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## Waldorf School March Workshop to Address the Question, Are we Teaching Academics Too Soon?

The Waldorf School of Princeton, located at 1062 Cherry Hill Road in Montgomery, will host developmental pediatrician Dr. Susan Johnson for a weekend workshop on March 20 and 21. The workshop is titled, "Toward an Understanding of Neurological Science and Learning: What can science tell us about the healthiest way for today's children to learn?"

Drawing from the latest neuroscience research and from her professional and personal experience, Dr. Johnson's workshop will provide information about how children learn. Topics that will be addressed include: what goes on in a child's brain that enables them to read and write; the effects that early learning can have on children; physical signs to look for to let you know when a child is ready to read and write; and effective movements and movement therapies that help to create the brain pathways needed for academics.

"There is a widely-held belief that if we just start teaching children to write, read, and spell in preschool, they will become better writers, readers, and spellers by the time they reach first and second grade. This is, however, not true. Children should only be taught to write, read and spell when their neurological pathways for writing, reading and spelling have fully formed. There are many neuro-psychologists, developmental and occupational therapists, and teachers who are concerned that our current trend in this country of pushing "academics" in preschool and kindergarten will result in greater increases of children, particularly boys, who are diagnosed with attention and other learning disabilities", said Dr. Johnson.

While the workshop is geared to parents, educators, and health practitioners, the topics presented are relevant for anyone involved with children. A key aspect of the workshop will be an explanation of non-pharmacological strategies that can be used to heal children with learning challenges. New Jersey educators attending the workshop will be eligible to receive professional credit.

"The Waldorf School of Princeton is honored to be able to bring Dr. Johnson here from California to speak to the community. We hope that by participating in the workshop people will come away with a better understanding of how children actually learn", said Marla Hanan, Community Relations Associate at the Waldorf School of Princeton.

For more information and to register for the workshop, please contact Marla Hanan at the Waldorf School of Princeton at [mhanan@princetonwaldorf.org](mailto:mhanan@princetonwaldorf.org), 609-466-1970 x 620.