

Missoula Friends Meeting & NPYM Youth Committee
Notes from an Adult Discussion on Children's Programs
January 11, 2015

notes compiled by Jay Thatcher, Annual Session Children's Program Coordinator

Thankful for this opportunity to visit and admitting our newness to this ministry, Katherine Spinner and Jay opened the meeting for some wonderings, questions, comments and ideas from local Friends.

- We have a small and diverse group of children. Leading a program for them is challenging.
- Religious education includes many interactions and events in many contexts, such as floating rivers and driving home from trips. Let's not limit our scope to a planned 45 minute lesson on Sunday.
- What do we do with rambunctious boys in winter?

Sharing some recollections from his childhood in a similar meeting, Jay invited Friends' simple presence with the children as the greatest gift we can bring to them.

Katherine spoke about the importance of the consistent presence of a person and a style, particularly as children enter into silent worship.

Katherine shared her collection of books that offer a chance for children to learn spiritually. She also brought a copy of [*Opening Doors to Quaker Religious Education*](#) by Mary Snyder for the meeting to keep and share.

Further ideas came up.

- We could make individualized plates as we did some years back.
-or napkins.
- Next time you open up a wall in the meeting house, how about placing a time capsule?
- We could do some more summer outings.
- Let's empower ourselves to be with the children of our meeting. This is *community*.
- Children can make cards for those who are sick or sad in the meeting.
- I'm a parent and don't plan to teach. However, I can prepare lessons from books for others to teach from.
- Improvisational theater and creative dramatics activities work in Corvallis.
- Wax paper, autumn leaves and an iron are what I need for my classic First Day School lesson. One young child considered this activity some years back and responded, "I think I'll wait until I'm five."
- I can bring a stash of cardboard boxes.
- I'll make a sign up sheet for adult involvement on Sundays.
- The Heifer Project fundraising idea came from one child in our meeting. A decision needs to be made about what to purchase with the funds raised. I'll help the children do that today.