



## **P.E.A.C.E. News for August 2021**

***Peace Educators Allied for Children Everywhere, Inc.  
(P.E.A.C.E., Inc.)***

***Please contribute to our future as we support the  
peaceful world we and children need to thrive.***

**Donate**

# ***Action Alerts***

## ***CHILD CARE URGENT ACTION NEEDED!***

The U.S. Senate is on the verge of acting this week on the President's Infrastructure Plan and a Budget Reconciliation Bill that would enact much of what the President asked for in the American Families Plan to help child care. In view of this timing, we need you to call your Senators' offices at (202) 224-3121, to urge them to rebuild child care following the disastrous pandemic. We need a high quality system to help parents work, children thrive, child care programs avoid bankruptcy, and child care workers stay off welfare. You can use the same number to contact your Representative's office. [Find more of the specifics of what's being asked for...](#)

### ***Help Parents Get Their Advance Child Tax Credits***

Earlier this year Congress passed a law to give parents a tax credit for each dependent child this year. The amount is substantial, and it can be used for child care expenses. But many parents, especially those who don't make enough to have filed Federal Income Tax returns for 2020, will not get these payments automatically, or will need to apply to get the payments. You can refer them to the [IRS website](#).

### ***Please Get Vaccinated ASAP!***



It's good for your health, it's good for the health of the children in your care, and it's good for their families too. The more eligible people we can get vaccinated, the easier it will be for life to return to normal for all of us.

# ***P.E.A.C.E. Retreat***

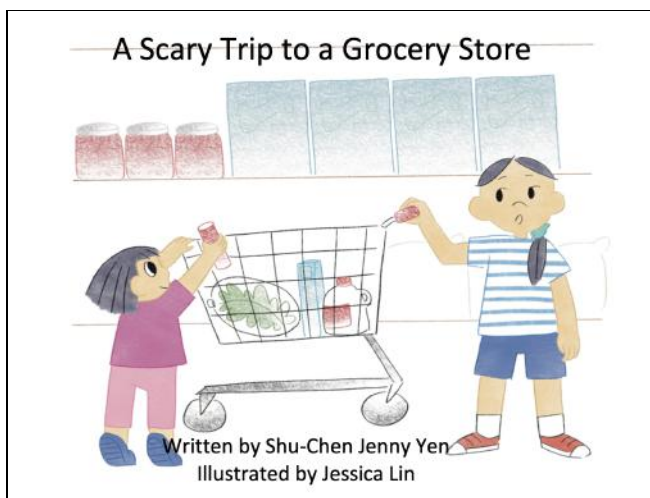
## ***Auburn, CA, June 25, 2021***



P.E.A.C.E. and EPCC members at the Mercy Center, Auburn, CA

P.E.A.C.E. had its annual retreat in Auburn, CA. It was great to finally meet in person as well as virtually. We devoted one day to our own organization and the second day to a joint meeting with [Educators for Peaceful Classrooms and Communities \(EPCC\)](#). Our organization planned activities for the coming year, such as supporting the Asian Interest Forum during the upcoming NAEYC's annual conference. We were excited to have Dr. Shu-Chen Jenny Yen, co-establisher of this interest forum, join us via Zoom to discuss her new book: *A Scary Trip to a Grocery Store*. This book is based on a true story and reflects

the increased racism against people (including young children) of Asian descent in this country. Throughout her story, she emphasizes how we can help young children understand and stand-up against racism. The book is [free to download](#) and it comes with a [lesson plan](#) for ages 4 through 10.



To read more about Dr. Shu-Chen Jenny Yen's social stories, please visit the [Social Story Center](#).

We also discussed the need for improvements on our website, a social media internship, as well as the success of our P.E.A.C.E. Projects, which we started sharing in last month's edition. During the retreat, we celebrated the life of Eric Carle, author and award winner of numerous children's books. As a group, we created a story inspired by him, called ["Two Playful Foxes"](#).



