

BLÁTHÚ NEWSLETTER



An update for members and friends

December 2023

Unto myself I must be true
And when my tasks I rightly do,
Then God, from my own will, the world with
light is filling.

Though sometimes I feel weak and small,
I'm linked with love unto the All.

And I grow stronger when to do God's
work I'm willing.

From *In the Light of a Child*, by M H Burton

Welcome to the Winter 2023 newsletter!

Light the fire, fetch a blanket, cosy up with a good book or a craft project. What better way to spend the colder evenings? One of the articles in this issue asks, "What nourishes us?" It's a good question, and maybe particularly important in those times when we are busy, busy, and do not make time to stop, rest, care for our own selves and souls.

So many people, including those working in the kindergartens, feel they have no time for anything beyond their work, the daily routines of cooking, cleaning, care of the home. But there is - there has to be - more to life than this!

Do you take time to do the things that nourish you? How do you relax? Do you create beauty in the world just for the love of it? Do you draw, or paint, or write? Do you read poetry, or inspirational books? Do you go for walks in the rain and the wind, and let yourself be amazed at the wonders you had not noticed until then? I am as guilty as anyone of forgetting to be kind to my self. However, recently I have been reintroduced to a

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practice that I had almost completely forgotten. A local herbalist has been offering monthly "Footbath Friday" gatherings. While recovering from a cold recently, I went along to one of these because the chosen herb for that month was thyme, and I knew that could help relieve my remaining congestion.

I stepped into a room where five chairs were arranged around a circular table. Each chair held a candle in a jar; a basin and towel were laid in front of it; a 2 litre bottle containing a thyme infusion and a 5 litre bottle of hot water sat to the side of each chair. The table was laid with teapots, small bottles and jars of thyme remedies and tinctures, plates with thyme-flavoured savouries, things to sniff and touch and delight the senses. So much attention to detail was apparent. We took our seats, lit and held our candles while the herbalist spoke about the healing properties of thyme, and invited us to fill our basins with the cold infusion and the hot water, to our own preferred temperature. Whenever the water cooled, she came around to top



An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth





it up with warm - what luxury! We sat there for an hour or two, tasting, smelling, chatting, listening, breathing, meditating, and receiving nourishment on so many levels.

I had almost forgotten how a footbath was always the first thing I would offer my son if he was unwell as a child. If you have forgotten how to nourish yourself, then this is a good place to start: a simple, loving, warming gift to restore a sense of well-being and being cared for. Don't we all need this?

This time of year as we await the re-birth of the sun/son, perhaps you would like to prepare a nourishing space for a footbath for yourself or a loved one: the right chair; a warm woolly blanket; a velvet cushion; scented oils to support your mood; a flask of herb tea to hand; a book of poetry to dip into as you, or they, soak away the stresses of the day, the week, the year, the season...

Here is a gift we can all give ourselves. Isn't it only when we know we are nourished and supported ourselves, that we can really share of ourselves with others? Enjoy!

In peace,
Ruth Marshall

BLÁTHÚ National Coordinator
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We welcome your contributions to the newsletter

Whether you are a teacher, practitioner, parent, student - or if you are just interested in what BLÁTHÚ does - we welcome your contributions to the newsletter.

Perhaps you would like to send in your seasonal reflections, good ideas, articles, stories, songs, book reviews, crafts, patterns, or recipes.

All your suggestions that can enrich our experience, and ultimately, nourish the children, are very welcome.

Please send all contributions to:

Ruth Marshall,
email: nc.blathu@gmail.com

by Mon 22nd January 2024



IASWECE

BLÁTHÚ is a recognised member of IASWECE, the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education.

IASWECE gives financial and pedagogical support to projects in order to develop and maintain the quality of Waldorf early childhood education throughout the world. For this IASWECE depends on the generous help of colleagues and friends, and therefore welcomes your donations. See <https://iaswece.org/how-you-can-help/> for bank details.

For the IASWECE newsletter, go to www.iaswece.org/iaswece-newsletter/



SPEAKING WITH PARENTS

By Niamh Ruiseal

The healthy social life is found when, in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection and when, in the community, the strength of each individual is living.

– Rudolf Steiner

As Kindergarten teachers, most of our time and attention is spent focused on the children in our care. But naturally we also have an equally important relationship with parents or guardians. This relationship can be supportive and nurturing for us – or sometimes it can be draining or even overwhelming.

So what can we do to help to keep our relationships as healthy as possible?

I believe Steiner was correct in the quote above. Our Kindergartens cannot be a healthy community unless everyone is included. So it is part of our job to bring every family along with us.

