
*Concerned
Educators
Allied for a
Safe
Environment*



CEASE NEWS Vol. 30: No. 1, Spring 2009

55 Frost St., Cambridge, MA 02140

Phone 617-661-8347; www.peaceeducators.org



Updates from the Network

Update from CEASE West

CEASE West once again participated in the California Association for the Education of Young Children (CAEYC) annual conference by contributing to the Center for Social Change. Our focus this year was on how carefully selected children's literature can nurture important **values** such as equality, inclusion, integrity, diversity, peace and nonviolence. We based our selection and display on CEASE member, Susan Hopkins's, book [Thinking Together with Young Children](#).

The highlight of the CAEYC 2009 conference was Nancy Carlsson-Paige's keynote speech, based on her recent book, [Taking Back Childhood: Helping Your Kids Thrive in a Fast-Paced, Media-Saturated, Violence-Filled World](#). Nancy is a professor of early childhood education at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and longtime member of CEASE. Nancy also presented a viewing of the compelling film "Consuming Kids: The Commercialization of Childhood." The film enlightened attendees about the pernicious methods used by the marketing industry to ensure that children are the most profitable consumer demographic in the world. The following discussion was lively and inspired many attendees to commit to taking action to inform parents and their colleagues.

In the photo below, CEASE West members, (right to left) Joyce Daniels, Marilyn Pearce, Chris Lamm, Marilyn Shelton and Sharon Davisson "with Nancy Carlsson – Paige to celebrate Nancy's significant contributions to the CAEYC conference.



Members of CEASE West

CEASE Boosts Children's Rights Convention

One of CEASE's long term projects is the U.S. Ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have participated in these efforts, with a wide variety of other national organizations, since the Convention was initially signed in New York in 1990. Since then every country in the United Nations except the United States and Somalia have ratified the Convention, and it is setting standards for the treatment of children everywhere that are recognized even by our own Supreme Court. A UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which meets regularly to review how countries are implementing the Convention, helps governments to bring about better lives for children almost everywhere. The Convention's standards, and the way in which the Committee encourages governments everywhere to help children thrive, is making a real difference in the lives of children and their families.

The US failure to ratify the Convention comes mainly from much noise generated by far-right organizations such as the Eagle Forum and Focus on the Family. These organizations made emotional appeals with no factual basis to their enthusiastic supporters, such as a claim that under the Convention American families that made their children attend Sunday School would soon find UN officials taking legal action to penalize them and even take their children away from them. This generated a huge and persistent flow of letters to Senators, urging that they turn down the Convention when it came to them for ratification. When Senator Jessie Helms became Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1994 he made it a point of policy that the Clinton Administration should not even put the Convention on its list of treaties awaiting ratification by the US. When "W" was elected President his Administration ordered US representatives to international meetings to speak out against the Convention at every opportunity.

The power of these nay-sayers has ebbed, and there is hope again for US ratification of the Convention, perhaps in the next year or two. CEASE has been participating in the Committee of organizations that meets quarterly to direct the Campaign to Ratify the Convention, www.childrightscampaign.org. Members of CEASE attended a Symposium entitled: ***The Convention on the Rights of the Child: Why It is Time to Ratify***, at Georgetown Law School in downtown Washington, DC, sponsored by the Campaign. It was an excellent opportunity for teachers, students, and interested citizens to learn more about how the Convention works in practice and how it would be to the advantage of the United States to participate fully in its valuable work. More information about this Symposium will be posted on the CEASE website.

John Surr

Organizing Men in Early Care and Education

A year ago, I attended the First World Forum on Men in Early Education Conference in Hawaii thanks from the generous support of CEASE. It is the first time “in the history of the world” (as Bryan Nelson told us) that men working with young children have had an international conference. Indeed, we are education’s tiniest minority. I haven’t always put much emphasis on being a man in early education. I really put efforts into nonviolent conflict resolution, anti-violence, anti-war activities. I have served as President of both the Albuquerque AEYC and Boston AEYC. But almost 2 years ago, four of us met in rural New Hampshire to see if we could connect with Men in early education in New England.

