

And the baby is growing! News from the IASWECE birth to three group

Lourdes Tormes



The birth to three working group in IASWECE is delighted to see how many countries have joined our invitation to create these simple, affordable conferences on SLEEP. In more than 25 countries these conferences have been organised in different ways, with different keynote speakers, with different approaches to such an important theme. What happens to the child when he sleeps? What is his spiritual activity during sleep? What are the pictures he needs to bring to sleep? How do we create a proper ambiance for him to go to sleep? What kind of daily activity will lead him to a fruitful sleep?...and many other questions have strengthened the consciousness on this theme in many early childhood settings and families. Also the booklet with quotes from Rudolf Steiner that IASWECE published has been a great help to deepen on the insights of Sleep. This booklet can be found on the webpage of IASWECE in English and German, and it may be printed and use for free, also for translation in other languages.

Now we are putting our hearts into next year big event: the Early Childhood International Conference in Dornach, "Inner Freedom - Social Responsibility: Finding ways into a human future". It is the will of IASWECE, together with the Pedagogical Section, to create a real Birth to Seven conference, on the basis of the 6th lecture by Rudolf Steiner from GA 306 "The Child's Changing Consciousness". We are planning workshops not only for kindergarten teachers but very importantly for birth to three educators, with a wide range of possibilities. We hope that you will find your very best choice! And during this big event, we will also be celebrating the 100 anniversary of the birth of Waldorf Education...so maybe it is time to start to think about saving money or raising funds for helping many educators to come to this big event.

At the same time, we have started a close collaboration with the Medical Section, working on what we have called "the Care1 Project: Pregnancy, Delivery and Early Years". Through this collaboration we are exploring - together with medical doctors, midwives, therapists, and early childhood educators - where are the needs and the challenges of all those who work with early years, on educational, medical and social levels. The birth to three group sent a survey to our speaking partners around the world, and their feedback has been very helpful for this work to try to get the sense of what are the needs and challenges in the different countries. These are only a few examples of the topics that arose:

- How can I come to know the child?
- How can I perceive his needs?
- How can I create the proper surrounding for his well-being?
- Breastfeeding/bottle-feeding
- Sleep: crying, exhausting nights, uneasiness or restlessness, fears, bed sharing
- How can I set a proper rhythm which is suitable for the child and for me?

- How do I know my child is doing well? Is my child developing properly? Am I sure I am doing the right thing?
- Dealing with the growing self of the child: conflicts, stress, setting boundaries, developing patience, loneliness.

It is the intention of this group to find a way to make available indications, information, resources and best practice examples to all those who need it. You will hear more about it.

We hope that all our work is being of help for those of you who are in care of the little child. Please let us know about your needs, your challenges, your concerns and your ideas.

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