

## *Parenting with Spirit*

• Reviewed by Stephen Spitalny

***Parenting with Spirit; A Waldorf Guide for the Three Phases of Childhood*** by Cindy Brooks and Joya Birns (Parenting With Spirit Publications, 2008).

Cindy and Joya have put together a wonderful booklet for parents on how to relate to children during the first three phases of life. They offer an easy to understand picture of child development and simple guidance on various aspects of connecting with the children, from communication to discipline to the therapeutic use of story. The last issue of *Gateways* included two stories from Cindy Brooks that are included in this book.

*Parenting With Spirit* is an excellent resource for a parent library, as well as offering insightful tips that teachers can use, especially in the realms of communication and storytelling. The authors set out to describe a path of parenting with spirit that they articulate clearly, both in parent skills development goals and as a perspective on relating to the child's developmental stages. Each section

of the booklet is concise but gives plenty of seeds for thought and further deepening and practice. Also, many of the sections are separated into the three main developmental phases from birth to 21 years, allowing the reader to focus on a particular stage if so desired. All of the suggestions are grounded in descriptions of how they relate to the particular developmental stage at hand, so the reader can understand easily why the suggestions are offered. *Parenting With Spirit* also includes helpful chapters by Scott Olmsted and Joan Agostinelli.

There is a section devoted to working with the spiritual world that is both accessible and inviting. Perhaps it could inspire readers (whether parents or not) to take up or deepen a practice of connecting with the spiritual world as a support for children and for one's own balance and sanity. I especially like the three star meditation in Chapter Two that is offered as a support for the adult in increasing calm and confidence, and regaining inner balance.

Currently the book is only available by contacting [parentingwithspirit@gmail.com](mailto:parentingwithspirit@gmail.com).

