

# Aarambh

NEWSLETTER FOR THE  
MONTH OF AUGUST 2014

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## Aarambh Waldorf School Celebrates its Birthday.

Aarambh celebrated its first birthday with its growing Waldorf family. The school started its new 2014-15 session by moving to a new and bigger campus at Shanti kunj farms.

# Message from the School



Aarambh celebrated its first birthday with its growing Waldorf family. The school started its new 2014-15 session by moving to a new and bigger campus at Shanti kunj farms. The journey has been wonderful this far, with parents contributing at every step; right from finding a new place, setting up the classroom and organizing the “Humanizing Education” talk to spread the richness of Waldorf Philosophy to everyone in Delhi. We had more than 175 participants attending the talk; participants comprised of inspired parents, educationists, care givers and others. The talks were held to build awareness about the beauty of Waldorf education and its extreme relevance in today’s world. Everyone had one or many takeaway pearls and the enthusiasm was distinctly palpable.

Last year, as a part of our fund raising programmes, Handwork workshops for adults and children were held. These workshops were, crafted and designed aesthetically, thus enabling the participants the experience the empowering effect of handwork in our lives. These workshops were warmly received. As our community grows, with humility and gratitude to all, we reaffirm our commitment to educate and serve.



## Teacher Talk

Our journey in 2013-2014 started with four children. We continue to grow, as our children continue to experience the richness of Waldorf education.

This academic session we had seven children in class, and enrollments continue. It has been a great experience for the little ones to have more friends. With growth taking place organically, it’s been a wonderful experience for the teacher too, and this time around she was more at ease and inner rest, as she welcomed the children into the class and helped them settle down.

The mixed age Kindergarten has allowed the teacher to witness the gifts which children of different ages bring to the class. Children are experiencing growth all around them; more ‘toys’ in the classroom, lovely outdoor activities and a ‘machan’ to climb, has been created for them to enjoy, learn and achieve further physical agility and independence.

“ A ‘machan’ to climb, has been created out of bamboo for children to enjoy, learn and achieve further physical agility and independence. ”





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Small seedlings and plants planted by them are growing each day. It is so wonderful to see children observing this growth and having a good time during their nature walk.

This year new teacher has joined in as an Assistant and the children have truly welcomed her with open arms and hearts into their ring!!

It is heartening to see her pen down the days review diligently everyday and discuss it with the teacher at the end of the week to understand deeper the underlying principles of Waldorf education

## Workshop Experience

It was indeed a pleasure to attend Dr. Laxmi Prasanna's three day talk and interaction 'Creating Happy and Healthy Children'. Different topics about child's development were discussed but what touched me the most was 'Every Seven Years we Change'. Most cells in our body are renewed over a period of time. ARE we the same person now that we were fifteen years ago? This concerns the emotional, physical and mental changes that seem to occur in approximate seven-year intervals. Of course there are no fixed boundaries and so one may achieve these levels of maturity at any period of our life. Rudolf Steiner, said that the seven-year cycles continue throughout life. I have just turned 35. Its the beginning of my new seven yr cycle. Here is what i discovered and i am actually experiencing it.

35-42 years:

From the thirty-fifth to the forty-second year, depending upon one's personality and what one's circumstances allow, one begins to feel a new restlessness. In some degree a desire to share whatever one has gained through life with others comes to the surface. This is almost like unfolding something, I have been experiencing this urge of joyous contribution.

I also particularly enjoyed the exercise 'Nature Observation' and how as parents and care givers we can impliment this in our life and be SEERS of our children.

Megha Kanera, Mamma to 5 year old Kabir



"Waldorf is about raising and cultivating the child you love, not the child you thought you'd have. It's about remembering. He is exactly the person he is supposed to be. And if you're lucky, He might be the teacher who turns you into the person you're supposed to be". - The Water Cycle

### CREATING HAPPY AND HEALTHY CHILDREN

27 - 29TH MAY, 9AM-4PM

HOW MUCH DO WE TAKE FOR GRANTED?

- A medical perspective on the impact of media on the child
- Dangers of introduction of academics too soon
- Immunization and it effects
- More on children and nutrition...

