

Soul Food

Children- Shining Lamps of the Future



November 2016

Children – Shining Lamps of the Future

This program will highlight the importance of the education of children. We were all children once, and we all share the desire for the well-being of our children, which has always been and will continue to be the most universally cherished aspiration of humankind.

October 2014

Program

 *Bahá'í Children's Choir*

01. *Bahá'í Prayer*

02. *Author Unknown* *Diane Loomans*

03. *Bahá'í Writings*

04. *UNICIF Australia*

05. *Christian Writings*

06. *Bahá'í Writings*

07. *Mahsa Vadat*

Jeanette Winterson



08. *Rabindranath Tagore*

09. *Christian Writings*

10. *William Wordsworth*

10. *Bahá'í Writings*

11. *Ellen Kreidman*

12. *Bahá'í Writings*



13. *Children, New York 5-7 May 2002*

14. *Bahá'í Writings*

15. *Sobonfu Somé*

16. *East African schoolmaster*

17. *Lewis Carroll*

18. *William Blake*

19. *Barbara Johnson*

20. *Bahá'í Writings*

21. *Bahá'í Writings*

22. *Bahá'í Writings*



The child must know that he is a miracle, that since the beginning of the world there hasn't been, and until the end of the world there will not be, another child like him.

Pablo Casals



**Bahá'í Prayer for children
~Children from Baha'í Children's classes**

01. O my God! O my God! Thou seest these children who are the twigs of the tree of life, the birds of the meads of salvation, the pearls of the ocean of Thy grace, the roses of the garden of Thy guidance.

O God!, our Lord! We sing Thy praise, bear witness to Thy sanctity and implore fervently the heaven of Thy mercy to make us lights of guidance, stars shining above the horizons of eternal glory amongst mankind, and to teach us knowledge which proceedeth from Thee.

Yá Bahá'u'l-Abhá!

~Bahá'í Writings

Children are the hands by which we take hold of heaven.

Henry Ward Beecher

02. **What's Really Important**

A few years ago at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun they all started out, not exactly in a dash, but with the relish to run the race to the finish and win.

All, that is, except one boy who stumbled on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times, and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and paused. Then they all turned around and went back. Everyone of them. One girl with Down syndrome bent down and kissed him and said, "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line.

Everyone in the stadium stood, and the cheering went on for 10 minutes.

~Author unknown

There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.

Nelson Mandela

03. Children are the most precious treasure a community can possess, for in them are the promise and guarantee of the future. They bear the seeds of the character of future society which is largely shaped by what the adults constituting the community do or fail to do with respect to children. They are a trust no community can neglect with impunity. An all-embracing love of children, the manner of treating them, the quality of attention shown them, the spirit of adult behaviour toward them – these are all among the vital aspects of the requisite attitude. Love demands discipline, the courage to accustom children to hardship, not to indulge their whims or leave them entirely to their own devices. An atmosphere needs to be maintained in which children feel that they belong to the community and share in its purpose.

~ Bahá'í Writings

04. What rights do children have?

Nearly every country in the world has agreed to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (CRC). The Convention was the first tool developed to incorporate the complete range of international human rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights as well as aspects of humanitarian law, that just apply to children.

The Convention has four guiding principles and they are core requirements for any and all rights to be realised. The principles are:

- Non-discrimination: the 42 articles in the CRC relate to the rights of EVERY child, no matter their religion, race or abilities; whatever they think or say; what their culture is; whether they are boys or girls or whether they are rich or poor.
- The best interests of the child: any decision that is made, or any action that is taken, that may affect children must prioritise the best interests of the child, always.
- Ensuring the child's survival and development: every child has the inherent right to life, and it is the responsibility of decision-makers to ensure they are provided every opportunity to develop and reach their potential,

- Participation: children are experts in their own lives and experiences, and should be consulted on decisions that affect them. Every child has the right to express his or her opinion, and can provide advice and valuable insight into how their rights can best be protected and fulfilled. You can learn more about the Convention [here](#).