P.E.A.C.E. member Fran Roznowski working on her page for the book.

Gaby Litsky, a member of EPCC, engaged us in this collaborative effort of each member making a design on paper using paint, drafting a sentence, and creating a page using collage techniques inspired by Eric Carle. We hope you enjoy our story. [Watch it here.](#)

We will join EPCC again at our next year's retreat, which will be in Auburn, California in June.



# Resources

## P.E.A.C.E. Projects 2021

*The P.E.A.C.E. Projects is an initiative to sponsor and mentor Early Childhood Educators, in promoting Peace Education for young children in the classroom.*

**P.E.A.C.E. Project granted to Zihan (Lia) Xu**  
***A New Multicultural and Integrative PK-12 Humanities Curriculum***  
***That Promotes Diversity, Equity and Inclusion***

**An Introduction to the Work of Zihan (Lia) Xu**



### About Zihan (Lia) Xu

Zihan (Lia) Xu is a musician, author, and educator. Lia has played guqin for more than twenty years. Classical arts and culture have played a formative role in her personal development. After graduating from the Chinese University of Hong Kong with a master's degree in history, Lia published her first academic book on guqin, which is officially added to the Hong Kong Public Library collection. Lia's book was the first of its kind, covering guqin art history and using comparative and public history methods to span both history and policy. She knows the importance of youth having access to culture, art, religion, and history and sees their integration in education as a key to

addressing international social issues such as racial conflicts, religious violence, and gender inequality.



*Students exploring the Guqin with Lia.*

### About the Guqin

Guqin is a seven-stringed zither without bridges, and it is the oldest Chinese instrument with over 3,000 years of history. Often considered the pinnacle of the four traditional Chinese arts, the guqin is regarded as one of the most important symbols of Chinese high culture. Of all the instruments from China, the guqin has the most well-documented history and best-preserved repertoire of songs. Lia features the guqin instrument prominently throughout her PK-12 humanities curriculum, since it offers a unique journey into Chinese traditional culture which values connection and integration. Lia explains that understanding one's own culture is a key first step toward learning and respecting other cultures, and the guqin serves as an important tool and symbol in that regard.

### Multicultural and integrative education

In recent times our children have had to adjust to many significant changes in their environment - from the coronavirus pandemic, to wildfires, to global warming, to earthquakes, to the impacts of technology and artificial intelligence - all of which occupy headlines on modern platforms in a rapidly changing and information-rich landscape. In these times more than ever, it is important for our children to possess strength in resilience and to be equipped with the faculties and knowledge to lead and to address societal issues cooperatively, inclusively and sustainably. Tomorrow's leaders need skill sets that allow them to thrive in diverse and multicultural environments, and early childhood education plays a pivotal role in preparing tomorrow's leaders to set and to achieve ambitious goals and breakthroughs in diverse and multicultural settings.

To better prepare the next generation for an inclusive future, Lia has dedicated years developing a multicultural and integrative education theory and curriculum. Multicultural and integrative theory is based on the work of holistic education methods which focus on the process of learning and teach different subjects as one interrelated whole. Multicultural and integrative theory is also influenced by the Montessori Method which emphasizes that children learn best when the environment supports their natural desire to acquire skills and knowledge.



*Lia engaged in a discussion with children*

As society becomes increasingly cross-cultural, Lia believes that teaching to recognize strength among differences and teaching to interact, to work and to cooperate inclusively is essential for helping our next generation to achieve extraordinary results in any environment. The practice of multicultural and integrative theory is designed to cultivate civically-engaged adults that understand and treasure multiple perspectives. The theory helps to address racial discrepancy systematically and progressively throughout the course of the curriculum, in a way that effectively ties to current events and global developments. In addition, the theory, methods and PK-12 humanities curriculum provide systematic and effective strategies and tactics that help newcomers or minorities incorporate into the social structure of the host society.



