

Editorial

CEASE Changes to P.E.A.C.E.: A New Name, Sharpened Focus and Activities

At our Summer Retreat in the Sierra foothills we did some soul-searching and listening to each other, which resulted in an amazing consensus that CEASE needed to come into the 21st Century with a new name, a new formulation of our purposes, and a new set of activities to focus our scattered efforts. Over the years, since we were founded by Peggy Schirmer and friends in 1979, we had taken on many issues that were important at the time but had lost their claims on our time and attention, often because other organizations stepped up to take the lead on them. We decided collectively to support those other organizations in their efforts, but to focus our own initiatives on the essential elements of why we were members of CEASE. A signal of those core values was the name of our website, chosen during the infancy of the Internet by Alice Wadden, www.peaceeducators.org.

Working with young children and their families, we all value the efforts to prevent violence from emerging as a pattern of response to challenging events in the early years. Our focus is the basics of peace education and getting along with others. We know that these efforts alone are not enough, and that we need to work with adults to eliminate the culture of violence that is far too pervasive and the politics that lead to war and other violence in society at large. Only with a wholesome and complete dedication to nonviolence and respect for everyone and our environment can we succeed in teaching peace to young children. So we decided peace education is the essence of our work.

We changed our purposes to reflect this focus, and we narrowed the many calls to action on our Website's Take Action! Page. We will concentrate our efforts where they are most productive. In the process, we decided to change our name to Peace Educators Allied for Children Everywhere (P.E.A.C.E.). All these decisions happened by group consensus. These changes were accepted by a consensus decision in November through a mail ballot and at our annual meeting during the NAEYC Conference. In addition, to complete the process, we amended our By-laws to bring them up to date.

Take Action!

1. Tell our leaders to use their words, not their weapons, and to put the weapon money to use in helping young children grow.

Call (202) 224-3121 for Congress, or (202) 456-1111 for the President.

2. With a donation, please help the US Committee for UNICEF to help the far too many young children who are victims of war. **Go to**

<http://www.unicef.usa.org/donate>.

3. A new report demonstrates conclusively that the common core standards harm children's learning in Kindergarten.

Please contact your State and local educational officials, as well as local media, and urge them to restore a developmentally appropriate Kindergarten curriculum.

Please go to www.peaceeducators.org home page for the changing action messages and click on the Take Action pages for more on the work of P.E.A.C.E.

Since 2004 CEASE has been part of an Interest Forum of NAEYC, called CEASE/Violence in the Lives of Children Interest Forum. Membership in this Forum is open to any NAEYC member. The Forum is independent of P.E.A.C.E., but we facilitate its work and it sponsors sessions of interest to us. It offers, as well, public exposure to NAEYC members generally, through NAEYC's website and its Annual Conferences. In recognition of our name change we applied to NAEYC to change the name of the Interest Forum to Peace Educators Interest Forum. The NAEYC Governing Board approved this name change on January 27, 2015.

So now we have a new public face and a new focus. All we need is fresh energy generated by this new structure to bring peace to even more young children and adults. That's up to each of us.

Reported by John Surr, Bethesda MD