~UNICEF Australia

***All of us have moments in our lives that test our courage.
Taking children into a house with a white carpet is one of them.***

Erma Bombeck

05. Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.
For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.
He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.
Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.
I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.
When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.
Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

~Christian Writings

***The instruction of these children is even as the work
of a loving gardener who tendereth his young plants
in the flowering fields of the All-Glorious.***

Bahá'í Writings

- o6. O God, guide me, protect me, make of me a shining lamp
and a brilliant star. Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful.
~Bahá'í Writings
- o7. You're my destiny
You're my guiding light
You're my soul and treasure
Sleep my child
Through the night.
- Sleep my paradise
My garden flower
You're the song of my life
Sweet baby
My nightingale
Sing to my heart
Sing the darkness away
Far away
You're my soul and treasure
Sleep my child
Through the night.
~Mahsa Vadat
- o8. Children are living beings - more living than grown-up people who
have built shells of habit around themselves. Therefore it is absolutely
necessary for their mental health and development that they should
not have mere schools for their lessons, but a world whose guiding
spirit is personal love.
~Rabindranath Tagore

***A child's voice, however honest and true,
is meaningless to those who've forgotten how to listen.
J.K. Rowling***



Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.

John W. Whitehead

09. He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven, therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw that he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

~Christian Writings

10. There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream....

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

~ William Wordsworth

11. Encourage the children from their earliest years to master every kind of learning, and make them eager to become skilled in every art – the aim being that through the favouring grace of God, the heart of each one may become even as a mirror disclosing the secrets of the universe, penetrating the innermost reality of all things; and that each may earn worldwide fame in all branches of knowledge, science and the arts.
Certainly, neglect not the education of the children.
Rear them to be possessed of spiritual qualities, and be assured of the gifts and favours of the Lord.
~ Bahá'í Writings

Children spell love, "T-I-M-E."
Dr Anthony P. Whitman

12. **The Most Caring Child**
Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was a four-year-old whose next door neighbour was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap and just sat there.
When his mother asked him what he had said to the neighbour, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry."
~Ellen Kreidman

A person's a person, no matter how small.
Dr. Seuss

13. We are not the sources of problems; we are the resources that are needed to solve them. We are not expenses; we are investments. We are not just young people; we are people and citizens of this world.
Until others accept their responsibility to us, we will fight for our rights.
We have the will, the knowledge, the sensitivity and the dedication. We promise that as adults we will defend the children's rights with the same passion that we have now as children. We promise to treat each other with dignity and respect. We promise to be open and sensitive to our differences.
We are the children of the world, and despite our different backgrounds, we share a common reality. We are united by our struggle to make the world a better place for all. You call us the future, but we are also the present.
~Meeting of Under 18 Delegates to the United Nations Special Session on ~Children, New York 5-7 May 2002

***While we try to teach our children all about life,
our children teach us what life is all about.***

Angela Schwindt

14. Thus shall these tender infants be nurtured at the breast of the knowledge of God and His love. Thus shall they grow and flourish, and be taught righteousness and the dignity of humankind, resolution and the will to strive and to endure. Thus shall they learn perseverance in all things, the will to advance, high mindedness and high resolve, chastity and purity of life.
Thus shall they be enabled to carry to a successful conclusion whatsoever they undertake.
~Bahá'í Writings

15. We must try not to educate our children away from the spirit, so that they don't have to work so hard trying to reconnect when they grow up. When they know they already have spirit, then everything else becomes understood. And it makes life easier for them.
~Sobonfu Somé
16. From their parents and grandparents, children learn traditions and morals.
In return they surround their elders with respect and concern. From other children of the same age, they learn the notions of equality and of helping one another. Listening to one another with respect enables them to find their own place and thereby become aware of their rights and duties in regard to the rest of the world.
~East African schoolmaster

***Parenthood is a partnership with God... you are working with
the creator of the universe in shaping human character
and determining destiny.
Ruth Vaughn***



17. Lastly, she pictured to herself how this same little sister of hers would, in the after-time, be herself a grown woman; and how she would keep, through all her riper years, the simple and loving heart of her childhood: and how she would gather about her other little children, and make their eyes bright and eager with many a strange tale, perhaps even with the dream of Wonderland of long ago: and how she would feel with all their simple sorrows, and find a pleasure in all their simple joys, remembering her own child-life, and the happy summer days.
~ Lewis Carroll.