Lia's PK-12 humanities curriculum equips the younger generation with competencies and skill sets which help to create and foster cross-cultural connections across peers and cohorts. The practice also emphasizes the importance of balance and the achievement of long-term, practical and sustainable results in key areas of one's life, including Health, Relationships, Wealth and Spirituality. Lia understands the value of long-term balance and believes that it helps to facilitate achievement of long-term goals peacefully, while conducting oneself inclusively and while thriving on diversity.

Contact information: [liaxu.guqin@gmail.com](mailto:liaxu.guqin@gmail.com) - [Facebook](#) - [YouTube channel](#)

Performance:

- ["Guqin Talks to Technology"](#)
- [Museum of Fine Arts Boston performance](#)
- [City of Boston Immigration Heritage Concert](#)



# Dear Olive Branch

## A P.E.A.C.E. Perspective on Practical Problems



### Adapting to change

As the pandemic “lock down” starts to be lifted, people are coming out and gathering “in person” again. Grown-ups are going to meetings, families to church, and children to school. On the one hand, it’s very exciting and happy... on the other hand, it can also be a time of anxiety.

My first sortie out into the new “in person” world was a meeting of my hand quilting group. We had not met at all for months, and now we were all gathering together. I came into the home where we met, and stood at the top of the stairs leading down to the quilt room where I heard laughter and felt delightful energy. My stomach clenched and I realized that in addition to my excitement at coming together, I also was feeling unsure about how to join the group! Oh, I realized... this is how many children feel when they are at school and want to be a part of things, yet are uncertain how to join.

Our stories for this issue of Olive Branch suggest ways that we can support children, families and colleagues in group settings. We can make entering easier.

- ~ How best to include those who want to join us?
- ~ How can we support children as they learn to join in the group?
- ~ How can we bring new members of a group into the group culture?

And finally, a very happy ending to my anxiety... as I came down the stairs, the group welcomed me with out-stretched arms and big hugs. All was well!

### Honoring the child’s goal

As a four year old, my parents sent me to a parent participation class established by the adult education program in the city where I lived. We had moved to that city during the previous summer, so my family did not know the other families in the neighborhood. I went to the program three days a week from 9:00 to 12:00. I remember sitting on the rug one day, because the teachers had a hard time getting all of the children in a lopsided circle, there were so many of us, and I didn’t know why they called it circle time

when it really wasn't a circle. I had a hard time waiting for whatever it was that they wanted to talk about to be over so I could go to the gear board, which was in the back right of the room on a little table. It was my challenge to get all of the gears connected and moving at the same time, and I wished there were more gears and a bigger board. There was also a stacking toy with about 11 wooden circles on a single pole, where they would be in rainbow order if they were stacked from biggest to smallest, with the red one on the bottom and the violet one on top. It was possible to stack the wooden circles with the biggest one on the bottom, then the smallest one, then the next biggest one, then the next smallest one, so that when they were all stacked, the top two wooden circles were almost the same size and color. Another day, we were handed real clay, so we were able to make things with the clay. I had made a nice round lump of clay, and the teacher handed me spaghetti and told me to use the spaghetti to decorate my lump of clay. I was horrified that I would get in trouble for getting the spaghetti in the muddy clay, as then we could not eat the clay, and I knew better than to waste food. I had to solve the problem, so I hoped that my mother would not be too angry.

Therefore, I followed the teacher's directions so I would not be in trouble right then, and carefully stuck just the ends of the spaghetti into the clay, so I could break them off later and cook them since the rest of the spaghetti piece would not be dirty. I was expecting my mother to say something when we got home with the artwork, and was amazed when she did not say anything about wasting the spaghetti pieces, and she put the dried clay, with the spaghetti sticking out of it on a shelf, which is where it stayed for many years.

I do not remember being interested in what the other children were doing when I was there. I really was not interested in playing with them, as they wanted to do things that I had already mastered a long time ago, like when I was two. I had problems to solve. I wanted to know how things were constructed, and what I could do with the materials that were there.