We started to consolidate lists of local men working in the field. We presented at AEYC conferences throughout New England. Our listserv grew from four to now 60 men. We received a grant from NAEYC through the Boston AEYC to get NAEYC scholarships to men and their allies. Dr. B. Berry Brazelton, leading baby doctor, joined our reception at the MassAEYC conference and talked to us about the importance of men in the lives of young children. Some of the men in our group, with the help of the Cayl Institute, gave a well researched paper of gender equity in early education to the Massachusetts State House. We started giving out an annual Steve Shuman Award for the support of men in early education in honor of a local male pioneer in this field. We are also sponsoring a talk with Dr. Ed Klugman, a professor emeritus for Wheelock College, about his 59 years in early education. What a year it has been! As a group, we are not sure of our future, but we know at least this year we have established a presence in early education in New England. Maybe other areas of the country can be linked up with the MenTeach national network and work for change and gender balance in the field. In most of early education, men are only 3-5% of the teaching staff. Children, parents, and society will benefit by a better gender balance. Thanks to CEASE for their role in supporting men in this work.

Craig Simpson, CEASE New England

CEASE and Media Education

CEASE has been active in the past couple of years in efforts to raise consciousness about the unintended effects of modern electronic media on the lives of the young children we care for. We have been pushing NAEYC, for instance, to update and broaden its position statements about electronic media in the lives of children. NAEYC appears to be beginning that process, although with fits and starts that need to be monitored.

We also have been supporting the efforts of our own Diane Levin, Nancy Carlsson-Paige, and others, to educate the public, especially teachers of young children, about the violence, greed, and other developmental delays and disorders that come from American electronic media along with the remote entertainment and electronic babysitting that too many parents practice.

We have been supporting a number of campaigns of organizations such as the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood (www.commercialfreechildhood.org) and TRUCE Toys (www.trucetoys.org). If you want to become more active in this work, we encourage you to join the Yahoo groups list serve, Act4CEASE@yahoo.com. You can do so either directly as a registered member of Yahoo groups, or by contacting John Surr, surr@his.com, our list administrator. If you are coming to Washington, D.C. in November to the NAEYC Conference, we will be presenting or supporting several sessions there in this general area.

Our 30th Year Celebration

Our 30th Year Celebration began in Dallas and will culminate at the 2009 NAEYC Annual Conference, Nov. 18-21, 2009 in Washington D.C.

The focus of our year’s work and our 2009 Seminar at NAEYC is **Media**: its role in the lives of children for good and ill! Teachers and parents need support as they navigate the destructive forces of commercialism and violence in the media to which too many children are exposed. They also need help to find the constructive and educational resources which well chosen media can provide. For more on taking action on children and the media go to www.commercialexploitation.org

Please share your perspective on Media and children and stories of success you have had in your work with children and parents on this topic. We will consider your contributions for publication in the **CEASE Packet Fall 2009**.

Join us for our Celebration in Washington!

Cultivating Compassionate Communication

I had an extraordinary experience with my daughter using compassionate communication skills. She is a 12 year old who attends the Waldorf School in Shelburne, Vermont.

One night she was beside herself for several reasons and moped around the house very quiet and disturbed. Her best friend is leaving the school, dad was out of town, acne is getting the best of her face, and mother does not have all the answers. Many reasons for a sixth grader to feel glum. Mom however, felt differently. After all, the sun would shine tomorrow, dad would be coming home soon, the acne will clear up, and mom actually knows more than my daughter thinks. *“Cheer up “ I said, “ you are just tired. Everything will seem brighter in the morning.”* My comments were met with scornful eyes, pouting, and responses that I do not care about her, I do not know anything, and that nothing matters.

I was saddened by her words, as I could see what I thought were helpful words were not relieving her pain. She asked me to leave her alone, and I felt completely alienated and sorry for myself. If I could not comfort my own daughter over something so trivial, how was I going to handle adolescence?

I had just returned from my first Nonviolent-Compassionate Communication workshop, birthed by Marshall Rosenberg. The wisdom of the work points out the natural order of compassionate response in a dialogue, and breaks it down into four parts. Those four being:

- Observing the moment without judgment or analysis or diagnosis.
- Identifying your feelings in the moment.
- Determining your needs based on your feelings.
- Requesting an action to meet those needs.

I quickly referred back to the workshop in my mind and reviewed how I had communicated with her. I realized that I had done the first step right by observing her pain and sympathizing, but I did not honor the second step. I went directly into diagnosing her pain. I blamed it all on her being tired. Analyzing someone's condition is what I have learned is dishonoring and not accurate. While it is not directly violent, it **feels violating** to her!

