, engaging in facilitated dialogue and forming the Waldorf Associations Working Group. In January the leadership bodies of the three organizations met for the first time in Sebastopol, CA, to get to know one another and explore further collaboration.

Together the three associations developed collaborative funding possibilities with RSF Social Finance and planned the June 2020 Education Innovation Summit in Chicago to celebrate 100 years of Waldorf education. We also planned to expand the meetings to bring delegates and representatives of each associations' schools together in person at the June Conference, but because of the pandemic a smaller virtual meeting focused on our work with DEI questions.

International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE)

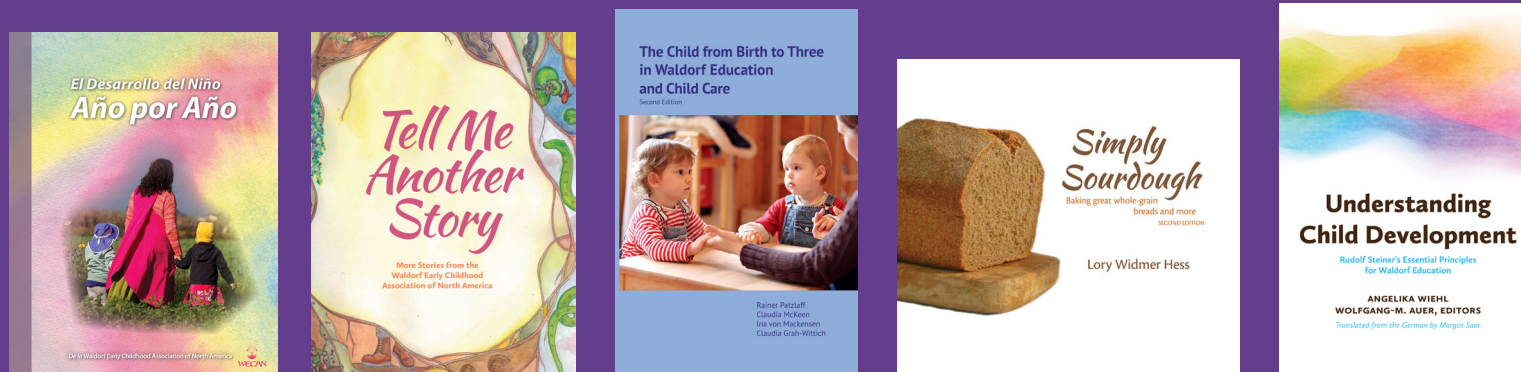
In October, the IASWECE Council met at Emerson College in Forest Row, UK, to work on issues emerging from the Dornach World Early Childhood Conference in April 2019. They included training educators to work with digital media questions, working with trauma, international advising, working with parents, and the relationship of anthroposophy, religion and Waldorf Education.

IASWECE offered support to early childhood training and professional development projects in thirty-two countries on four continents this year, including new projects in Nigeria and Malaysia.

The spring meeting planned for Vilnius, Lithuania, was postponed due to the pandemic, and the Council began a series of teleconference meetings.

Support for Waldorf Early Childhood Around the World

WECAN supports the work of IASWECE through membership contributions that come from WECAN organizational member dues. We were able to offer \$41,250 in 2019-20 to support this international work. This year at our East Coast and Pacific Northwest conferences, participants donated \$5,314 to support the Bait Al-Shams Waldorf early childhood initiative in the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon.



Public Policy and Outreach

WECAN continued to collaborate with the Trust for Learning and Ideal Learning Round Table and wrote suggestions for the proposed NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice document, which is used as a cornerstone of educational practice instruction in many colleges and universities. We also offered feedback on the NAEYC Power to the Profession document, a collaborative definition of the competencies of early childhood educators working with children from 0-8 years of age.

After success with the Oregon State Registry, WECAN Public Policy and Teacher Education colleagues continue to work toward recognition of Waldorf early childhood teacher education at WECAN Member training institutes in other states and provinces.

WECAN Books

In addition to the twice-yearly Gateways newsletter, WECAN published the following books in 2019-20:

El Desarrollo del Niño Año por Año is a Spanish language edition of *Child Development Year by Year*, edited by Holly Koteen-Soulé. The Spanish edition, translated by Lenya Bloom, includes photos from Latin America.

Many early childhood teachers and families around the world have thanked us for our new collection of stories, ***Tell Me Another Story***, edited by Louise deForest. This collection is especially helpful in this time of the pandemic, where children are often at home with parents.

The second edition of ***The Child from Birth to Three in Waldorf Education and Care*** presents the anthroposophical view of child development from birth through age three, and makes concrete suggestions of how to support children's physical, emotional, and spiritual growth in out-of-home care settings.

Simply Sourdough, by Lory Widmer. Encouragement and instruction for parents and educators baking nutritious, whole-grain breads, muffins, pancakes and more.