My nightmares as an adult include being coerced to go to a social event and talk about nothing more than the useless trivia of the latest soap opera, or a sporting event. I would much rather ponder the effects of mycorrhizal fungus since my squirrels plant trees in my garden, and what if I need to do something to solve the problem for my perennial collection of food bearing trees?

As an adult, who now likes to build wooden gizmos, gardening, rebuilding houses and adding closets, and is not particularly interested in small talk, I wonder if it would have been helpful for the adults to teach me how to solve the problem of interacting with the other children.

How would you solve the problem of a small child who seemed to be interested in tackling complex problems, and not interested in the problem of talking to age mates?  
(DS)

### **Supporting entry into a new group**

When I first began teaching in the parent participation preschool program in California, there was a boy in my class who was already five years old. His parents were both quiet, and he didn't have brothers or sisters to interact with. This was his first time in a setting with other children. His parents wanted to focus on his social/emotional development for the year. They said he was having trouble using his voice to say what he needed or wanted.

I noticed this not long after school began. He was standing in the room near the block area and suddenly began to cry. I walked over to his side and asked if he wanted to play in the block area. He nodded his head, yes. I asked if he wanted my help. He nodded his head, yes. We walked over to the block area and I asked if he wanted me to say the words. He nodded his head, yes. So I said to the children playing there, "Andrew would like to play here in the block area. Can you make some space for him?" The children did.

This coaching and saying the words for him continued until one day, when I asked Andrew, "Do you want me to say the words or do you want to say the words?", he said, "I can." And he did. Eventually he stopped crying and was able to say what he needed, and you could tell he felt good about using his voice.

The coaching that I was able to provide for this child to help him develop confidence and positive relationships went beyond the classroom. The next year, when Andrew was in kindergarten, I saw his mom and she told me that one of the things she noticed was when they went to the park, he was able now to go up to other children and talk and play with them – she saw more smiles in his relationships with others! (JD)

## **Adults entering an established collaborative writing process group**

Above we have two examples of children being new in settings. An example of what it is like for an adult to join a group is offered by Educators for Peaceful Classrooms and Communities (EPCC). EPCC is administered by a Planning and Development (P&D) committee, and they are committed to the collaborative writing process.

The EPCC collaborative process developed over a period of years, as we worked out how to collaboratively design our training materials. Our procedures are to have a whole group discussion and agree on the concepts. One or two people then develop a draft document. The documents are printed, and put out on the table for everyone to read and make comments. Once we are finished reading and editing, we put our initials in the upper right hand corner to indicate that we have read and edited this piece. Then the process is repeated with the revisions, until there are no more edits. This takes TIME.

When new people enter our P&D group, we have observed a variety of reactions to this writing process. Some people immediately embrace the process and feel relieved that they don't have to have all the answers. But there have been other new people who find the process very traumatic.

One lovely person who joined the P&D group was able to share her feelings of experiencing a lot of discomfort with having her work edited by a group of other adults. We paid attention and worked on how to help people get acculturated to our collaborative culture. Beyond explaining the process before engaging new people in it, we had to discuss why we are committed to collaboration. The synergy that comes from multiple points of view has enriched our work. Some pieces of our writing can be traced back to who introduced the idea to the group, but most of our materials have developed "on their own" out of shared discussions and writing. Often it is helpful for new people to begin in this writing process with a small group so that the editing process is not a reflection on their individual contribution. Moving away from seeing group editing as a criticism to seeing it as a fun, collective, inclusive process takes longer for some than others. Our responsibility as P&D members is to monitor reactions and feelings, and offer support or mentoring when appropriate. (P&D)

NOTE: We chose "Dear Olive Branch" as the title for this column for several reasons – foremost as a sign of peace. Also olives come in many colors, sizes, tastes, uses – a sign of diversity just as there are many types of questions and those who send the questions. We hope "Olive's" responses will help you, the reader. If you have a question for Olive, email it to us at [1peaceeducators@gmail.com](mailto:1peaceeducators@gmail.com) with Olive Branch in the subject line.

