



# LifeWays North America, Inc.

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## LifeWays Early Childhood and Human Development Training

### CORE CONTENT

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#### Human Growth and Development

Developmental Cycles from Birth to Twenty-One	Spiritual Nature of The Child
Adult As Curriculum/Child As Apprentice: Imitative Nature of the Young Child	Child Development from Medical Perspective – Natural development and health issues such as:
Understanding Children’s Drawings	Sleep, Importance of Warmth, Nutrition
Development of Speech	Health and Safety
Development of Movement	Nurturing and Nourishing: Care of Child / Care of Caregiver
Development of Thinking	Development of Play
The Mantles that support walking, speaking, thinking	Development of the Senses
Seven Life Processes	Brain Development and Neurological Research
Working with Adult Temperaments	Body games for the very young
Comparison of Developmental Theorists and Contemporary Child Development Views	Three R’s of early childhood – Routine/Rhythm, Repetition and Respect/Reverence
Biography Themes/Life Phases	Discipline: The L.O.V.E. Approach

#### Child, Family and Community

LifeWays Principles and Practices	Personal Life Balance
Breathing/Flexibility in Working with Parents, Colleagues and Children	Mindfulness As A Tool for Work and Daily Living
Creative and Healthy Environments for Children	Seasonal Festivals and Celebrations
Joyfulness As An Approach to Working With Children and Families	Nature Study and Nature Walks
Diversity	Framing/Scheduling
Working with Self-Evaluation	Personal Pacing
Tools of the Trade – Establishing Child Care Programs	Tools of the Trade – Establishing Parent-Child Programs

#### Program/Curriculum for Child Care and Parenting

Crocheting	Doll Making
Knitting	Sewing
Fabric Dyeing	Toymaking
Felting	Watercolor Painting
Puppet Making	Woodworking
Storytelling	Music – Voice and Kinderharp
Introduction to LifeWays Living Arts	Moveable Pictures/Coloring
Movement – Eurythmy/Spacial Dynamics	Speech Exercises
Gardening	Cooking

#### Domestic/Nurturing Arts

Nurturing Care of Children (e.g., clothing, feeding, sleep, warmth, bathing, hair brushing, foot baths, bodily care, comforting, diapering, toileting)	Domestic Arts (e.g., cleaning, cooking, tidying, laundry, baking, manners, table setting, caring for things, repairing)
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# OVERVIEW

## ***Human Growth and Development***

### ***Human Growth and Development, Understanding Our Children***

What do young children really need - at home, in childcare, in life? To know what they need, we must first understand something of who they are and from whence they came? Through the insights of Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf education, and other contemporary research, we will cultivate our understanding of how the child develops from pre-birth to seven, including a glimpse at the developmental cycles from birth to twenty-one. We will also work with three R's of early childhood – rhythm/routine, repetition and reverence/respect. Understanding the spiritual foundation of the imitative nature of young children and the importance of our continuous self-development on behalf of the children.

### ***Human Growth and Development, Speaking, Listening and Understanding***

From Karl Konig's *The First Three Years* and other sources, we will study the development of movement, speech and thinking. We will further develop our understanding of early childhood development through an exploration of children's drawings and the development of play from infancy through six years old. We will introduce puppetry and storytelling that is appropriate in the various stages of early childhood development.

### ***Human Growth and Development, Nurturing, Nourishing and Understanding***

We will focus on child development from the point of view of physical well-being – natural development and health issues, importance of warmth, sleep and nutrition, and safety issues. Further focus will be on the care of the adult – nurturing the nurturer. We will learn about neurological development and the relationships between walking, speaking and thinking in the first three years. We will also be introduced to the L.O.V.E. approach to child guidance. We will conduct a comparison of several developmental theorists and study adult temperaments as a tool for working with colleagues, parents and ourselves.

## ***Child, Family and Community***

### ***Child, Family and Community, Adult As Curriculum, Child As Apprentice***

Of particular importance, we will consider early childhood education as a relationship-based curriculum compared to a program-driven curriculum. Course content will include relationship-based caregiving; seasonal celebrations and festivals; breathing/flexibility in working with parents, colleagues and children; mindfulness as a tool for work and daily living; and nature study. We will also look at the fundamentals of establishing parent-child programs, child care programs, and working with licensing and the community at large.

### ***Child, Family and Community, It Takes A Village***

Focusing on personal life balance as a support for working with children, families and communities. We will further work with the development of community social skills, seeking and understanding diversity, seasonal celebrations and festivals, and continued nature study.