What can help is creating warmth and trust. Trust is the whole basis on which our work exists - Parents hand over their young child to us in total trust - trust that we will care for them and treat them with the utmost respect and love, while also including them in the group and introducing them to the wider world.

We build trust with the parents:

- in our conversations at drop-off and collection times,
- when we speak about their child and they see that we really “see” their child.
- when we go on home visits - this really strengthens the bond between teacher, parent and the child. A whole new world of connection is created.

So what can we do if things are not going smoothly with a parent?

It can be exhausting and stressful. It consumes a lot of our time, energy and our thinking.

I think the first step is to remember is that we - both teacher and parent - have the same common goal: everybody wants the best for the child even if we are coming at things from different angles.

Possibly the first thing to think about is: *what can we change in the kindergarten or within ourselves that will help the situation?*

I think we all know that we cannot change another person, we can only change ourselves. Can we work with the night time and receive help from the spiritual world with our difficulty?

If it is a situation with a child in our group, try to envisage an example of the child in her/his most difficult moment and take it into your sleep. Ask their Angel and yours to help you find helpful solutions in the moment when the difficulty arises again.

This may manifest as Henning Kohler writes in his book *“Working with Anxious, Nervous and Depressed Children.”*

He states:

“Instead of sensible instruction, we make stories full of rich pictures that develop insight by means of fantasy rather than of intellect.”

He tells us to pay attention to the insight we receive.

He goes on to say:

“Three things are essential in seeking collaboration with the child’s angel:

- *your own thoughtful effort in forming a concept of the course of human maturation;*
- *exact observation, carried on with veneration for the child;*
- *and lastly, relegating night after night, the fruits of these efforts to sleep as you prepare for it,*

trying yet again to combine what you have observed with insights you have arrived at."

I cannot recommend this book highly enough. His understanding of today's children is extraordinary.

The other book that can help us with our work with parents and children is *"Ways of Attending"* by Iain McGilchrist.

In it he tells us that, *"The play of attention can both create and destroy but it never leaves an*

object unchanged."

So the very way we pay attention to an event will affect its outcome. How we think about a parent or a child has the power to make a situation better or worse.

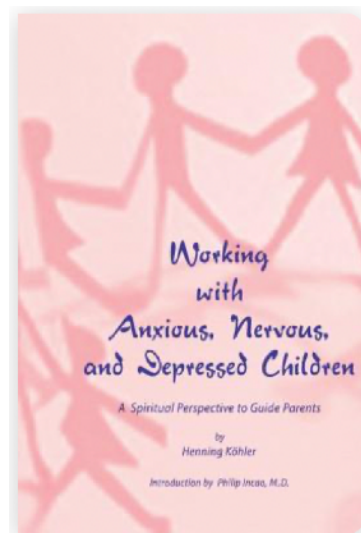
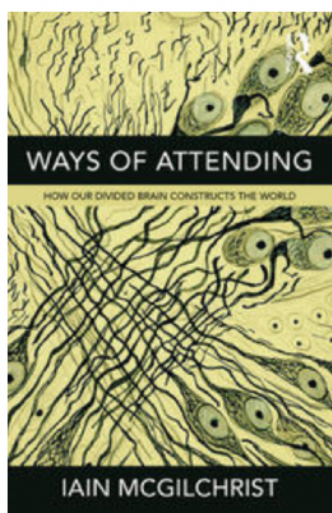
We know that Steiner puts a lot of emphasis on the inner work of the teacher. We know that this is our greatest gift/tool. These books help to bring clear pictures and guidance to help us with this inner work in a very practical way.

"Attention changes what kind of a thing comes into being for us: in that way, it changes the world."

- Iain McGilchrist 2009.

The two books that Niamh particularly recommends:

- **Ways of Attending**, Iain McGilchrist, ISBN 9781781815335, Routledge, 2018
- **Working with Anxious, Nervous and Depressed Children**, Henning Kohler, AWSNA, 2001



NOURISHMENT – WHAT NOURISHES US?

By Stella Huth

Nourishment can be understood in many different ways. When asked “what nourishes you?” the answers are manifold and very individual.

Besides good, quality, delicious food one might say: A walk in the woods, paying attention to nature, observing flowers or little insects, taking the time to listen to the chatter of a bird, singing with your children, reading stories, seeing a child happy and content, having learned something new, successful team work, sitting in complete silence, receiving a smile from a stranger, having a good chat with a friend, drinking a cup of tea, meditating, yoga, joyful moments with your family and so on.

Here we can detect different kinds of nourishment: Nourishment for our body, our soul and our spirit. The following will look at the different ways of nourishment in relation to shared meals within our families or in Kindergarten.