Topic for the next Dear Olive Branch column: **Moving forward**

We are looking for your questions and/or short stories regarding "moving forward" after experiences of Isolation, Loneliness, Discrimination or Loss.

Please submit your ideas by September 10th.

# How I Became a Water Protector

By Craig Simpson

In June of this year I took a three-week trip to Minnesota, which I have wanted to do for many years. My initial reason to head to the “Land of Lakes” was to look for my ancestors’ graves. Practically all of my grandparents and great-grandparents, uncles, and cousins came from Minnesota going back several generations (pre-Civil War). My father’s family came to be in southern Minnesota following the Dakota Uprising in 1862 after which 38 Indigenous warriors were hanged and much of the remaining tribal members were put on steamboats to Nebraska and south of the Missouri River for permanent relocation. The land was opened for occupation by white farmers. My relatives moved from Ireland and Wisconsin for settlement.



*Water protectors lock down under the boat “Good Trouble” to stop construction of Line 3.*

*Photo from Collective.*

For many years I have followed the writings of Indigenous leader and activist Winona LaDuke of the Ojibwe White Earth Reservation. I had worked with her in New Mexico in the late 1970s opposing uranium mining of the Dine reservation. I had always admired her courage and commitment and leadership. In one of her books she described the

ecological destruction of her people by lumber companies. My mother's side of the family were involved in the lumber industry. I knew that growing up, but I didn't know that the lumber industry was part of the destruction of Indigenous tribes in northern Minnesota. When I met Winona over the years, at Indigo Girls concerts or running for Vice President for the Green Party, each time she encouraged me to visit her land and home and her people. She lives on Line 3 on the Shell River near Park Rapids, Minnesota.

Line 3 resistance has been going on for the last seven years. It is part of Enbridge Corporation's plan to pump tar sands from Alberta, Canada to Duluth on Lake Superior, to be shipped to refineries in Michigan. This pipeline goes 300 miles through the Land of Lakes - ponds, rivers, lakes and wetlands of wild rice and clam beds from time immemorial. Enbridge has a long history of ruptured pipes and oil spills. This is a disaster and it has already happened.

A major call was put out early in the year that water protectors were needed to stop the construction of this pipeline. June 1, I headed to northern Minnesota. Nonviolent direct action is done in affinity groups (AGs). I joined two.

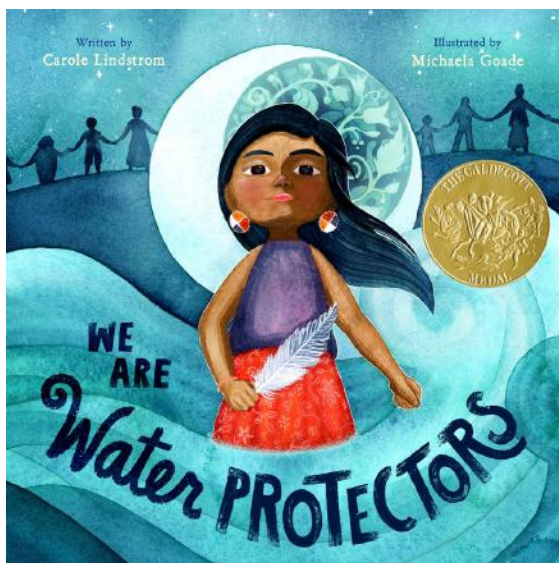
My first AG was huge. We might have had as many as 40 people. That violates the "rules" of affinity groups. The general theory of AGs is that smaller is better to take nonviolence training together. We learn to trust and rely on one another. But this group broke the rules. Many of us had never met before. We were from all parts of the Northeast from Maine to Washington DC. Later, some came from Colorado. We worked with several of the camps set up along the pipeline to resist the construction. In the camps you learned about nonviolent direct action from experienced Indigenous and two-spirit trainers who have worked at this for many years. Some were experienced with pipeline protests. Some were veterans of the Dakota Access Pipeline protests at Standing Rock Reservation four years ago.

