



Dear friends,

As the majority of the Waldorf world moves online, Christopherus Homeschool Resources stands ever more firm in rejecting the notion that computer-use is something that is just fine for children or is in some way a modern path that 'new Waldorf' must embrace. As far as I am concerned, 'new Waldorf' should be about alternatives to computer use by teachers and children, going ever deeper into Waldorf's therapeutic basis to offer real assistance to people looking for healthy ways of educating and parenting children.



The challenges parents face are huge—working from home combined with educating one's children—and not being thrilled by either. How to cope? It is odd to me when people say that being against zoom calls with children means one has no sympathy with the needs of the working parents. That is a very strange assumption to make—for surely folks realize that one does not simply plonk a child down in front of the screen and say 'stay here for 5 hours while I work'! (or even 1 hour—or less with a very young child!) So the parents are involved no matter what they do if the children are at home so then the question becomes, what is the best way to empower the parents to deal with the reality of being home with their children? Screens are not the solution and can cause more problems than they supposedly solve.

And of course part of the reason for that is the actual effect of screen-use on children—my mind cannot quite grasp how so many Waldorf teachers are forgetting all they have learned and experienced of healthy ways of educating children and why they are actually Waldorf teachers. It's not like I—and other brave Waldorf teachers and many, many parents—have some sort of perverse anti-tech thing going on!! Not by a long chalk! It's all about the effect of screens on children. Full stop. Period. Have folks forgotten how antsy and discombobulated many children become when exposed to screens? Or, on the other hand, how sucked in many become, unable to separate themselves? Have folks forgotten about the importance of nurturing the twelve senses, of working via imitation for little ones and through the arts for older children? Have they forgotten whole-body experiential learning? Does anyone actually think children can learn in a meaningful way via a screen—even conventional educators have grave reservations about how much children 'learn' on-screen. And considering that most conventional educators regard learning success as something which is quantifiable, measurable, that is saying quite a lot. We in Waldorf who know that true education is not quantifiable, is all about developing the purpose of the incarnating child and her capacities as a human being, cannot in any way think that screen learning is real learning.

Let us especially not forget those children with any sort of disability or learning issue who are especially vulnerable to the bad effects of screens. I do not see much anywhere about how the needs of children on the spectrum and those with other learning or developmental issues are being met during this challenging time.

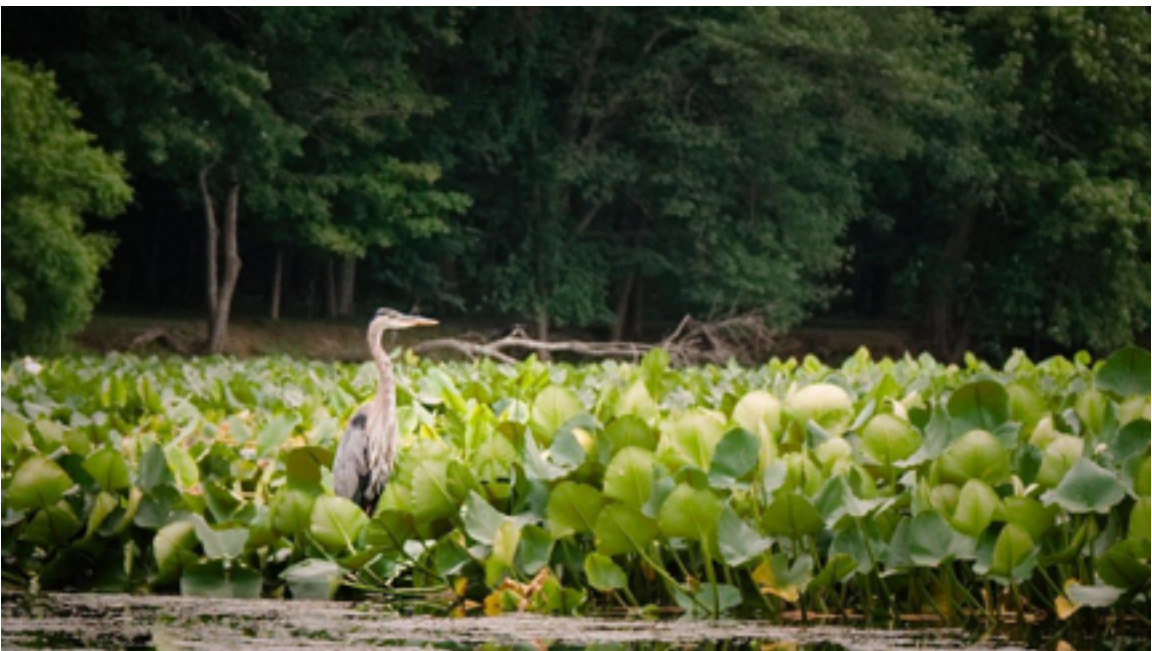
As for the poor—those whose children are already subjected to long hours of child care, to too much screen use, to poor diets and the toxicity that life in poverty means, are also especially at risk. All this nonsense about making sure we don't discriminate against those sections of the population who cannot afford computers—mainly, but not in any way totally, Black and Latino communities—are barking up the wrong tree as far as I'm concerned. It is exactly the children of those communities, especially the urban poor, who need LESS screen time and more time in Nature. The well-to-do can always escape to the country to mitigate screen use or leave it behind—the poor cannot. The children of the poor do not need screens—they need meaningful teaching, beauty, artistic experiences, play, and access to Nature. Having worked in outdoor education with deprived communities in the UK and US, one specifically having to do with gang prevention, I can speak to the truth that meaningful whole-body education is a much needed and little recognized pillar of equity and justice for large segments of working class and poor children.