I then switched gears to name my feelings: *“I feel distant from you and I would like to know how you are feeling deep inside and what you might need.”* We both waited in silence for a long 5 minutes. I then said *“perhaps you are feeling misunderstood by me, and would like me to listen more to what you are trying to tell me.”* After making sure I was ready to listen, I couldn't believe what came out of her mouth! I listened to my daughter tell me all of her needs that have been piling up over the past year. Her need to look at other schools, her need to be more challenged, her philosophies on life and how she would like to

discuss things with a scientist. Her desire for her own room. The list went on and on...it was like she was being heard for the first time ever.

I finally responded by saying that I needed some time to figure out how we might meet some of those needs. We both felt heard. It was amazing how such a little twist in attitude and search for the real underlying needs changed everything.

In a matter of weeks, I have been able to practice this formula and enjoy more deeply connected conversation with others. When I seek my own and others' needs clearly, I can steer my dialogues with more compassion, mastery, and fulfillment. I practice opening my mind to hear the underlying feelings and needs.

We all know the saying “I learned it all in kindergarten.” Our innocent souls battled our needs on the playground for attention and monkey bars. Back then, it was easy to find our emotions and live loudly what was burning inside us. Filters, judgments, and evaluations did not get in our way.

As I practice this material as an adult, I must train myself to watch my distracting thoughts and preconditioned evaluations and not respond immediately. Instead, I drop down into my feelings and land in my heart. This vulnerable and innocent place is where I navigate my feelings, needs and wants, *before* I respond to someone else. My blank mind is a great place to lay my attention because everything becomes new. My response to the world is then determined by my awareness of my needs from moment to moment.

I have been facilitating a Heart Circle, designed by Tej Steiner. We spend our time practicing the art of dropping down into our hearts and feelings and naming how we feel. It is always surprising to find out we honestly do not know how we feel sometimes. We have been so educated to think our way out of situations that our feeling life can sometimes be buried underneath the debris of knee deep thoughts and analysis. I have introduced the compassionate communication concepts to my circle, and immediately we all have a tool that allows our deepest needs to surface.

There are those lucky ones in life who have been taught that the heart and the gut is your best guide. I use to envy those people but now stand in line to learn from them. Our feelings have been given a bad rap by society. Comments like “You better think it through” puts our feeling compass in second place.

I could write on and on about the subject of heart vs. mind, but that would be an entirely different essay. My purpose for writing this article is to shed light on the gift

continued on page 5

Vermont Teachers Connect With Nation's Capitol



Siobhan Henry-Hooker and Dana Steffan, two Burlington, Vermont preschool teachers, identified a serious problem with access to quality early childhood care in their State. They are teachers at Stepping Stones, a nationally accredited multi-age Child Care Center located in Burlington, Vermont. Henry-Hooker has taught at the center since 2001, and Steffan since 2004. During that time, they have worked closely with their fellow teachers to create an ever-evolving and emergent environment that fulfills the needs of every child and family that enters their doors.

As they worked co-operatively with families and other educators, it became evident that many of Vermont's children were not receiving the funding they needed to attend a quality program. Henry-Hooker and Steffan had long been seeking a way to advocate for the children and families that they became involved with through their work, and this issue helped them focus their energy on a crucial topic. "We want to raise awareness concerning Vermont's Tuition Assistance program," states Henry-Hooker, "The eligibility and reimbursement guidelines are still at levels set in 2000, and more and more families are falling into that divide."

What does this mean for our children? With outdated eligibility levels, fewer working families qualify for help paying for childcare. In fact, a working single parent with two children would have to make significantly less than the state's minimum wage to qualify for the full benefit. In addition, even one hundred percent of the reimbursement may pay for only half the cost of a child attending a quality preschool.

The advocacy method that Henry-Hooker and Steffan settled on was to invite policymakers into the classroom to see what levels of quality should be available to every child. The first person to receive an invitation to tour

Stepping Stones was Suzi Wizowaty, a legislator in Vermont. Soon after, Bernie Sanders' office in Washington, D.C. sent a representative, Robin Juliano. Henry-Hooker and Steffan provided detailed tours of their school, which included crucial statistics and figures related to quality and access in Vermont's early childhood education system.

During Wizowaty's visit to the school, Steffan pointed out how important it is for children to form sustained relationships with their caregivers. "With seventy percent of Vermont's children in out of home care during the work week, it is crucial for caregivers and preschools to have the support of our policymakers," she stated. Wizowaty reflected, "Stepping Stones is an inspiring place. I wish every family in Vermont with young children had access to this kind of early childhood education. We know it has an enormous impact on kids' future success."