18. **Nurse's Song**

When voices of children are heard on the green,
And laughing is heard on the hill,
My heart is at rest within my breast,
And everything else is still.
'Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
And the dews of night arise;
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away,
Till the morning appears in the skies.'

'No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,
And we cannot go to sleep;
Besides, in the sky the little birds fly,
And the hills are all covered with sheep.'
'Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,
And then go home to bed.'
The little ones leaped, and shouted, and laughed,
And all the hills echoed.

William Blake – Songs of Innocence

When correcting a child, the goal is to apply light, not heat.
Woodrow Wilson

19. A rose can say 'I love you,'
Orchids can enthrall,
But a weed bouquet in a chubby fist,
Oh my, that says it all.
~Barbara Johnson
20. Children, as persons, are entitled to the greatest respect. Children are given to us as free-flying souls, but then we clip their wings like we domesticate the wild mallard. Children should become the role-models for us, their parents, for they are coated with the spirit from which they came- out of the ether, clean, innocent, brimming with the delight of life, aware of the beauty of the simplest thing; a snail, a bud
~ Gerry Spence
21. As to thy question regarding the education of children:
It behoveth thee to nurture them at the breast of the love of God, and urge them onward to the things of the spirit—that they may turn their faces unto God; that their ways may conform to the rules of good conduct and their character be second to none; that they make their own all the graces and praiseworthy qualities of humankind; that they acquire a sound knowledge of the various branches of learning—so that from the very beginning of life they may become spiritual beings, dwellers in the Kingdom, enamoured of the sweet breaths of holiness, and may receive an education religious, spiritual, and of the Heavenly Realm. Verily will I call upon God to grant them a happy outcome in this.
~Bahá'í Writings

22. O ye young Bahá'í children, ye seekers after true understanding and knowledge! A human being is distinguished from an animal in a number of ways. First of all, he is made in the image of God, in the likeness of the Supernal Light, even as the Torah saith, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' [1] This divine image betokeneth all the qualities of perfection whose lights, emanating from the Sun of Truth, illumine the realities of men. And among the greatest of these attributes of perfection are wisdom and knowledge. Ye must therefore put forth a mighty effort, striving by night and day and resting not for a moment, to acquire an abundant share of all the sciences and arts, that the Divine Image, which shineth out from the Sun of Truth, may illumine the mirror of the hearts of men.

It is the longing desire of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to see each one of you accounted as the foremost professor in the academies, and in the school of inner significances, each one becoming a leader in wisdom
~Bahá'í Writings

No one has yet fully realized the wealth of sympathy, kindness and generosity hidden in the soul of a child. The effort of every true education should be to unlock that treasure.

Emma Goldman



Please join us for refreshments

Soul Food

Soul Food is an open community devotional event hosted at the Bahá'í Centre of Learning on the first Sunday of each month. It provides an occasion to be inspired and reflect on uplifting themes. Our programs feature live music, audio-visual pieces and readings from various authors, sources and Faiths - indigenous, ancient and modern- from all over the world.

Soul Food was initiated by the Bahá'í community in Adelaide and now occurs in places around Australia and as far afield as Botswana, Africa. California and Kansas.

It is also proudly supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

Original programs are available for free download from

www.soulfood.com.au/tas/

Soul Food

Venue: Bahá'í Centre of Learning, Hobart

Time: 3.00pm – 4pm

Children's classes in the Neighbourhood

Regular children's classes are held in communities around Australia and aim to nurture the hearts and minds of children with an emphasis on helping them to reflect on and apply spiritual gifts and principles such as love, unity and justice to their own lives and the lives of others. Based on the teachings of Baha'u'llah, the Founder of the Baha'i Faith, the classes seek to inspire in children a love of God and His Messengers, and of humanity in all its diversity. Classes include short lessons, story-telling, art projects, games, as well as prayer and memorization of quotes from Sacred Texts to engage the whole child. Baha'i children's classes are open to all children, subject to parental approval. For inquiries or more information please call Shohreh's mobile 0419 585 453.

"Children are even as a branch that is fresh and green; they will grow up in whatever way you train them. Take the utmost care to give them high ideals and goals, so that once they come of age, they will cast their beams like brilliant candles on the world..."

