

What is it our duty to build for future generations?

Susan Howard and Laura Mason

Nearly 100 years ago, the first Waldorf School opened in Stuttgart, Germany. Out of that impulse an entire school movement was born. There are currently over 1,100 Waldorf Schools and over 2,000 Waldorf Early Childhood programs across the globe.

The anniversary of the founding of the first Waldorf School provides us all with an opportunity to look to the past and recognize the work that came before us, which enables us to do our work today. It is also an opportunity to look toward the future and ask what we can do to support those who will come after us.



In *The Child's Changing Consciousness*, Steiner speaks of the three principle virtues: gratitude, love and duty. Gratitude naturally grows in children in their early years, so long as the adults around them are worthy of gratitude themselves. When true gratitude is fostered, the child can fully recognize their fellow humans and the beauty of the world around them. This foundation of gratitude provides an environment in which love can awaken in the child: love of the world, humanity and God. Finally, when the ability to love is fully awakened, a sense of duty to the world and others naturally unfolds from within. Now the child can fully integrate into society.

Steiner's ideas about the development of the foundational virtues lead us to questions that we can ask ourselves as we consider our work in the Waldorf movement. What work was done in the past that strengthens us as a movement today? What do we have to be grateful for? How is love manifest in our work today? Are our actions driven by love of the world and our fellow humans? What responsibilities do we have as carriers of the impulse of Waldorf Education into the future? What is it our duty to build for future generations?

There are many wonderful ways in which those of us who are a part of this movement can engage in this celebration. The intention of this letter is to connect you with some of those resources and inspire you to take part! We encourage you to look, together with your early childhood colleagues, at the following resources and consider what would best meet the needs of your program and what might inspire you to take action.

- [Waldorf 100 website](#) – you are invited to peruse this site to see the inspiring activity going on in schools across the globe.
- [Waldorf 100 video](#) – please view the inspiring video and consider adding a link to your website.
- Waldorf 100 countdown – [click here](#) for instructions for adding the countdown widget to your website.
- You are welcome to add the Waldorf 100 logo to your website (see below).
- Study materials – The Pedagogical Section Council has prepared study materials to encourage enlivened study across the globe. *Entry Points – A Guide to Rudolf Steiner's Study of Man*, can be purchased [here](#). Please find Volume 1 [here](#) for your use. We encourage you to take up a study with colleagues at your program or in your region.
- There will be a World Early Childhood Conference at the Goetheanum, April 15-19, 2019, on the theme of “Inner Freedom as Social Responsibility: Childhood as the Source of a Human Future”. Information on the conference will be available soon on the IASWECE website. We warmly encourage you to attend.

Please also be aware that another Waldorf 100 video is being created that focuses on early childhood. If you have high quality video clips that you would like to be considered for possible inclusion in the video, please send them to: info@iaswece.org.

We hope that you will find the work being done on this celebration of the movement inspiring. We will be in contact with you as new information becomes available. Please feel free to share with us what new ideas you may have.



To add the Waldorf 100 logo on your website:

Right-click on the image, save as a file to your computer, then add to your website.



Susan Howard is a member of the IASWECE Coordination Group and coordinator of WECAN (Association of Waldorf Kindergartens in North America).

Laura Mason is a Waldorf kindergarten teacher in Bellevue, Washington, and is the Membership Coordinator of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America. She is a member of the North American Waldorf 100 Planning Group.