In terms of Waldorf education, the 'Waldorf world' has, by and large, missed the boat. What an amazing opportunity to press for LESS computer time for all children—and to offer creative ways that parents, including those who have no knowledge of Waldorf, can use to meet the real needs of their children.

Having said that, I am pleased to say that I know of a number of groups working with rogue Waldorf teachers who are not towing the line, who do not think zoom is any solution for children and who also reject the absolutely appalling specter of mask-wearing children—including the very tiniest. I stick to my guns: if the disease is that bad, children should be at home. And if it is not, then masks can create more problems than they solve, especially for children. As for children wearing masks out-of-doors---well, I am sorry. I know I will alienate many of you but I must speak out of my knowledge and experience: children need to strengthen their immune systems and their lungs; they need to intimately connect with Nature through their senses; they need to feel and smell and touch and taste....and having what is in effect a damp, warm Petri dish slapped across the face does not help the situation.

Last month I wrote an open letter to Waldorf teachers to see if they could delve into their wonderful creativity and flexibility to find non computer-based ways to support parents who have been forced to homeschool. That created a bit of a stir. [You can read some of the responses here.](#)

We now have two free videos called No Computers for Children—part one is an overview and part two has practical advice for how one can actually do this. [They are both available to view here.](#)



The sharp-eyed amongst you will have noticed that we have a new banner on the Christopherus website—we have added the words 'promoting a computer-free childhood'. There is little more to be said about this.

So Christopherus is absolutely firm in offering no computer based anything for children. But we are in the process of developing a self-study course for Christopherus homeschoolers which is internet-based. It will have audio downloads, demonstration videos, pdfs one can print out, study guides and so on. There will be artistic, Nature and contemplative exercises for parents to do well away from their computers. Since we already sell and provide free audio downloads and videos, I feel fine with developing such a resource. And in the days of incredibly expensive whilst also unreliable international mail delivery (see *below for more*) this is another way Christopherus can support friends and customers outside of the USA.

I am also creating this course because of the enormous volume of new homeschoolers coming toward Christopherus. I was offering some telephone consulting but my year-long programs filled up in a jiffy and for a number of reasons the one-off calls are on hold for now. There are logistical reasons for this—but being somewhat overwhelmed by demand is another. I sincerely hope that this self study course will help. At the moment its working title is *On the Journey with Christopherus: A Self-Study Course*.

More details in the next Homeschool Journey Newsletter including hoped-for release date.



I recently announced on the [Christopherus facebook group](#) that we are struggling with the issue of international shipping. Basically, too many packages are taking way too long to arrive at their destination or, worse, not arriving at all. We of course replace those packages the post office has lost at our cost. We insure all international packages but, in the 'new normal', the USPS, which was struggling before the world went pear-shaped in March, simply does not honor the insurance. So we

lose out! We are a very small business and cannot afford this. Suffice to say we have exhaustively explored alternative freight companies but either our international volume is too small for us to have an account so as to use them; or we are too rural with no service; and they all cost our customers far more than the USPS.

We also looked at print on demand—those of you who have been reading this newsletter for some time might remember announcements about that. Without going into all the gory details, suffice to say it was a disaster. So not doing that. And over the years we have also explored having people print in other countries...piggy-back onto other distributors....etc etc. Have not found a solution yet.

So this is just a heads-up to you folks outside of the US to let you know that we are working on a way forward...but do not know yet what that might look like. The best solution is—and has been for all 17 years we have been in business—for visiting friends or relatives to carry curriculum materials to their destination or for those who live abroad to order their materials to arrive at a US address when they themselves visit the US. Folks outside the USA might want to give that serious consideration. The only trick is to get the timing right—and as the domestic postal services are also slow (in no way as bad as international) one needs to allow plenty of time for this to work!

We now have an archive of past issues of the Homeschool Journey newsletter.
[You can access that here.](#)

Lastly, I would like to extend my deepest thanks to those of you who recently donated to Christopherus, thereby allowing us to further reduce the low income price for four families for whom low income was still too expensive in these difficult times. If anyone wishes to make a donation, we will put it into the 'pot' and offer it to any homeschooler who approaches us asking for financial assistance.

[Such donations can be made here](#)—we thank you all for considering this.

Til September,
Blessings on your homeschool journey,
Donna