



## Childcare Program Mission

*"Children who live in an atmosphere of love and warmth, and who have around them truly good examples to imitate, are living in their proper element."*  
Rudolf Steiner, *The Education of the Child*

Love and emotional warmth create the basis for a child's healthy development. These qualities should live between the adult caregiver and the child, in the children's behaviour toward one another, and among the adults and families in the Childcare Centre.

Waldorf Early Childhood Educators believe that children learn through imitation. Meaningful work and chores are part of our day. We provide rich opportunities for the children to explore the social and natural worlds through self-initiated free play. We also understand that a strong rhythm and routine helps children to feel secure and calm. Through this state of security and calmness, the quality of the children's play will be richer. Our program includes a consistent and predictable rhythm filled with song and activities that bring joy and goodness to the children's day.

Teachers and students are often busy together throughout the day baking bread, cooking, sewing, sweeping, washing, and gardening. The children are welcomed to take part in these activities. Children are able to achieve a sense of satisfaction and purpose when they take part in all aspects of daily life.

The children's social, cognitive and physical development is fostered in our program through creative arts, storytelling, cooperative activities and free play. Each day also includes outdoor time where children can play and work outside. We believe that in their early years children learn best when they are active and engaged in healthy movement.

Seasonal festivals are a highlight in our program for children and they are involved in the preparation of these special times. These festivals also serve to bring families and the community together so that meaningful relationships with faculty, parents, children and community are fostered.

Our teachers recognize that they play an important role in the class by creating a calm and secure environment. They understand that in this atmosphere, children can best discover the world around them and gradually find their place within it.

Teachers in a Waldorf environment are challenged to engage in a constant process of renewal. Teachers actively observe the children in their care, carry them in their meditations, and seek to work consciously and artistically to create the experiences that will serve their development. The teacher's devotion to this task awakens them to the importance of self-education and transformation in the context of community. Their ongoing study of child and human development and artistic and meditative practices become essential elements for the practice of Waldorf early childhood education.

Through on going daily observations and monthly written recorded observations of the class dynamic, teachers will ensure that their program is following the program statement and note its impact on the children in the group.

Our teachers work toward providing experiences that are essential for healthy early childhood education. They include:

- Love and warmth
- Creative, artistic experience
- Free, imaginative play
- Protection for the forces of childhood
- Joy, humour and happiness
- Adult caregivers on a path of inner development
- Care for the environment and healthy nourishment for the senses and body
- Meaningful adult activity as an example for the child's imitation
- Gratitude reverence and wonder