

Waldorf Education in Armenia

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One of the first Waldorf kindergartens founded in the former Soviet Union was the kindergarten in Yerevan, Armenia. This was in 1991. At first, the work began modestly with an “experimental group” in a state kindergarten. Lectures, handwork circles and weekend workshops were organized, interest grew, and in 1994 the kindergarten moved to another building and became independent.

Interest in Waldorf education has grown strongly in recent years, and today the kindergarten has 80 children. It is independent and private, recognized by the government, and able to work without compromising Waldorf education.

What looks a success story was and is possible only through great effort. The kindergarten must finance itself exclusively from parents’ contributions and donations.

It does not have its own building, and has had to move several times. There is an acute space shortage; at the moment there are only two play rooms and two sleeping rooms available, which means that each group has 35- 40 children with only three adults. The kindergarten is open from 8:30 in the morning to 6:30 in the evening.

The Waldorf educators here are clear that the situation must be improved. They are hoping that efforts in two areas of Waldorf education in Armenia will have a large impact:

The need for space must be alleviated and a permanent home must be found. There is a very active campaign underway for funds for the purchase of property.

The lack of teachers is a problem that must be solved by establishing deepening courses orthrough cooperation with other countries. This is no small task if one considers that the distance to the training course in Moscow is more than 2000 km and to Odessa 1700 km.

Mentoring and advising in the kindergartens is supported by IASWECE and should contribute toward finding new paths into the future. Restricted gifts for this project are warmly welcome!

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