~ from the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith

Study Circles

The Bahá'í Community is offering a series of life-changing circles of study. The purpose of Bahá'í study circles is to provide participants with the knowledge, spiritual insights and skills to enable them to contribute to the betterment of society, starting with their own neighbourhood. This is done through systematic study of a sequence of courses based on the Bahá'í Writings using the courses of the Ruhi Institute. The first in the sequence of books is called Reflections on the Life of the Spirit. It examines spiritual matters such as prayer, meditation, life and death and the development of the soul. Study circles are held all around Australia and are open to all. You are invited to take inspiration from the Bahá'í teachings, benefitting from whatever gems of wisdom and knowledge will help you to address the challenges you face. Study circles are held in an uplifting environment conducive to spiritual empowerment of individuals, who come to see themselves as active agents of their own learning. The role of the study circle facilitator is not to impart knowledge, but to assist discussion. Study Circles feature participatory learning, involving discussions with others and the use of the arts.

For inquiries or more information please email Shirin at shirin@iinet.net.au.

Junior Youth Groups

Developed for youth between the ages of 12 and 15, these programs are designed to empower and equip young people with the knowledge and concepts that will encourage the expression of their personal potential, and develop the skills and attitudes necessary to become agents of change - for themselves and their communities. Through engagement in service initiatives, artistic and extracurricular activities they foster a sense of world citizenship and a lifelong commitment to serve humanity.

The junior youth spiritual empowerment program is open to young people aged between 11 and 14, and assists them to navigate through a crucial stage in their lives.

Those in their early adolescent years possess altruism, a sense of justice, eagerness to learn about the universe, and a desire to contribute to the construction of a better world.

The program helps them form a strong moral identity and empowers them to contribute to the well-being of their communities and the world at large.

By developing their spiritual qualities (virtues), their intellectual capabilities and their capacities for service to society, the participants come to see that they can become agents of positive change in the world.

The program adopts a participatory mode of learning where the facilitator and participants learn from each other.

Groups of participants engage in activities such as artistic expression, discussion, drama, cooperative games, study of literature, story telling and acts of community service.

The junior youth program explores themes from a Baha'i perspective, but is not a formal religious education program. It is open to all, subject to parental approval. Junior youth groups meet on a regular basis and there is no written homework.

All program facilitators are certified under the Baha'i Child Protection Policy, which includes a mandatory police check. Parents are welcome to meet with the facilitators to learn about the program.

For enquiries or more information please call James Pepperell or email him james.pepperell@gmail.com

join us

for the next program December 4th

"A Sense of Time"

Upcoming Dates Titles

January 18th 2015

World Religion Day

Please Note: There will be no Soul Food in January 2017.

We invite you to join us as we celebrate WORLD RELIGION DAY

Jan 15th 3pm at the Bahá'í Centre of Learning for Tasmania (here).

Upcoming Dates for Soul Food 2017:

February 5th March 5th April 2nd May 7th June 4th July 2nd
August 6th Sept 3rd Oct. 1st Nov 6th Dec. 4th

The child is made of one hundred.

The child has
A hundred languages
A hundred hands
A hundred thoughts
A hundred ways of thinking
Of playing, of speaking.
A hundred always a hundred
Ways of listening of marveling of loving
A hundred joys
For singing and understanding
A hundred worlds
To discover
A hundred worlds
To invent
A hundred worlds
To dream
The child has
A hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more)
But they steal ninety-nine.
The school and the culture
Separate the head from the body.
They tell the child;
To think without hands
To do without head
To listen and not to speak
To understand without joy
To love and to marvel
Only at Easter and Christmas
They tell the child:
To discover the world already there
And of the hundred
They steal ninety-nine.
They tell the child:
That work and play
Reality and fantasy
Science and imagination
Sky and earth
Reason and dream

Are things
That do not belong together
And thus they tell the child
That the hundred is not there
The child says: NO WAY the hundred is there--
Loris Malaguzzi

All Soul Food programs are available for download from www.soulfood.com

You can find out more about the Bahá'ís and their world embracing vision at www.bahai.org.au or feel free to call 03 6234 7654 for more information.