

Report from the Research Institute for Waldorf Education and Waldorf Publications

Patrice Maynard

Director of Publications and Development

With the book *Into the World: How Waldorf Graduates Fare After High School* printed and out into the world itself, the Research Institute (RIWE) is well on its way toward its next project – namely a survey of Waldorf parents. This new study seeks to go deeper than standard parent questionnaires that ask, “How pleased are you with the education of your child?” Beyond this legitimate yet somewhat self-serving question, we also want to investigate how the principles underlying Waldorf education alter actual parenting practices in the home and in the general community.

Over the decades of Waldorf education, parents have expressed relief that, through participation in a Waldorf school’s environment, they have learned ways of parenting not readily available in mainstream culture. Our hope is to identify this deeper transformation in parenting that may be the unintended consequence of parents enrolling their children in Waldorf schools. Other information on the wider impact of Waldorf education from the perspective of parents will also be gleaned, of course. Our research will follow the good path laid down by the work of RIWE’s latest survey of Waldorf high school graduates.

Ultimately, the possibility exists that with the data included in the book *Into the World* and the responses from parents in this upcoming survey, RIWE will be able to paint a broad picture of a remarkable view of rearing children—parenting as an inner path of personal development—and inspire a transformation of the way human development, human capacities, and education altogether can be practiced. What a balm to childhood this would be!

The light that the Waldorf approach throws on how to welcome children into the world is becoming visible to an increasing number of people. Celebrating the mighty cycle of the seasons, carefully calling young people to a love of learning, and getting them to participate in daily artistic work, to feel necessary to the world, and to discern truths beyond the obvious — all of these considerations speak to a radically different way of looking at children, education, teaching, and parenting. This approach holds the potential of health, enthusiasm,

and enhanced human capacities for the young people who experience a Waldorf education.

Beyond overseeing our research projects and co-authoring *Into the World*, RIWE’s Executive Director Douglas Gerwin continues to travel, lecture, teach students, train teachers, and participate in the work of the Teacher Education Delegates Circle and Leadership Council of AWSNA, the International Forum for Waldorf/Steiner Education, the Pedagogical Section Council, the Center for Anthroposophy, as well as the Research Institute for Waldorf Education. As RIWE’s Director of Publications and Development, Patrice Maynard curtailed her travel by a small margin this year, even before the current worldwide pandemic would have accomplished this for her. From her offices in Hudson, NY, she has overseen the publication of many remarkable books during this year of Waldorf100, including:

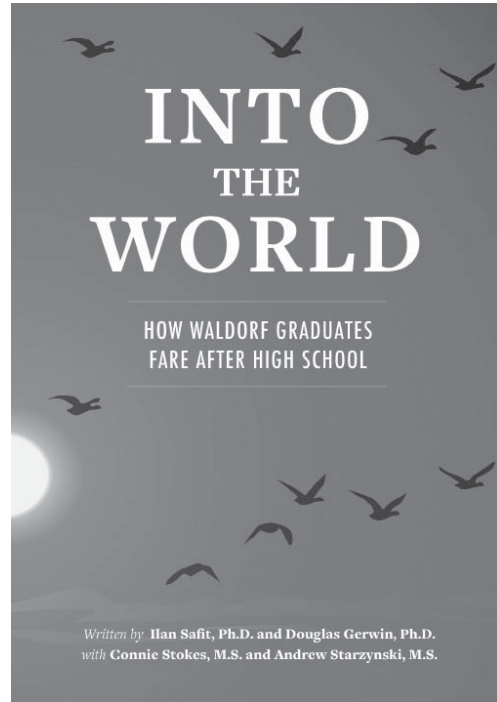
- *Growing Up Healthy in World of Digital Media*, a new collection of essays by Michaela Glöckler
- *Emil & Berta: The Origins of the Waldorf School Movement* by Sophia Christine Murphy, Emil & Berta Molt’s granddaughter
- *Bare Hand Knitting: Tool Free Knitting at its Finest* by Aleshanee Akin
- *Exploring Shapes Creatively through Pure Form Modeling* by Arthur Auer
- *The First Waldorf Teachers*, a collection of biographical vignettes by Tomáš Zdražil
- *Voyage in Song and Story* by Jeannette Resnick
- *The History of the Waldorf Movement Worldwide*, a monumental chronicle by Nana Göbel
- *Tapestry of a Waldorf Curriculum: A Teacher’s Guide to the Waldorf School by Grades (1-12) and by Subjects* by Tobias Richter, on behalf of the International Forum for Waldorf/Steiner Education

- *Immersion Learning: A Travelogue* by Frans Lutters
- *Xavier Sings the Alphabet* by Marylynn Channer

These titles illustrate the limitless variety of aspects of Waldorf education available to the general public through RIWE's Waldorf Publications.

As RIWE goes to press with this issue of the *Research Bulletin*, restrictions necessary for coping with the global pandemic are being put into effect. Never was there a more stunning way to demonstrate how we are all united as human beings. Heightened awareness is a gift, however disturbing the way in which it is bestowed.

The goal of the Research Institute and Waldorf Publications is to ground the work of Waldorf communities in realities based on living experiences and sound research of Waldorf practices. This makes resources reliable and, especially in the current situation, potentially reassuring. While extreme measures of separation are enacted in our work—as in yours—to assist the prevention of contagion, all at RIWE are holding readers and all those in Waldorf communities in mind and heart with good wishes. Strongly connected hearts cannot be separated.



The most recent title from Waldorf Publications, an in-depth study of the lives and careers of Waldorf alumni.