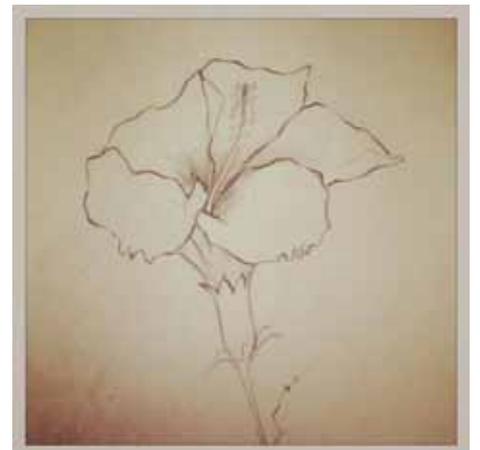
ABOUT DR. LAXMI PRASANNA

Dr. Laxmi Prasanna is a pediatrician (pediatrician) with 27 years experience and is the President of International Council of Nurses in India. Before joining her present position she was the Head of the Department of Child Development Unit at Apollo Hospital, Chennai. She then founded the Rama Children Hospital in Hyderabad, India in 1997. She has also founded the Karnataka Centre for Healing and Integral Education in 2008 to cater to children with special needs and developmental delay.

Dr. Prasanna uses an integrated approach towards child development and treatment. Her approach includes conventional, holistic, naturopathy and ayurvedic, all of them working towards the parents and family wellbeing. She has worked extensively in India, Nepal, Singapore and other countries in Australia for the past three years.

**Aarambh Waldorf School**  
New Delhi

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2017-2018: Dr. Megha Kanera, Megha Kanera  
2018-2019: Dr. Megha Kanera, Megha Kanera



“ A healthy social life arises when the whole community finds its reflection in the mirror of person's soul, and when the virtue of each person lives in the whole community. ”

# Parent Talk

I had spent 5 months running around trying to get my son admission into Nursery in Delhi. Out of the 32 schools I applied to, he only qualified for one, my alma mater. My heart sank. I had 1 day to respond and fill his fee. As I sat, wondering what to do, I knew that I couldn't let him go through the same journey that I had experienced in school. More than anything my dream for him was for him to be a happy person. I said no and decided that if there were no schools out there that met my stringent standards for my son I would home-school him.

That's when I chanced upon an email about an event at a Delhi Waldorf school. I must admit the name 'Waldorf' made me assume that it would be another super-expensive 'international' school. Way out of my budget. But something pushed me to call the number given. My first conversation put me at ease and I was surprised by how smoothly it flowed (even as an adult I have always been uneasy around schools and people who represent them.) When I walked in for the parent orientation with my mother, I immediately felt a sense of peace. I felt like I had reached the right place. A few parents, along with the teacher, did a stellar job of explaining the Waldorf system of education. The fact that their children were part of the process gave it a lot more credibility for me. This was the kind of place I had been looking for, for my son.

The school teacher has a very gentle way of handling things and talking to people. She has taken out the time to understand Arhant's situation and try to work around getting him settled in school. Arhant loves the space and the people. The teacher's presence comforts people. She has a quality that makes it easy for parents to trust her and know that she will do her best for their child.

The talk by Manivannan Sir, confirmed my belief that I had come to the right place for my son. As he spoke, I found myself vigorously nodding my head. Some of the things he said were things I had done with my son despite great opposition from family members. I felt that somehow, due to circumstances and my own inner sense of what to do, I had managed to stay on the right path for my son's well-being and happiness. I look forward to attending his 5 day workshop. It was heart-warming to meet a man like him.

Our journey with Aarambh has just begun. I am sure it will be a long and happy one. Thank you to all involved, for bringing this wonderful school to Delhi.



Priya Sharma, Mamma to 4 year old Arhant

“ Arhant loves the space and the people. The teacher's presence comforts people. She has a quality that makes it easy for parents to trust her and know that she will do her best for their child. ”



Having lived away from home for several years we were looking to reconnect with family, friends and our cultural roots once we returned to India. Although we saw Delhi changing in bits and pieces on our annual sojourns to Delhi, however, the extent of the city's transformation dawned on us only after settling back. Commercialization, competitiveness and lack of human empathy were what dominated our social interactions. As a result we began looking for a school that would help inculcate love of learning and concern for other living beings in our children. A school which did not treat the child as an automated machine which was to be filled with random information and then tested on it.