### ***Child, Family and Community, Loving Our Work***

Further working with development of community social skills as well as understanding joyfulness as a healthy approach to working with children and families.

## ***Program Curriculum***

### ***Program Curriculum, We Are The Curriculum***

In keeping with the understanding that the self-development of the adult is primary in early childhood education, the curriculum includes a variety of skill-based classes, such as crocheting, knitting, fabric dyeing and gardening to facilitate the student's ability to create useful and beautiful things. The daily movement and music classes will include games and songs to do with children as well as exercises to develop personal posture, singing skills and work with the children's kinderharp. We will also study how the environment affects young children and will look at how to set up environments that support their physical, emotional, cognitive and social development.

### ***Program Curriculum, We Are The Curriculum, Part Two***

We will be introduced to the art of water color painting for ourselves and with young children and will continue our crafts classes with a simple woodworking project. With a master puppeteer and storyteller, we will learn how to work with simple storytelling, how to create enchanting felted puppets and how nursery rhymes support developmental growth in young children. We will also work with speech exercises to tune our own speech and will continue with our movement curriculum. We will consider the various elements of a healthy early childhood environment and how to establish such an environment.

### ***Program Curriculum, We Are The Curriculum, Part Three***

In keeping with the understanding that the self-development of the adult is primary in early childhood education, the curriculum includes a variety of skill-based classes. We will create a simple doll and blanket and consider the role of doll play with young

children regardless of gender. We will also introduce sewing and simple toymaking to facilitate the student's ability to create useful and beautiful things. The daily movement and music classes will continue. We will also consider various components of natural outdoor environments for young children and the benefits of nature play. We will look at various outdoor play settings for children, including the garden. We will introduce an approach to self-evaluation and will continue to work with methods to support personal pacing skills.

### ***Domestic Arts and Nurturing Arts***

#### ***Living Arts - Domestic, Nurturing, Creative and Social Arts***

Discussion and hands-on experience regarding how to establish healthy routines and rhythms with children. Also working with setting and cleaning the table, manners, cooking, scheduling, washing dishes, cleaning the environment, tending garden, other outdoor care, general household management. Discussion and hands-on experience working with clothing children, diapering, toileting, hand and foot washing, holding and touching, rocking and comforting.

### ***Integration of Learning / Independent Study Requirements***

**With the support of an assigned mentor, each student will fulfill the following requirements outside of the scheduled training sessions:**

#### ***Mentoring***

Students will be assigned a mentor who will provide the following services:

- Monthly telephone consultation – students are required to phone their mentors monthly
- Possibility of observing mentor in her or his own working environment if applicable
- Offering of advice in selecting a theme for final paper or project
- Help in finding a location for LifeWays and conventional program observations and for the practicum if needed (usually practicum will be in student's own site)
- Reviewing and offering comments on student's program observation reports and on final paper or project
- Two-day observation of the student during the practicum with a follow-up conversation.
- Written report on mentor's two-day observation and general comments on student's progress.
- Student reviews mentor's report and has an opportunity to discuss it with mentor.
- Mentor sends final report to the program director.
- The mentor and the program director, with input from the student, will determine if the student has completed all of the Integration of Learning Requirements and is prepared to receive LifeWays certification.

#### ***Practicum***

- Two-week practicum, preferably in student's own program or home to better assess student's work with relationship-based care. This is a time period where student does her/his regular routine, and during that time period the mentor observes for two days.
- Student sends mentor a description of her/his daily and weekly rhythm. This helps student to clarify the schedule and intentions. It is not meant to be anything different from student's regular weekly schedule with children. This gives the mentor a window into how student works with rhythms and routines. If student is doing a practicum in a site other than student's own, student must write out the schedule of that site and send to mentor.

#### ***Observation in a LifeWays-Approved Early Childhood Program and in a Conventional Program***

- Student observes a LifeWays-approved early childhood program and documents the observation based upon the criteria in the Observation Report Form. If the program student is visiting is an all-day program, student is to observe through lunch and the beginning of the nap routine to see the transitions and the nurturing activities.
- Student observes a conventional early childhood program and documents observations based upon the criteria in the Observation Report Form.
- Both observation reports are sent to student's mentor and the program director.

