# WECAN NEWS

## 2021–2022 ANNUAL REPORT FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS



During 2021-22, WECAN engaged in great soul-searching, exploration, stretching, and learning as we met the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and committed ourselves to active work on diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. During these challenging times, early childhood educators in our member schools and programs exercised tremendous courage, flexibility, and dedication in their work, and WECAN reached out to offer support.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity and good will of our colleagues, friends and donors and would like to present you with a picture of the highlights of WECAN's activity in 2021.



WECAN Board, Staff, IDEA Coordinators and Alma Partners

# Highlights of the Year 2021-2022

**The Work of the WECAN Board**

Board Members continued their work through Zoom meetings in 2021-22, looking forward to meeting again in person. The Board's primary focus was Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access, as described below in this report.

In the summer of 2021, Sarah Arnold, WECAN Board Member and Public Policy Coordinator, left WECAN to lead the development of a new charter school in New Hampshire. And in spring 2022, we said goodbye to Holly Koteen-Soule, a long-time Board member who continues her leadership of the Early Childhood Research Group. We are deeply grateful for their many contributions to WECAN's work.

The Board also met twice with our Regional Representatives, who shared pictures of the realities in their regions. The leading thoughts from these meetings helped to inform our planning for future activity.

**Membership**

WECAN welcomed two new Associate Members in 2021: Treasure Garden in Fair Oaks, CA, and Wildflowers Child Care in Boise, ID, and congratulated Ak Lu'um Waldorf Community in Playa Del Carmen, Mexico, on becoming a new Full Member.

WECAN membership in 2021-22 included 185 Full and Associate Member programs. The number of Registered Initiatives in Mexico, Puerto Rico, and on tribal lands was 17, and there were 11 Member Teacher Education institutes. The total number of organizational members and affiliates grew slightly this year to 213.

WECAN also had 520 individual Members throughout North America this year, a slight decline from 2020 -21.

**Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA)**

WECAN appointed two IDEA Coordinators, Lynn Turner, and Leslie Wetzonis-Woolverton, to work with the IDEA Committee, Board, and staff members to develop an understanding of the needs and challenges before us. This is an enormous, far-reaching challenge as we strive for a "Both/And" approach that avoids the dangers of extremes. The IDEA Coordinators also hosted several web events on such themes as Cultivating Positive Self-Identity in Early Childhood Programs and Renewing Our Festival Life.

In spring 2022, WECAN also embarked on a collaboration with Alma Partners to undertake a year-long Diversity, Equity, Access, and Justice (DEIJ) Self-Audit process involving the WECAN board, staff, committees, and WECAN Members. Our initial focus was on our principles and how we express them, WECAN's organizational culture, and our policies and procedures.



**Collaboration among Waldorf Early Childhood Colleagues**

Our newly formed WECAN Community Hub grew to more than a thousand participants actively sharing questions, resources, and inspiration. We have discovered that online communications—the Community Hub, zoom meetings, webinars, and conferences - can bring together educators from throughout North America in ways we never had imagined.

**Birth to Three**

Our WECAN Birth to Three coordinators Heather Church and Magdalena Toran focused on bringing colleagues together, which, in this time of isolation and separation, was a healing impulse. Online meetings with childcare providers in centers and home-based programs, parent-child teachers, and birth to three trainers offered opportunities to share common ideas, successes, challenges, and living questions. This created a rich and rewarding opportunity for WECAN to listen deeply to the needs of the child, caregivers, and families of the youngest children.

Contributions from the 2019 Birth to Three Conference were also collected into a print resource, *Birth to Three in Education and Care - Rudolf Steiner, Emmi Pikler, and the Very Young Child* edited by Heather Church, published in June as a support for those working and living with young children.

**Teacher Education**

WECAN's Teacher Training Expectations and Curriculum Guidelines remained steadfast guidelines and much conversation took place among North American early childhood teacher education colleagues at monthly online meetings and through IASWECE international Zoom conversations. What is the new normal? As most of the North American member institutes returned to in-person training, this important question was actively carried by all.

WECAN welcomed a new Association Member Institute: YaxKin, Formación de Maestras Waldorf de Jardín de Infancia de la Riviera Maya.

**Collaboration with Other Organizations**

WECAN continued to work closely with the Association of Waldorf Schools (AWSNA) and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education (APWE) in a variety of ways, especially through monthly meetings of the Waldorf Associations Working Group.

We also collaborated with other organizations advocating for a healthy childhood, including the Trust for Learning, Defending the Early Years, and the Early Childhood Work Group of the Children's Screen Time Action Network.

