

## *Awakening to Child Health*

• Reviewed by Stephen Spitalny

***Awakening to Child Health, Vol. I*** by Raoul Goldberg, MD (Hawthorn Press, 2009).

*Awakening to Child Health* articulates Dr. Goldberg's research into the sources of children's well-being. In this thoughtful approach to children Goldberg begins by connecting the reader with the wonder of childhood by hearkening back to one's own experience as a child, while examples from Dr. Goldberg's years of experience are found throughout the book. (Dr. Goldberg has been a Waldorf school doctor in South Africa for many years. He has a pediatric clinic and directs the Syringa Health Centre in Capetown, a holistic health clinic with a wide range of complementary therapies.)

This in-depth guide to the physical, soul and spiritual development of children from birth through adolescence combines the doctor's own research and

experience with the insights of Rudolf Steiner. It is a highly accessible book, informed by embryology and spiritual psychology, and creates a broad and deep look into human development. The contents of the 428-page volume, the first of three, include: an in-depth look at prenatal development and experience, a chapter on birth experiences, an expanded picture of the first three years, and a wide-ranging overview of the first seven years; all important topics for readers of *Gateways*!

This is a descriptive and warmth-filled book that details the effects of relating to children in loving, attentive ways. It is not a medical textbook, nor a home health care guide, but a guide to being nurturing and awake as a support to the development of the children in our care. It is valuable resource for teachers, doctors, parents and anyone interested in children, one you will refer back to again and again over the years.

### **Other Recommended Resources**

We are experiencing a mushrooming epidemic of childhood obesity and childhood onset (Type 2) diabetes. Attention on children's nutrition is becoming more and more fashionable in North America, even Mrs. Obama is speaking out on this subject. I recently watched a film entitled *Two Angry Moms* about the sorry state of school food programs and the will efforts of a small but growing number of concerned adults. It seems that once again the needs of children have taken a backseat to corporate profit. I have become an angry mom, and you can too for the sake of all the schoolchildren in the US. Go to their website and see how you can participate: [angrymoms.org](http://angrymoms.org)

Another organization working on behalf of children is the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood whose aim is reclaiming childhood from corporate marketers. They are working on various issues including violence, sexualizing of children, obesity and play. Their website is: [www.commercialexploitation.org](http://www.commercialexploitation.org). More than ever, it is important to stand up in defense of children's true needs for health, nutrition, and a childhood that supports physical/soul/spiritual development. And it means we have to stand against the entrenched corporate culture of greed and power that has infected our political system. Our future depends on it!

I highly recommend the book *Weapons of Mass Instruction*, by John Taylor Gatto, for understanding another aspect of the system that is working against the needs of children. In it, Gatto chronicles the history of compulsory education in the US. This book is highly readable, fascinating, and chilling. It is a strong reminder of why we are involved in Waldorf education!

—Stephen Spitalny