#### ***Child Observation Project (Observing two children during the course of the training)***

- Student selects a child to observe over a three- to four-month period. Upon completion another child is chosen for the next three to four months. Student's written observations are meant to be objective and based purely on what is observed. For example, "Johnny takes very small bites of his vegetables. He eats all of his rice and asks for more. He eats quickly with little chewing. When he is finished, he starts wiggling in his chair and kicking the bottom of the table." Some people journal by taking a few notes every day. Others prefer to write an overview paragraph weekly. Student's style of journaling can be individualized, but brevity is recommended in order to help remain in the realm of pure observation. The following observations are to be journaled: 1) how the child moves; 2) how the child speaks; 3) how the child interacts socially; 4) how the child plays; 5) how the child listens; 6) how the child sleeps and wakes; 7) how the child eats
- Samples of journal entries are sent to mentor upon completion of each observation.

### ***Improving Observation Skills and Gardening Project***

- Student plants and cultivates a small garden during training period.
- A report and photographs of the gardening project is brought to the final session of training.
- Daily Nature Observation: Student chooses a particular object in nature (a plant in a garden, a tree, the sunset or sunrise, etc.) to observe every day for 5 minutes to support the schooling of observation skills and the ability to note subtle changes that take place over time. Student is not required to journal this.
- Monthly Nature Walk Journal: Student must go on a nature walk each month for 45 minutes to an hour in the same location. Student must journal the changes observed in that location each month. This does not need to be more than a paragraph each month.
- Student must bring monthly nature walk journal to the final session to share one entry in class.

### ***Celebrating Festivals***

- Student must plan and celebrate a seasonal festival with student's community. This could be student's own family, neighborhood, child care, playgroup or pre-school families, or whatever context works. The festival needs to include the elements taught in the LifeWays training on festival development, namely: story, songs, game (could be a circle time), craft activity, simple decorations, festive food, blessing, and brief sharing with the adults on the meaning of the festival.
- Student sends outline of the festival plan and photographs of the festival to program director.

### ***Improving Music Skills***

- Weekly voice and kinderharp practice.
- Any other homework assigned by music teacher.

### ***Movement and Handwork***

- Any homework assigned by movement teachers.
- Any homework assigned by handwork teachers.
- Samples of completed handwork items are brought to final session to display at graduation ceremony.

### ***Cooking with Whole Foods and Grains***

- Student must practice cooking whole foods and grains on a weekly basis.
- Student submits three recipes to program director to be shared with all the students. These should be recipes that student has cooked at home during the training period.

### ***Research Paper or Approved Project***

- If writing a paper, it needs to be a 6-10 page double-spaced paper on a child development topic approved by program director.
- If doing a project, it needs to reflect student's understanding of how the chosen project observes and/or serves the developmental well-being of young children. The project must be approved by the program director.
- Paper or project description is sent to mentor for proofreading and comments.
- Final paper or project description is sent to mentor and program director.
- The student presents the paper or project during final week of training.

### ***Required Reading Materials LifeWays Training (there may be some slight variations according to training location)***

*Home Away From Home: LifeWays Care for Children and Families* by Cynthia Aldinger and Mary O'Connell— coming soon  
*The Education of the Child* by Rudolf Steiner – Part One and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lecture of Part Two  
*You Are Your Child's First Teacher* by Rahima Baldwin Dancy – Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11  
*Beyond the Rainbow Bridge* by Barbara Patterson – Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 & pgs.148-162, 169  
*Work and Play in Early Childhood* by Freya Jaffke – Chapters 1, 2, and 4  
*Creating a Home for Body, Soul and Spirit* by Bernadette Raichle  
*The First Three Years* by Karl Konig – Chapters 1, 2, and 3  
*Toymaking With Children* by Freya Jaffke – Chapter 1  
*The Developing Child: The First Seven Years – WECAN Gateways Series*  
*Sing a Song with Baby* by Mary Schunemann

### ***Recommended References (These may vary with the different training sites)***

*Lifeways* by Bons Voors and Gudrun Davy, *The Spiritual Tasks of the Homemaker* by Manfred Schmidt-Brabant, *The Genius of Play* by Sally Jenkinson, *A Holistic Wellness Guide* from Lilipoh Magazine, *Nurturing Children and Families: One Model of a Parent/Child Program in a Waldorf School* by Sarah Baldwin, *The Incarnating Child* by Joan Salter, *Understanding Young Children* a Compilation by Rudolf Steiner, *Our Twelve Senses* by Albert Soesman, *Bringing Love, Giving Joy* by Wilma Ellsersiek, *This is the Way We Wash-A-Day* by Mary Schunemann, *Homemaking as a Social Art* by Veronica van Duin, *Homemaking and Personal Development* by Veronica van Duin, *Healing Our Children- A Collection of Articles for Parents* by Susan Johnson MD, *Completing the Circle* by Thomas Poplawski