We are grateful that our WECAN Office is located in the Threefold Educational Community in Spring Valley, which hosts our in-person February Conferences and board meetings and offers advice, support, and a lively cultural context for our work.









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

WECAN is a member of the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education.

After two years of online meetings, IASWECE Council members representing more than 35 countries, were delighted to come together in person (with a few joining online) in Dornach, Switzerland, in April 2022. Study themes included Diversity Awareness, with a focus on Waldorf education, festival life, and spirituality in Japan, as well as supporting educators and families responding to the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. WECAN supports the work of IASWECE through membership contributions that come from WECAN dues. We were able to offer over $40,000 in 2021-22 to support this international work.

**WECAN Conferences**

T**oward A Kinder, More Compassionate Society - Working Together Toward Change**, February 9-11, 2022 This was the theme of our annual February Conference, held for the second time online and attended by 800 Waldorf early childhood educators from throughout North America and around the world. The conference opened with a Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address by Otsistohkwi:yo, followed by stimulating collaborative keynote sessions with Meggan Gill, Keelah Helwig, and Joaquin Muñoz, as well as workshops and panel discussions. Silk and String Puppeteers from Toronto and members of the Everlasting Tree Community offered a puppetry performance of the legend of the Dancing Stars, and members of the Ak Lu'um Community School performed the Huichol legend, The Blue Deer.

Conference participants donated $6800 in support of the Everlasting Tree School on the territory of the Six Nations of the Grand River in Ontario and the Lakota Waldorf School in Kyle, South Dakota.



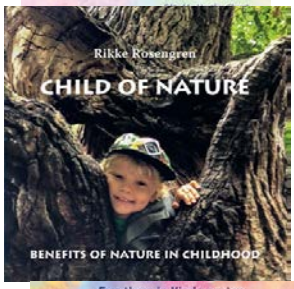


**WECAN Books**

In addition to the twice-yearly *Gateways* newsletter, WECAN published the following book in 2021-22:




***Birth to Three in Education and Care: Rudolf Steiner, Emmi Pikler, and the Very Young Child***
Edited by Heather Church
*Birth to Three in Education and Care: Rudolf Steiner, Emmi Pikler, and the Very Young Child* shares its title with the theme of the first conference of its kind to be hosted at Sophia's Hearth Family Center and Training Institute in Keene, New Hampshire. The keynote speakers have devoted their life's work to understanding the young child, to what the child's needs might be, and how we, as conscious adults, can welcome them most warmly into their physical bodies and onto their paths as human beings. They explored how Emmi Pikler and Rudolf Steiner inform educators' work with very young children.



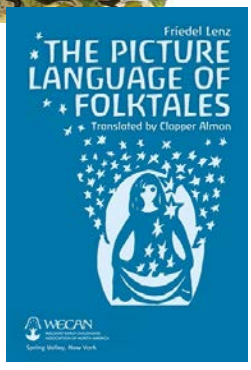

***Child of Nature***
By Rikke Rosengren
Nature has a unique potential as a platform for children to grow and experiment. Child of Nature emphasizes children's curiosity, their natural need for movement, and how to optimize the possibilities for children's development outdoors. Parents, teachers, and caregivers will learn practical ways to give children the chance for adventurous play and sensory stimulation, and thus support a pedagogical foundation for education that is based on children's healthy development. Beautifully illustrated with over 180 color photographs and drawings.




***Eurythmy in Kindergarten - A contemporary approach to speech and movement***
Eurythmy in Kindergarten is a beautifully illustrated anser to the question, "Why eurythmy in kindergarten?" This unique, artistic form of movement, with its deep connection to the formative power of speech, is especially important for young children's speech development, which is increasingly under threat in our times. This lovely booklet is written for kindergarten teachers, eurythmists, students in training programs, and parents. We have sent a sample copy to each WECAN Member program and encourage you to order more for your colleagues and parents!




***Loving care for the child under three***
By Helle Heckmann
Taking the child's need as her point of departure, Helle Heckmann sets aside mainstream expectations. Twenty-first-century pressures on families, imposing long working days on parents and much absence from the family and home, create the classic problem of our times: while creating economic safety and security for their families, how can we give the best we can to the children we love, while also satisfying our personal needs as well as the demands of society? This book offers perspectives from several adults who care for young children in diverse ways.