Our **physical body** receives nourishment through food, ideally through good quality food. Good nutrition starts with the choice of seeds. Plants grown from hybrid seeds seem to become more and more intolerable for many people¹. The quality of the soil in which the vegetable was grown is also of great importance for our nutritional intake besides we are becoming increasingly sensitive to pesticides and artificial fertilisers which are used in most conventional crops growing.

Different parts of the plant nourish certain parts of the human body. According to Rudolf Steiner the fruit or blossom of a plant stimulates our lower body, the leaf part stimulates our chest area and the root affects our head.²

But eating is so much more than just nutrition. Nourishment happens on other levels too. Especially when sitting down together and enjoying a meal with others.

Sharing a meal within the family or in Kindergarten with the whole group releases the “love hormone” oxytocin which promotes positive feelings and thus has a positive effect on our wellbeing. Recent research suggests that there seems to be less and less time in family life for

sitting down together at meal times. How great it is, that in Steiner Kindergartens we still do that and pay attention to the loving preparation of food and eating meals together. Having meals within a community means not only being together and enjoying each other’s company it also gives us and the children an opportunity to learn from each other, to communicate, to laugh, to interact, to feel part of a community.

Enjoying meals together gives the children trust, a sense of rhythm and structure, an overall psychological stability and can be seen as the pillar of community building. It also helps them to relax, to bond with other children and teachers and supports the development of the feeling of being hungry or full. It is said, that children who have experienced regular family/community meals have a higher intake of fruit and vegetables, suffer less from obesity and are more likely to continue shared dinners with friends in later life. Adults at work, who sit down together for meals with their colleagues show better team work, collaboration and team performance. Community meals nourish our social and emotional wellbeing and can clearly be seen as an act of care, as nourishment for the soul.

Therefore shared meals foster a great sense of community, togetherness and belonging.

Gerald Hüther, a well-known German neurobiologist, emphasises on the importance of Community for the child’s development. Every child brings into the world a desire to discover and to create **together**. The primary learning experiences of a child are experiences in a living relationship with another living person.

Letting the child be an active part of the community, can be as simple as letting her or him help with the preparation of food, setting the table and sharing the meal together.

In Kindergarten we do that. And with that we nourish body, soul and spirit:

We start our meals with a certain ritual: a song, a blessing, a little saying to honour or show



gratefulness towards the earth, thank for the food. This is **spiritual** nourishment.

Our **soul** is nurtured by creating a certain mood at meal times, lighting a candle, taking sufficient time to eat, sharing out the food with patience, care and in a loving way, really enjoying what we eat: delicious, golden pumpkin soup for example. Paying loving attention to how the food is prepared and displayed is also nourishment for the soul. Bread rolls shaped or decorated in a special beautiful way, (see star bread rolls) are eaten with a different contentment than “ordinary” rolls. Cherishing meal times together, sitting down together as a community fills us with the satisfactory feeling of togetherness.

The good food itself, given to us by mother earth, nourishes our **physical** body.

So maybe it is not that worrying when a child goes through a short phase where it doesn't eat as much or only certain foods. The feeling of togetherness and being part of the community experienced through the beautifully held, shared meals will still nourish the child.

Let us also keep the nourishment of body, soul and spirit in mind when celebrating festivals in Kindergarten, the upcoming Lantern Festival or Advent maybe, because all three are joining the celebration:

Every festival comes with special food or a traditional meal (physical body) and certain rituals like songs, craft activities (lanterns e.g.) lightening of special candles (advent wreath e.g.) (soul). Before the celebration the teacher has inwardly prepared and made a conscious connection to the meaning of the festival, has thought about and planned why and in which way she wants to celebrate it with the children (spirit).

With this in mind, may you have a nourishing Lantern Festival and Advent.

- Stella Huth

Literature:

¹https://www.kultursaat.org/bilder/user_upload/2016_Hinweis-Magazin.pdf

² Rudolf Steiner GA354 <https://rsarchive.org/Lectures/GA354/English/AP1987/19240731p01.html>

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAM MEETINGS

By Stella Huth

A vital part of our job as kindergarten teachers is the preparation and reflection of the daily work with the children in our care. Some of this is done alone, like individually learning new circle times, stories, puppet shows and finger games. Other matters need the attention of the whole kindergarten team: structuring the day and finding a good rhythm, dealing with certain challenging behaviour, preparing parents evenings and parents meetings, writing child observations, reflecting on celebrated festivals, exchanging views on educational topics, sharing pedagogical questions and knowledge... just to name a few.

Team meetings are important for coordinating and structuring the team, to talk about the children and their developing needs. For a professional discussion concerning pedagogical questions and motifs, we need the input and support of all our colleagues. Here we need to work as a team.