These visits were the pilot for a program soon to be launched statewide. During the Legislative Invitational, which will take place in the fall of 2009, Vermont's legislators will be invited into nationally accredited early education programs to see up close what a quality program looks like. Teachers at these centers will take the opportunity to talk to legislators about making quality accessible and affordable for all of Vermont's children. Henry-Hooker says she "looks forward to providing teachers across the State with the support they need in order to feel comfortable talking to their legislators. As we all work together, we can create a positive change for the future of our families and children who want to participate fully in Vermont's excellent early childhood services."

Siobhan Henry – Hooker and Dana Steffan,
Burlington, VT

Compassionate Communication

of compassionate communication. No matter what situation you find yourself in, naming your feelings and identifying your needs as well as the person you are speaking to is the perfect vantage point to seek mutually felt compas-

continued from page 4

sion and understanding.

For more information about joining a practice circle contact Sally Dames at Gatherround@aol.com

Sally Dames, South Burlington, VT

Now is the Time: Getting to a Nuclear Weapons-Free World



Thirty years ago, the alarm at the threat of nuclear weapons brought together the founders of CEASE. That danger is still with us today. As we celebrate the 30th year of CEASE it is appropriate that we renew our determination to eliminate nuclear weapons. We are given hope by President Obama. He has declared to the world his commitment to move forward to a nuclear weapons free world. His voice and leadership joins that of activists around the world. Long-time peace activists now find themselves in alliance with prominent cold warriors calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons for our national security. 77% of Americans and 76% of people world-wide agree. In 2009, people everywhere can find optimism for the many steps ahead. Nevertheless, it will take all the organizing skills and persistence of peace groups across our land and around the world to finally realize this goal. The time is ripe for this effort.

At their first meeting, Obama and Russian President Medvedev began negotiations for continued reductions in their remaining nuclear arsenals. (20,000+ remain at this time despite the twenty years since the end of the Cold War!) Their cooperation can lead to removing nuclear weapons from hair-trigger alert, making the whole world safer. Their support for on-going efforts to contain existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons grade uranium will diminish the threat of terrorists getting bomb-making capabilities. As the two largest nuclear weapons-holding states by far when they make progress on decreasing their stockpiles, other nuclear-armed states will have reason to move in the same direction. Credibility can be restored to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which has been undermined by U.S. and other states refusing to honor their commitment to work for elimination of nuclear weapons.

Meetings are happening this spring to prepare for the 2010 renewal of that crucial agreement.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), signed in 1996, should now be ratified by the U.S. Senate, but it will take 67 votes to achieve that result. President Obama will need help from all who believe in this goal to get the necessary votes. Help will be needed from the initiative of Henry Kissinger, George Schultz, Sam Nunn, William Perry, James Baker, Colin Powell, and others who are now speaking out for abolition of all nuclear weapons. Such abolition is the key to security for the U.S. and the rest of the world. With such people arguing for this change, there is hope that others will change their Cold War mindsets as well. Political activism will be needed as the 2010 campaigns get underway. We can join these efforts at www.nuclearweaponsfree.org

Locally, we can join the Mayors for Peace Campaign that has been unanimously supported by the U.S. Conference of Mayors at its 2008 meeting. Launched internationally by the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this campaign gives each town and city a chance to push for a nuclear weapons-free future. Ask your mayor to sign on to their resolution and make sure that the local news covers this decision. Step by step we must inform our neighbors and communities about the choice before us. Look for the Mayors' campaign at www.mayorsforpeace.org there you can sign the petition CANT, which stands for Cities Are Not Targets.

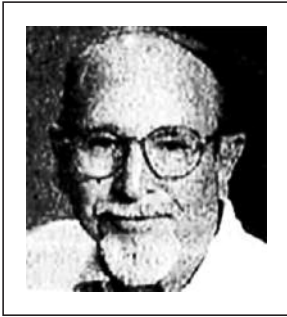
In our 30th year we honor Peggy Schirmer and the founders of CEASE when we work for a nuclear weapons-free world. The time is now.

Lucy Stroock, Cambridge, MA

Our 30th Year Celebration

Our 30th Year Celebration will culminate at the 2009 NAEYC Annual Conference,
Nov. 18-21, 2009 in Washington D.C.

Join us for our Celebration in Washington!



John Coble

December 27, 1924 — February 21, 2009

We wish to acknowledge and honor John Coble. He was long-time CEASE member, husband of Sunny Wallick, who died on February 21, 09. In WWII he was a ball-turret gunner in a B 17. When he returned home he became an active member of Veterans for Peace.