***The Picture Language of Folktales***
By Friedel Lenz
Fairy tales speak in a visual language—but what do these pictures speak of? In The Picture Language of Folktales, Friedel Lenz looks at fairy tales and their original images as part of the development of human consciousness. The characters of these stories are human beings living within two worlds—one which is physically visible and experienced through bodily senses and another that is not visible but nonetheless sensed. Friedel Lenz's consideration of these twenty-five tales, originally collected and retold by the Brothers Grimm from 1812 to 1857, offers the possibility of limbering up our thinking and feeling to allow the pictures of these stories to speak. WECAN extends deep gratitude to Clopper Almon for this translation.

# Finances 2021-22

Table 1

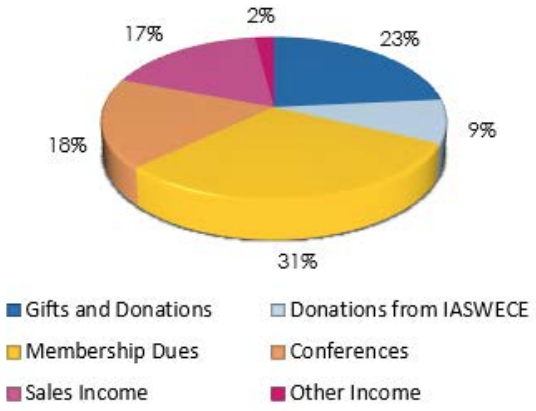
**WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA**

**Profit / Loss Statement June 30, 2022 (Accrual Basis)**

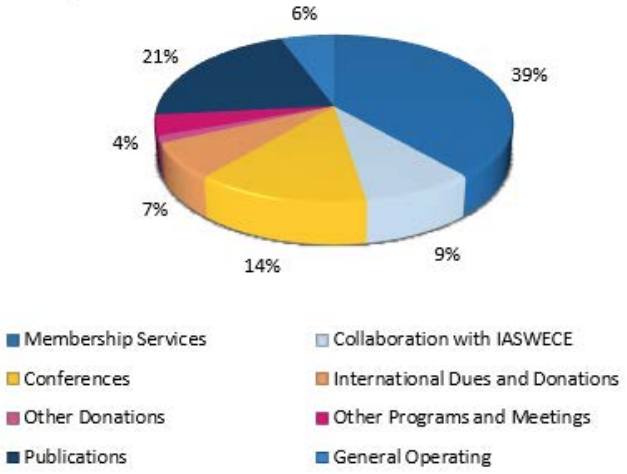
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|---|---|
| **INCOME** | |
| Gifts and Donations | 145,457 |
| Donations from IASWECE | 52,717 |
| Membership Dues | 192,130 |
| Conferences | 109,715 |
| Sales Income | 106,691 |
| Other Income | 12,683 |
| **Total INCOME** | **619,394** |
| **EXPENSES** | |
| Membership Services | 227,284 |
| Collaboration with IASWECE | 52,479 |
| Conferences | 81,147 |
| International Dues and Donations | 41,139 |
| Other Donations | 7,500 |
| Other Programs and Meetings | 23,287 |
| Publications | 123,550 |
| General Operating | 33,310 |
| **Total Expense** | **589,695** |
| **Net Ordinary Income** | **29,699** |

**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.*

**Income**




**Expenses**




# Donors and Supporters 2021 - 2022

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 Tennis
Adrienne Doucette
Aimee de Ney
Alexis Mei
Aline de Souza Harris
Allyson Anthony
Alyssa Dixon
Amanda Weeks
Andrea Cooper
Andrea Gambardella
Andrea Pisacano
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New Adult Learning
Rudolf Steiner Centre Toronto
Sophia's Hearth Family Center
Sunbridge Institute
Waldorf Publications
Warmth and Weather
West Coast Institute

**Other Conference Support**
Green Meadow Waldorf School
Threefold Educational Foundation

**Friends and Volunteers**
Charlton Hughes Campbell
Green Meadow Waldorf School
Ray Manaças
Threefold Educational Foundation

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WECAN
WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

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Magdalena Toran, Conway, MA

**Project Coordinators**
Birth to Three, Heather Church
Outreach and Public Policy, Sarah Arnold

**Staff**
WECAN Coordinator, Susan Howard, Amherst, MA
Administrator, Melissa Lyons, Spring Valley, NY
Communications, Lara Radysh, Shelburne Falls, MA
I.D.E.A. Coordinator, Lynn Turner, Silver Spring, MD
I.D.E.A. Coordinator, Leslie Wetzonis-Woolverton, Silver Spring, MD
Membership, Laura Mason, Issaquah, WA
Publications, Donna Miele, Spring Valley, NY
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Conference Administrator, Andrea Cooper, Amherst, MA
Andrea Gambardella, Spring Valley, NY

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