Weekly team meetings are essential to establish successful team work and to ensure continuous occupation with your quality management. Team meetings give you an opportunity to find more efficient ways of working together and to create a workplace, that everyone is happy with.

Having regular team meetings means creating a professional space to reflect and discuss your pedagogical approach: what works well for you as an individual and as a team; what is the team happy, or unhappy, with?

Team meetings give you the opportunity to get to know each other; to understand each other better; to develop a team ethos; and to look at questions like how to make decisions, how to handle disagreements and address difficult issues with colleagues or parents perhaps. Is every member of the team heard? Are we happy with the way we work, or do we just accept a certain behaviour? How can we, within the team, give feedback or constructive criticism? How can we address issues like being understaffed or exhausted? How do we share responsibilities and divide daily tasks? Are our roles defined properly? Are we all carrying a work load we can handle?

Good team meetings have a positive effect on the overall communication between colleagues. It is always better to talk in person with everyone involved present. Emailing or texting can too easily be misinterpreted and lead to misunderstandings and conflict. Talking in team meetings to everyone at the same time means, ideally, that everyone is on the same page, has the same information, and can voice an opinion straight away. Important or critical topics are better discussed in person, in a direct dialogue. If a colleague seems unhappy or complains a lot, ask *why* and find out if there is a personal, organisational or structural overall problem that the team can help with.

To prevent issues from building up, it is good to address concerns as soon as they arise. Every



team member is contributing to the work atmosphere. You can look at your “team climate”: do we create a mood of joy and inspiration or do we work on a basis of frustration and stress? Do we like going to team meetings? The work atmosphere depends on the individual’s general attitude. Everyone is responsible for their own attitude. Everything can be difficult or joyful, depending on one’s attitude.

At more stressful times your team can provide a space to lighten your spirit and to lift each other’s mood. You can talk about a special moment with the children or what excites you about your work, about the children. You can find inspiration in and learn from each other. You can talk about your frustrations when things seem difficult or challenging and offer each other support. In this way, you can act as a role model, building and strengthening your community.

It can be such a fulfilling feeling of contentment working harmoniously together with colleagues, when mutual preparation leads to a “successful” day in Kindergarten, when things run smoothly; the children really enjoy ring time; we handle a challenging situation calmly and cooperatively; or when we have the time to observe a child being peacefully immersed in play. It is also very rewarding when we are creating something new by working on a festival or a puppet show *together* or if a parents’ evening was enjoyable because you, as a team, felt prepared and confident. With the support of a well-working team, we can create a nourishing environment for ourselves, our colleagues, parents and children alike.

WHY I WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF YOUR TEAM

Whenever I have spoken to kindergarten teachers recently, it seemed they were pretty much dealing with the same issues. The workload for kindergarten teachers has expanded greatly. Teachers are under a lot of pressure due to staff shortages and sick leave. Teachers have very little time for team meetings and preparation, and are naturally expected to do overtime and often feel undervalued and under paid.

Unhappiness and frustration about your work conditions, as well as discrepancies, issues and misunderstandings - be it with your employer, team or a parent – and feeling unsure about pedagogical matters can be draining and energy-wasting, which will, at some point, affect your personal health and work attitude in kindergarten.

Not having time for team meetings or being understaffed are matters that need to be addressed. If you feel like you are rushing through the day without sufficient time to focus on the children's needs and yours (!) then you might want to ask *why* that is and what is necessary for it to change. Who can be approached about that? A colleague, the board or would it be helpful to invite a mentor?

In my role as Blathu's temporary mentor, I would like to offer support to you and your team. Together I would like to look at matters which concern you as teachers. I agree with Rudolf Steiner: *"Only if society looks upon teachers with the due respect for their calling, only if it recognises that teachers stand in the forefront of bringing new impulses into our civilization ... only then will teachers receive the moral support they need for their work."* *

In my ideal world every kindergarten teacher wakes up in the morning, thinking - like a little child might - *"I love going to Kindi!"* How many days of the week do you wake up like that? I know only too well from my own experience that in reality, there are other days too... In my opinion, the general care of the kindergarten teacher's well-being is easily neglected. But if we ourselves don't look after our needs and well-being, who will? Just like the children in our care, we can only be our best when we experience a relaxed work environment, see meaning in what we do, and feel appreciated and heard.

If you, or your kindergarten team, have any questions regarding organisation or structure of team meetings, if you are looking for guidance in a certain matter or need pedagogical support, please feel free to contact me via phone or email for further information or to arrange a mentoring visit. I am looking forward to meeting you, hearing about your experiences and working together on matters or questions that concern you and your pedagogical work.

Best wishes, Stella Huth
Email: s.huth(at)posteo.de

* Ref: Rudolf Steiner Education (2003). *An Introductory Reader*. Rudolf Steiner Press.