Statement of purpose

This revised Statement of Purpose was adopted at the CEASE Annual Meeting November 21, 1996.

CEASE is a network of parents, teachers and other concerned individuals who are dedicated to creating a safe world for our children. We seek to end the violence that permeates our society to an ever increasing degree and to remove the root causes of this violence by advocating for peace, justice and economic opportunity.

We are committed to:

- Raising public awareness about both the origins of violence and the disastrous effects violence and injustice have upon children, families and communities.
- Eliminating the acceptance of violence which is created by mass media conditioning.
- Ensuring the abolition of nuclear weaponry, and other weapons of mass destruction, and an end to the proliferation of conventional weapons.
- Putting a stop to the dangerous degradation of our natural environment by supporting the development and use of reusable, non-polluting resources that protect the health and safety of future generations.

Central to the solution of these problems is the redirection of national priorities and funding from the military and corporate interests to human services and environmental preservation.

We work towards these goals through the following activities:

- Providing a supportive network for teachers and parents who share our concerns.
- Educating the early childhood community through the publication of **CEASE NEWS**, creating periodical informational fliers, giving workshops and developing peace education materials.
- Advocating for a government that is committed to improving and expanding quality child care and child development programs.
- **Fostering a society that focuses on the well being of young children and their families through all our work.**

YES, I WANT TO JOIN THE CEASE NETWORK

Date _____

- Enclosed is my \$10 subscription. new subscription renewal
- Enclosed is my \$5 student subscription. Here is an additional gift to help defray expenses.
- Enclosed is a gift membership for:

Name _____ Phone number () _____

Address _____

e-mail _____

Place of work _____ position _____

NAEYC Member How did you learn about CEASE? _____

For tax deductible contributions over \$50 make check payable to Survival Education Fund

Return to CEASE, c/o Lucy Stroock, 55 Frost Street, Cambridge, MA 02140

E-mail: info@peaceeducators.org

Book Reviews

It's a Boy!: Understanding Your Son's Development from Birth to age 18

by Michael Thompson, PhD and Teresa H. Barker
Balletine Books

You can hardly be neutral about boys in an early childhood setting. They push our buttons, make us exhausted at night, confound and confuse us. Girls do the same, only different. After Michael Thompson, with co-author Dan Kindlon, completed the book and documentary [Raising Cain-Protecting the Emotional Lives of Boys](#) he kept his eyes focused on boys. In his latest book, *It's a boy!*, he talks to parents and others about the joys and stresses of raising boys. In this book he details the boy's development from birth to young adult. He goes into each age with great detail. The most important message to parents of young sons is "fall in love with your son". Attachment in a boy's life is key. Even after 15 months of age boys crave connection with Mom, Dad, peers and caregivers. This is the key to understanding them in all their energy as well as their quiet moments. This book will be helpful to parents and teachers as they struggle to understand the boys in their lives.

Craig Simpson, Somerville, MA

One Hen

by Kate Smith Milway (Picture Book)

One Hen tells the true story of Kojo, a young boy from Ghana in West Africa, who realizes that one small loan will result in a successful venture. This inspirational story proves that a little help, in this case a micro-loan, can make a difference in a family, village and country. There is also a photo and a short biography at the end of the tale.

Karen Kosko, Cambridge, MA

Every Human Has Rights: a Photographic Declaration for Kids

Published by National Geographic

This remarkable book has a fitting forward by Mary Robinson [former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and former President of Ireland]. The book is based on the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights with Poetry from the ePal community. The poetry is brief and the ages of the writers are from 10 to 18 years. The poets were selected from an online contest judged by 'Elders' including Mary Robinson.

The photographs are outstanding, varying from a close up of a family in Ethiopia to photos taken during the Holocaust in an Austrian concentration camp.

There are side bars on each page describing the 30 Human Rights depicted and captions give labels to each picture. This book is the real deal and a wonderful treasure. It encourages each reader to go to www.EveryHumanHasRights.org to participate in the ratification journey.

Every picture tells a powerful story and the book begs to be shared.

Karen Kosko, Cambridge, MA

Please feel free to copy this newsletter and any other materials you receive from CEASE and distribute them to colleagues, parents, students..... Help us to reach out!

**Let people know about our website
www.peaceeducators.org**

CEASE welcomes contributions to the newsletter. Please write us about your work for a peaceful and safe world for children. Send us resource information you value. We will publish as space allows.

CEASE
55 Frost Street
Cambridge, MA 02140