

December 12, 2021

Dearest Nursery families,

It's hard to believe that soon, we will be turning the page into a new year again.

And as we approach Winter Solstice (December 21st) it brings into our experience the shortest day and the longest night of the year.

This time of the year, animals slow down and hibernate, plants slow down their growth and trees drop their leaves, and human beings go through changes as well.

During this time of the year, our mood and consciousness become inward and reflective.

As we enter the winter break, I wish for your days to be filled with warmth, laughter, love and health.

Today, I am sending you a booklet about Waldorf toys.

My intent is to give you another glimpse into why we do the things we do and if you have skills in knitting or sewing, have someone in your family who does, or better yet, the courage to find your new hidden talent, this booklet will give you the inspiration to want to make something for your child. Starting a new project would be a beautiful way to pass the time together during the long break, while your child watches you imbue your heart and soul into it.

When you walk into a Waldorf Early Childhood room, you will notice the natural materials such as wood, silk, cotton, etc. You will also find many play things and objects that are open ended and without many details, giving children the opportunity to imagine and foster creativity. I have seen children turn blocks into the chair of a fire engine, then into an instrument, then a stepping stone that leads to a castle and so on.

In this booklet called "Toy Making" by Gun Lee Blue (Early Childhood teacher at the Brooklyn Waldorf School), she describes how "A toy that is handmade, rather than mass-produced, has a life of its own. A plastic or artificial toy often cracks, discolors, or breaks over time, and if left out in the elements, it will be less likely to be of any interest to the child. A toy of natural materials can be lovingly repaired, and if left out in the elements, can be resurrected by a good washing and a little fresh wool stuffing. All adults can make toys, the simpler the better, and less "perfect" is even better! It is the love and attention that went into the making of the toy that really stands the test of time. By paying attention to the color, texture, smell, and shape of something, one enables the young child to create an inner picture, and imaginative play will flow forth."

Just in case you are still hesitant in plunging into unfamiliar territory, for our next Parent Meeting in the spring, we will make something simple together.

Blessings on our week ahead, I will see you all tomorrow with your lovely children!

With warmest wishes,

Maria Morioka
WSOC Nursery Teacher