Blathu is very pleased to have Stella step in as mentor at present. Here, she gives you a brief introduction

Who is Stella Huth?

A couple of years after finishing school in 2002, an eye-opening encounter with a little boy made me realise that I wanted to work with children. After finishing my Steiner kindergarten teacher training, I moved to Kilkenny. Over the last 13 years I have been working in various kindergartens and crèches in Ireland and Germany. I recently finished a bachelors degree in Early Childhood Education. I enjoy nature and all its wonders, puppet shows and felting. Protecting and caring for the unique stage of childhood and supporting the people who look after today's children is of great importance to me. I am looking forward to working with you.

Stella Huth

BLÁTHÚ MEMBERSHIP 2023-24

It is now time to renew your membership with Bláthú for the year 2023-2024.

As the national organisation for Steiner Waldorf Early Years in Ireland, BLÁTHÚ is committed to upholding standards of Steiner pedagogy in early years education and care. BLÁTHÚ is committed to promoting the growth and development of Steiner Waldorf services in Ireland, and aims to support our member services to maintain the quality of care and education that they provide. As a member of BLÁTHÚ, you are part of a recognised professional body which, through its mission and actions, is committed to furthering the profile and formation of Steiner Waldorf Early Years services and pedagogy.

Proposed changes to membership requirements:

Annual membership will now run from 1st September to 31st August each year, to reflect the school year and to assist a smooth membership renewal process.

We are proposing to introduce a number of minimum standards, which will be implemented over the next three years.

Standard of Training:

We would wish to see that each member service have, or be currently working towards having, at least 1 fully-trained Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood teacher.

Commitment to CPD:

Completing a minimum of 2 relevant CPD workshops per service per year. Participation by staff members on a Steiner Early Childhood training or a foundation course in Anthroposophy, in Ireland or abroad, is also considered as CPD.

Representation at Annual Conference:

Each member service to send at least 1 staff representative to BLÁTHÚ's annual conference.

Mentoring:

We recommend a minimum of 1 mentoring visit per service per school year, plus a follow-up zoom call within 6 weeks of the mentoring visit. BLÁTHÚ offers a considerable discount if a service commits to a series of 3 pre-booked visits.

Membership Options:

Full Membership is open to Kindergartens/Early Years Services as organisations which avail of FULL benefits. 3 contact persons receiving correspondence, usually lead teacher, assistant teacher & the committee secretary. All members of staff/committee can avail of discounted entry to BLÁTHÚ workshops & events. **Cost: €75 p/a**

New or small initiatives such as parent & toddler groups can take out a **reduced** membership, which means they can avail of full benefits with one person receiving correspondence & discounts. **Cost: €35 p/a**

Associate membership is available to organisations such as VCOs, Universities or Colleges who wish to associate themselves with BLÁTHÚ, receiving updates and discounts to BLÁTHÚ events.

Cost: €65 p/a

Individual membership is available to members of the general public and parents of children who may be attending one of our member settings, receiving updates, newsletters and discounts to BLÁTHÚ events.

Cost: €25 p/a

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP?

Benefits to All Members

- Join with members nationwide strengthening Steiner Education in the Early Years sector.
- Receive the quarterly BLÁTHÚ newsletter
- Receive a discount on BLÁTHÚ events and publications
- Receive regular updates & job vacancy information
- Mentoring and support

Additional Benefits to Full Members

- BLÁTHÚ is a recognised professional body
- BLÁTHÚ represents you at national and international levels
- Your service's website can be linked from listing on www.blathu.org
- The assurance of quality

So, what do we do now - how do we renew our BLÁTHÚ membership?

Contact the National Co-ordinator, Ruth Marshall:

Email: nc.blathu@gmail.com or tel: 089 241 1816,

and request a membership form, or download the form from our website www.blathu.org

FOR THE SEASONS - FESTIVALS - ADVENT

Month	Date	Festival / Event
November	11th November The fourth Sunday before Christmas is often in November	Old Hallowe'en; Martinmas / St Martins Advent
December	3rd Dec first Sunday of Advent 21/22 24/25 26 31st	Advent begins Sun 3rd Dec in 2023 Winter solstice - Midwinter - shortest day Christmas Eve / Christmas Day St Stephen's Day - The Wren New Year's Eve
January	1st 6th	New Year Three Kings / Epiphany / La Befana (Italy)



The gift of the light
We shall thankfully take
But it shall not be alone for our
sake.

The more we give light,
The one to the other,
It grows and gives light,
And shines even further,
Until every heart,
By love's set aflame
In every place
Great joy shall proclaim.
Not long shall continue the
dark of the year.
The light draws near.