At the Treaty Day in early June, thousands participated in a huge protest. Some people locked onto a boat and trailer blocking access to a construction road. Other water protectors took over a pumping station and locked it to construction equipment. Bus loads of supporters showed up with water and food for the water protectors. Well-known actors and actresses appeared while talking to the press. Our affinity group knew only of our action and were surprised and pleased to have others join us. Forty people were arrested, and I was involved in jail support - sitting outside the Hubbard

County jail for three days, and following those arrested through the court process. A few days later my second AG showed up. We were a smaller group of eight. Five of that group were arrested and I once again spent hours outside the county jail giving support. All summer, people have been arriving at the resistance camps and committing themselves to arrest or support. It is the largest mass civil disobedience in many years to work to stop fossil fuels and protect the treaties and water for the Native tribes in the area. I'm not sure if I made up for my ancestors' harm as settlers and loggers but I have been doing my best to clean up the mess. I did learn how to be a water protector and it was worth that.

For more information contact [Stop Line 3](#) or [Honor the Earth](#). Join the call for northern Minnesota or get involved locally to stop the funding of Line 3.

## Book Reviews



### [We Are Water Protectors](#)

**Written by Carole Lindstrom**

**Illustrated by Michaela Goade**

*We Are Water Protectors*, told by Carole Lindstrom and illustrated by Michaela Goade, is a multi-award winning book\* which is beautifully written with stunning illustrations that perfectly complement the text. Although it is about a serious and possibly divisive topic (protecting land and water from big business), it is written in simple, repetitive language similar to a poem making it accessible to young children. It tells the story of an Ojibwe young girl who has learned from her elders the sacredness and importance of water to her people, to all people and life on Mother Earth. The book uses the metaphor of a black snake as the pipeline invading land and causing harm to the water supply and consequently to all living things in its path. The Ojibwe girl knows the fight will be difficult but that it is a necessary fight and rallies her people to stand up and be water protectors. The last three pages of the book contain a glossary along with notes from both the author and illustrator which provide more information for further understanding and discussion. There is also an Earth Steward and Water Protector Pledge that can be read and signed so that readers can commit to being water



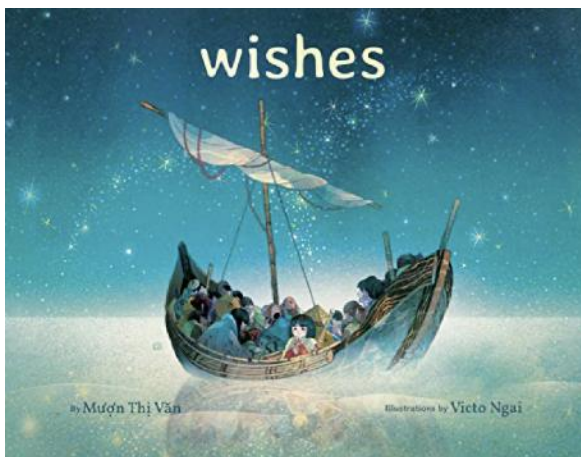
protectors themselves.

As a third grade teacher this past year, I used this book to complement and expand our water unit that focused on water conservation and pollution. *We Are Water Protectors* brought in current events (the opposition and protests against Embridge's Line 3 pipeline) and exposed students to the Indigenous perspective about the importance of water to all living things. I was able to share a digital copy of the pledge so that students could commit to being water protectors. Students appreciated this book for both its message and beautiful illustrations. They were eager to take the pledge and call themselves Earth stewards and water protectors.

