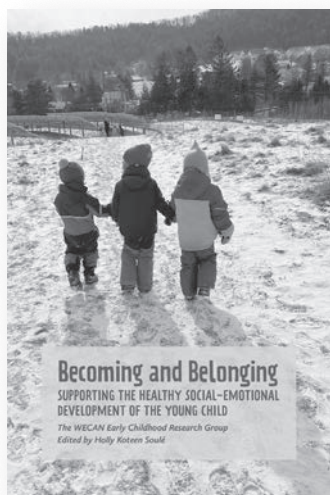

Becoming and Belonging: Supporting the Healthy Social-Emotional Development of the Young Child
The Waldorf Early Childhood Research Group, edited by Holly Koteen-Soulé
(WECAN, 2024)

Announcement by Donna Miele, WECAN Publications Coordinator



Becoming and Belonging: Supporting the Healthy Social-Emotional Development of the Young Child was conceived by the Waldorf Early Childhood Research Group to address these post-Covid times, during which families are challenged by a host of world events and

societal issues in supporting healthy development, especially social-emotional development. The authors have answered this call with a well-rounded offering of original articles and an appendix of selected supporting texts.

Relationship is foremost in the Group's concerns: helping young children to build relationships with each other and the world—to recognize “the I in you and the you in me,” as it is put by editor Holly Koteen-Soulé in the preface. Starting from this vantage point, the Group acknowledges that recent years have made relationship

a challenge for adults, whether we were isolating during the pandemic or entrenching ourselves in various camps based on ideological choices and strongly-held feelings about identity. How, then, should we approach early childhood education, in which learning to form relationship is so deeply necessary?

Each member of the Group answers from their own work, stepping back to examine the “Landscape of Social-Emotional Development,” moving closer to a position of “Beholding the Child,” meditating on “Re-Membering Play,” “Sensory Development as the Foundation for a Healthy Social-Emotional Life,” and “The Healing Power of Social Games,” among other topics. The collection also addresses children's foundational identity experiences (“‘Here I am!’ Positive Identity Development for Every Child,” “Face to Face, Heart to Heart, and Full of Imagination! Speech as the Living Bridge between the Emerging Self and the World”) and educators' personal development in and out of the classroom (“The Healing Deed,” “Soul Nutrition,” and “The Chalice of Community: The Social Art of the Waldorf Early Childhood Teacher”).

We hope you will find much to nourish and support your work in this discussion (which continues!) about creating space for emotional well-being and social healing, in your classroom and beyond. ♦