AS ADVENT APPROACHES...

It feels timely to remind you that we have two short videos available on the Blathu website on **Preparing for Advent**. In these presentations, you will find:

Part 1: we give a taste of the mood of Advent, and how to share this in simple, subtle ways, with the children, through creating an Advent landscape.
Link: https://youtu.be/GkJkE_lucrs?feature=shared

Part 2: Includes simple gifts to make, treasures from Nature, and painting with Jack Frost.
Link: <https://youtu.be/8JSrchPIXrs?feature=shared>

The first light of Advent is the light of stones.
Stones that live in crystals, seashells, and bones.

The second light of Advent is the light of plants.
Roots, stem, leaf, flower and fruit by whom we live and grow.

The third light of Advent is the light of beasts.
Animals of farm, field, forest, air and sea.
All await the birth in greatest and in least.

The fourth light of Advent is the light of humankind.
The light of love, the light of thought, to give and to understand.

Festive Wintry Biscuits

A simple biscuit dough that can be rolled out again and again!

Ingredients:

100g butter or coconut butter
250g muscovado or demerara sugar
200ml apricot or fig puree
1 tbsp ground cinnamon
2 tsp ground ginger
1 tbsp baking soda
300ml milk or rice milk
1kg plain flour, or spelt flour

Decoration:

Chocolate buttons,
dried fruit, chopped nuts...

For fruit puree you need
100g dried fruit; 300ml water
Soak fruit for 2 hours,
boil in fresh water,
let it cool, blend to a smooth puree.



What to do:

Melt the butter and sugar over a low heat.
Remove from heat.
Add fruit puree, spices and baking soda.
Slowly pour in the milk and leave to cool.
Stir in the flour, a little at a time, making sure dough does not become too hard.
Knead the dough and put in the fridge overnight.
Roll out the dough (max 7mm thick) and cut into shapes - stars, angels, reindeers, etc.
Place on a baking tray lined with greaseproof paper.
Bake at 200 degrees for about 5 minutes. Cool on a rack.

Adapted from an original recipe in: "Pumpkin Soup and Cherry Bread" A Steiner-Waldorf Kindergarten Cookbook by R Rosengren & N Lyzet, Floris Books



A Candle

A candle's but a simple thing,
it starts with just a bit of string,
But dipped or rolled with patient hand,
it gathers wax upon the strand.
Until complete and snowy white,
it gives at last a lovely light.

Life seems so like that bit of string,
each deed we do a simple thing.
Yet day by day on life's strand,
we work with patient heart and hand.
It gathers joy, makes dark days bright,
and gives at last a lovely light.

RANNTA SCÍPEÁLA GAEILGE – IRISH SKIPPING RHYMES

Compiled by Linda Grant

Is maith le páistí bheith ag scipeál agus nuair a bhí mé i mo ghirseach bheag, is minic a bhíomar amuigh faoin spéir leis an téad scipeála. Nuair a bhíonn an aimsir ag athrú agus ag éirí níos fuair, níl dada is fearr leat ná bheith ag scipeál chun eirigh té! Seo iad na rannta scipeála.

Children love to skip and, when I was a little girl, we were often outside with the skipping rope. When the weather changes and begins to get colder, there's nothing better than skipping to warm up! Here are some skipping rhymes.



Aon, Dó

Aon, dó,
Capall is bó,
Trí, ceathair,
Bróga leathair,
Cúig, sé,
Cupán tae,
Seacht, ocht,
Seanbhean bhocht,
Naoi deich,
Ciste te!

One, Two

One, two,
Horse and cow
Three, four
Leather shoes
Five, six,
Cup of tea
Seven, eight,
Poor old woman
Nine, ten,
Warm cake

Leag an Bord

Leag an bord,
Leag an bord,
Scian is forc
Is plátaí in ord.
Piobar dubh,
Piobar dubh,
Prátaí nua
Is cúpla ubh.

Set the Table

Set the Table,
Set the Table,
Knife and fork,
And plates in order.
Black pepper,
Black pepper,
New potatoes,
And a couple of eggs.

Cé hé do Leannán

Cé hé do leannán?
Cé hé do ghrá?
An dtosaíonn a ainm le hÁ nó Bá?

A,B,C,D.....

Who is Your Sweetheart?

Who is your sweetheart?
Who is your love?
Does their name begin with A or B?

A, B, C, D, ...



Bachlóg' ar Chrann

Bachlóg' ar chrann,
Bachlóg' ar chrann,
Ní fada go mbeidh mo bhreithlá ann,
Eanáir, Feabhra, Márta....

Buds on the Trees

Buds on the trees
Buds on the trees
It won't be long till my birthday is here
January, February, March...