We found our answer in Aarambh - Delhi Waldorf School. This is a school where the child is treated as a beautiful being and where the teacher nurtures the child as her own. The following anecdote illustrates this. Within a few days of starting school a friend asked our older son Advait how he liked his school. This is what Advait said: 'School? Yahan koi school nahi jata. Mai to Aarambh jata hoon. [School? No one goes to school here. I go to Aarambh].' All the adults chuckled at his matter-of-fact tone. But as a parent I was comforted and assured that the boy saw Aarambh as a natural extension of his home life instead of seeing it as a threatening place called school.

-Aparna Vaidik, Mother to 2.5 year old Udhav and 3.5 year old Advait

a year  
of new beginnings  
of waldorf education  
of cheshire cats and wagging tails  
of yummy fruit and chasing snails  
of hose pipes that rage  
and trees that stump  
oh, the joy of washing clothes  
of handling blunt knives  
of digging deep into mysterious pots  
of mud and dirt and glory  
and laughter, lots  
but most importantly  
of parents who wish  
they were their children again  
so that they may too  
study at Aarambh  
and not drown in their thoughts  
mulling over the miserable fact  
that their offspring had all the fun  
and they, poor them, did not!

Happy 1st Birthday dear Aarambh

Ta-ra-rum-pum-pum-pum!!!



-Shwetabh, Father to 4.5 year old Angad

# Understanding Waldorf - Parents as Providers

Providing for our children is another of parenting's paradoxes. Our children start life depending on us for everything. It is vital that we fulfill our role as providers. Food, clothing, and meaningful experiences are all a part of what parents work hard to give their children. The more thought and care we put into providing for our children at an early age, the more they benefit. Healthy food, warm clothing, and good medical care are just the kind of assignments that good parents take seriously. It is our job to provide the very best for our children and over time these decisions will involve schools, camps, after school lessons, and all sorts of teams. But here too, Emerson's words apply: "Every excess has its defect... Every sweet hath its sour."

In his book, 'Too Much of a Good Thing: Raising Children of Character in an Indulgent Age', Dan Kindlon points out that providing too much for our children for too long, impedes character development. When Kindlon did a survey on "too good to be true teenagers", the kinds of healthy children parents hope to raise, he found that there were certain characteristics that these young people had in common. They cleaned their own rooms. They did not have a phone in their room (I assume that also means a cell phone). And they did some kind of community service. What the parents provided was very simple; these children ate dinner regularly as a family.

What is clear from this study is that we should always provide our children with opportunities to give as well as receive. This can mean different things in different families. It can mean that children make their own beds or do the dishes. It can mean that adolescents do their own laundry or clean the bathroom. And with teenagers it can mean that they work outside of the home on weekends or in the summer to earn their own spending money, keeping in mind that independence fosters responsibility and that leads to building their self-esteem.

We are called on to protect our children, but not over-protect them, to provide for them, but not indulge them. These are the challenges that parenting sets before us; and as with any art form, there are no easy answers. We simply have to be present in the moment and move between the opposites to achieve the right balance. Sometimes this work seems overwhelming and I must say there are nights when I get down. It is then that I look for a little help and this quotation by E.F. Schumacher from *Small is Beautiful*, helps.

"Through all our lives we are faced with the task of reconciling opposites which, in logical thought, cannot be reconciled. How can one reconcile the demands of freedom and discipline in education? Countless mothers and teachers, in fact, do it, but no one can write down a solution. They do it by bringing into the situation a force that belongs to a higher level where opposites are transcended – the power of love."

These words remind me that I am just a struggling artist who really loves her work.

The above articles are by Jack Petrash, dated 2012, Jack Petrash, is an educator with over thirty years of classroom experience and a teacher of teachers. He is the founder and director of the Nova Institute, which seeks to bring fresh insights into parent and teacher education through a deeper understanding of children. He has written extensively on education and parenting.

## PARENT ORIENTATION

We usually conduct one parent orientation each month. You could call us or email us to schedule a parent orientation. Our schedule for parent orientations for the next 2 months are as follows: Saturday 20th September and 18th October 2014.

## REACH US AT

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