Understanding Child Development, Rudolf Steiner's Essential Principles for Waldorf Education is a selection of Rudolf Steiner's source texts on childhood, scholarly commentary, supplemental essays on sensory development and imitation, suggestions for studying the texts, and a discussion of the future of childhood.

WECAN Conferences and Regional Gatherings

Birth to Three Conference, October 2019 at Sophia's Hearth Family Center in Keene, NH: **Rudolf Steiner, Emmi Pikler and the Very Young Child**

East Coast EC Conference, February 7 - 9, 2020, at the Green Meadow Waldorf School in Chesnut Ridge NY: **The Art of Educating - Individuality and Community**, with Lisa Romero

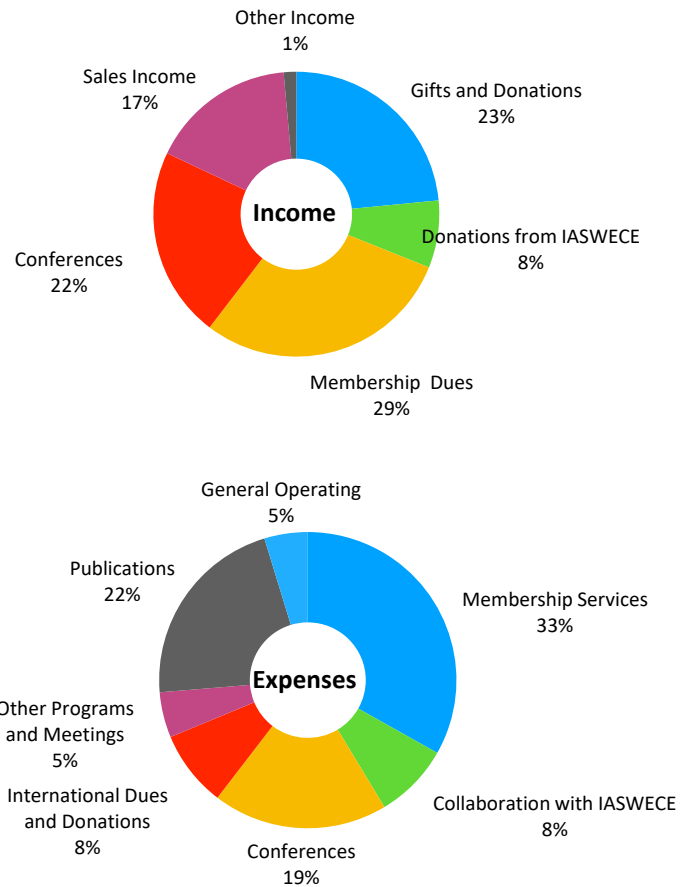
Pacific Northwest Conference, February 14 - 16, 2020, at the Cedarwood Waldorf School in Portland, OR: **Understanding the Developmental Unfolding of the Child**, with Dr. Adam Blanning

Finances 2019-20

WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA	
Profit / Loss Statement June 30, 2020 (Accrual Basis)	
INCOME	
Gifts and Donations	154,929
Donations from IASWECE	50,441
Membership Dues	193,413
Conferences	143,044
Sales Income	109,263
Other Income	9,403
Total INCOME	660,492
EXPENSES	
Membership Services	204,016
Collaboration with IASWECE	50,440.88
Conferences	116,982
International Dues and	51,217.41
Other Programs and Meetings	30,491.75
Publications	132,804.97
General Operating	29,000.44
Total Expense	614,953
Net Ordinary Income	45,539

A few notes of explanation: WECAN members pay a portion of their membership dues to support IASWECE and this is shown as membership income and also as a dues/donation expense.

Susan Howard, who is employed full-time by WECAN, works half-time for WECAN and halftime for IASWECE, and IASWECE donates funds to WECAN to support the personnel and other related costs for this activity. This accounts for the expense for international collaboration with IASWECE and the roughly equivalent amount of international support in donations from IASWECE.



Donors and Supporters 2019-20

We are extremely grateful to our many friends and supporters, including individuals, kindergartens, foundations, businesses and other organizations, many of whom are listed below.

Individuals & Organizations

Abigail Kurlfink	Astrid Mohtadi-Liebergessel	Claire Redgrave	Ewelina Mazur
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WECAN's mission is to foster a new cultural impulse for the work with the young child from pre- birth to age seven. Based on an anthroposophical understanding of human development, WECAN is committed to protecting and nurturing childhood as a foundation for renewing human culture. WECAN is a member of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education.



285 Hungry Hollow Road,
Spring Valley, NY 10977
845.352.1690
info@waldorfearlychildhood.org
www.waldorfearlychildhood.org

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Outreach and Public Policy, Sarah Arnold
Teacher Education, Ruth Ker

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Administrator, Melissa Lyons, Spring Valley, NY
Communications, Lara Radysh, Amherst, NY

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