Úlla, Cnónna is Plumaí

Úllaí, cnónna is plumaí ar chrann,
Cathain a bheidh do bhreithlá ann?

Eanáir, Feabhra

Apples, Nuts and Plums

Apples, nuts and plums on the tree,
When will your birthday be?

January, February, March...

Bainne na nGabhar nó Bainne na mBó

Bainne na ngabhar nó bainne na mbó,
Prátaí rósta is neart im leo!
Comhair na prátaí a gheobhaidh tú féin,
Níos mó ná dó, níos lú ná sé?
-A haon, a dó, a trí, a ceathair.....

Goats Milk or Cow's Milk

Goats Milk or Cow's Milk,
Roast Potatoes, with plenty of butter!
Count the potatoes you'll get,
More than two? Less than six?
One, two, three, four, etc...

Scipeáil suas is scipeáil síos

Scipeáil suas is scipeáil síos
Scipeáil timpeall is timpeall arís
Buail do bhosa a haon, a dó, a trí
Tig liom scipeáil go Sciobairín!

Skip Up, Skip Down

Skip up, skip down,
Skip round and around again.
Clap your hands, a one, two, three
Come skip with me to Skibbereen!

A haon, a dó , a trí,

A haon, a dó, a trí,
A ceathair, a cúig, a sé,
Is breá liom bheith ag truslóg,
Is breá liom bheith ag léim.

A seacht, a hocht, a naoi,
A seacht, a hocht, a naoi,

Ní stopfaidh mé, ní stopfaidh mé,
Go mbeidh mé i mBaile Átha Cliath!

A One, Two, Three

A one, two, three,
Four, five, six,
I like to stride,
I like to jump.

Seven, eight, nine
Seven, eight, nine,

I won't stop, I won't stop
Until I get to Dublin!

NANCY MELLON - STORYTELLING AND THE YOUNG CHILD



Although our Bláthú Conference was cancelled this year, we hope that some of you may have had the opportunity to meet Nancy Mellon during some of her other engagements around the country whilst she was in Ireland, and have thus been able to soak up some of her story wisdom.

Blathu staff and board members were still able to meet with Nancy, and this gave us an opportunity of a different kind.

Nancy Mellon, renowned storyteller and author agreed to an in-depth interview with Linda Grant, a board member with Bláthú and experienced Steiner Kindergarten Teacher. Linda asked Nancy a series of questions designed to elicit guidance for parents and kindergarten teachers in storytelling with young children.

Changes have occurred in modern times away from the oral tradition of story telling towards story mediated through screens: television, film, games and internet. What has been lost for the developing child in this change?

In oral storytelling, especially for young children, what is the role of language? What are the elements of the healing story? How do we invite healing into our storytelling? And what of Fairytales - are all fairytales suitable for the young child?

Following this, Ruth Marshall, storyteller and Blathu National Coordinator, asked Nancy about healing story as an aid to communication with co-workers.

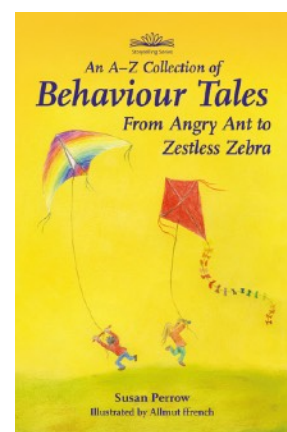
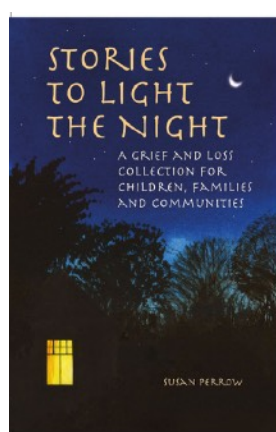
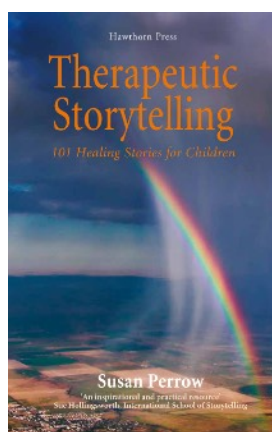
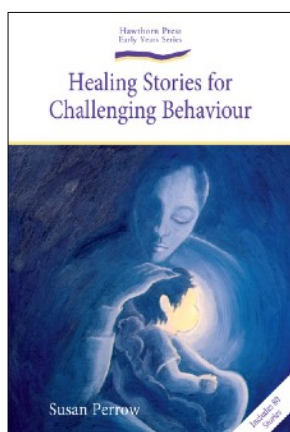
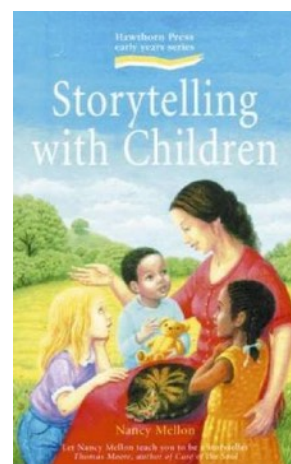
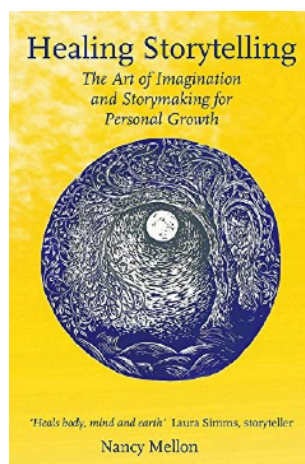
In our next newsletter, you will be able to read an article based on the interview, and the video will be available in the near future for members to view via a link on our website. These new on line resources will be accessible to members only. It forms part of the development of new services for members.

