

# Beginnings of Peace Education



*One boy has a toy, other boy is mad*



*First boy won't give up toy*



*Then he gives him toy*

With the changes in CEASE to P.E.A.C.E., I have been going over in my mind about “What exactly is Peace Education (especially for very young children)?” This is after 40 years as a pacifist and a teacher. The other question is “When do we start teaching it?”

A way to think about these questions for me is this story about a boy a few months past two who entered our program and had never been in a child care center. He was what might be called a little wild. At the time our classrooms were mixed age groups – babies as young as three weeks with toddlers as old as 33 months. This boy exploded the minute he arrived. He pulled out toys from the shelves, grabbed things from children, hoarded everything he played with, and knocked down block towers. He did lots of fighting, biting and pushing. But when he first saw the baby in the classroom he was completely enchanted. He was touching her, he pinched her, and he grabbed her neck. He really didn’t know what to do with this little, living being.

We adults had to be patient. It wasn’t easy. We had to slow him down, to show him how to touch gently. He soon brought the baby toys and was holding her hand. He tried not to fall on her. Soon he fell in love with the baby (and the baby with him). We were excited to tell his pregnant mom because he was now trained to be a brother.

In a more recent story, last week I was greeting the children in the early morning. Harry \* had been out of school for several days because of sickness and snow delays. He didn’t want for his mom to leave. He flopped himself down in the hallway screaming. When Mom brought him in the room he kicked her several times. He threw toys from the table onto the floor and overturned two chairs. I gathered him up -struggling so his Mom could

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