NEW RESOURCES:

Nancy Mellon is the author of several books, but perhaps the most relevant to developing your storytelling skills for work with young children are these two: *Storytelling with Children* and *Healing Storytelling*. Both available from Hawthorn Press.

Other books helpful for developing the art of healing with story, are **Susan Perrow**'s books on therapeutic storytelling, see below, also from Hawthorn Press. <https://www.hawthornpress.com>

Blathu has copies of many of these books, and hopes to develop a lending library as a resource for our members over the coming year.



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The course is open to anyone interested in exploring the foundations of Waldorf / Steiner education, anthroposophy, bio-dynamic agriculture etc. and is the foundation year of the **Soulscape Early Years Steiner Teacher Training**. Previous participants experienced the course to be an enriching and supportive process:

- "This course is helping me understand about myself and others. It has put being a human being in a new light."
- "A nourishing, life changing journey! This course changed my way of thinking, improved my skills and helped me to connect to myself and the people around me."
- "The course has exceeded my expectations in every way. I would recommend this for any adult regardless of background."
- "The foundation year does exactly as it proposes, that is, it nourishes and inspires participants into a space of inner reflection, inner being, inner creativity and ultimately inner self growth. At each session we experienced a tapestry of academic, artistic, practical and group learning techniques."

Cost: 1750 euro. Early Bird (before 31 December 2023) 1600 euro. Instalments possible and limited number of places at reduced rate for unwaged participants.

Full information from: thesteiner.training@gmail.com

KINDLING, Journal for Steiner Waldorf Early Childhood

KINDLING is distributed worldwide as printed copies or PDF. The two issues cover subjects such as play, movement, equality and diversity, sleep and care, toys and equipment, festivals, puppetry, storytelling, technology and recently sustainability – back issues are available.

For information on how to subscribe, please email: admin@kindlingjournal.org Or visit www.kindlingjournal.org



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VACANCY Kindergarten Manager

BURREN SONAS, KILFENORA, CO. CLARE



The Burren Sonas Kindergarten is looking for a committed Kindergarten Manager to lead the the Kindergarten in line with the ethos of the Steiner Waldorf approach.

The candidate must have a minimum FETAC level 6 qualification in childcare, with Level 7/8 preferable. Prior managerial experience within a childcare/creche is desirable. They must have a genuine interest in Steiner Waldorf Education and the ethos of a holistic and creative education. Steiner Waldorf qualification/experience is an advantage.

Job Start date: December 2023.
Search for Burren Sonas on Indeed.com for further details.

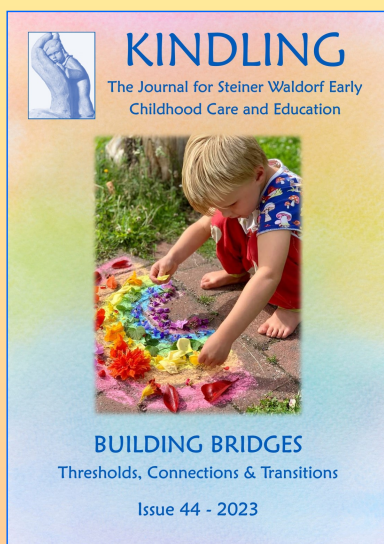
Please send your CV to burrensonas@gmail.com to apply.

burrensonas.com



KINDLING

The Journal for
Steiner Waldorf
Early Childhood
Care and Education



KINDLING contains themed articles, songs, stories, crafts, research, health, information, book reviews, news and more...

Published twice yearly in the UK, this journal is available worldwide as a printed copy or PDF.

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for news of upcoming
events

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