\*2021 Caldecott Medal: Goade is the first Indigenous illustrator to win this award;  
2021 Golden Kite Award for Picture Book Text

Submitted by Sabina Steede

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### Wishes

by MƯỢn Thị Văn

Illustrated by Victo Ngai

Orchard Books, an imprint of Scholastic Inc.,  
2021

Ages 5-10

Examine the story of a family leaving home and enduring a difficult journey, in search of something better. Inspired by actual events in

MƯỢn Thị Văn's life, *Wishes* looks at secret escapes through a different lens in this immigrant narrative.

A Vietnamese family packs up their life and escapes for a better life in this unforgettable tale told in only 75 words. The poetry is conveyed through a series of wishes made by inanimate objects.

*The clock wished it was slower.*

*The path wished it was shorter.*

*The boat wished it was bigger.*

*“The night wished it was quieter.”* A girl looks out the window as her grandfather digs up what appears to be a canister. *“The bag wished it was deeper”* as women fill it with food. A mother is about to flee with her daughter, son, and baby and is unable to control the elements of this dangerous journey into the unknown.

The author is a refugee whose family fled Vietnam in 1980 and spent a month at sea. They were saved, taken to Hong Kong, and finally made their way to the United States. That experience saturates the picture book with empathy and compassion. You are immediately drawn into the story and can put yourself into their shoes. The kids in this book are quite hot, hungry and thirsty, but their mother is constantly there to comfort them. It’s something to consider when the strange world seems unsafe and scary. The magic of this new book is that you can read the book together, grasp the horror, but also at the same time distance yourself so that young children are comforted.

The words are illuminated with the gorgeous artwork created by award-winning artist Victo Ngai. When she was asked, “What is your most favorite thing about art?”, Ngai answered, “Its ability to convey emotions, communicate ideas and arouse empathy beyond the barrier of languages.” The strong use of color, texture and dimension are impressive. Here the universal story of leaving, wishing, and arriving are illuminated with luscious illustrations. In the visual storytelling, the little girl makes eye contact with the reader while her face is filled with either sadness, confusion or hope.

I believe this timely book affirms our humanity, our wish for safety, and experiences that include the plight of many refugees. It helps to instill kindness and compassion. The author/artist statements at the end of the book reveal many details.

Additional Links:

[Book trailer on Facebook](#)

[Author information](#)

[Illustrator information](#)

Submitted by Karen Kosko

## Quote of the Month

"How smooth must be  
the language of the whites,  
when they can make  
right look like wrong,  
and wrong like right."

—Black Hawk, Sauk leader



*Picture courtesy of <https://www.visitnorthwestillinois.com>*

# Days of the Month

## August

August 6 - [76th Anniversary of Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima, Japan](#)



*Picture courtesy of BBC.com*

August 9 - [76th Anniversary of Bombing of Nagasaki, Japan](#)

August 9 - [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#)



According to the UN, there are over 476 million indigenous people living across the world (about 6.2 % of the global population). Indigenous people have special relationships with their land and are holders of a unique culture including traditions, languages, and knowledge systems.

*Picture courtesy of pixabay.com*

## August 12 - [International Youth Day](#)



*Image courtesy of YMCA International*

August 12th gives us an opportunity to celebrate International Youth Day; celebrating young people’s actions and initiatives, as well as valuing their universal and equitable engagement. According to the website GAIN, “the commemoration will take the form of a podcast-style discussion that is hosted by youth for youth, together with independently organized commemorations around the world that recognize the importance of youth participation in political, economic and social life and processes” (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, 2021).

## August 19 - [World Humanitarian Day](#)

On August 19, we celebrate World Humanitarian Day (WHD). This day is to commemorate workers who were killed or injured during their humanitarian work, and all workers who continue to provide life-saving protection and support for those in need.



*Photo courtesy of Dio Hasbi Saniskoro*

# ***You're Important to Us!***

## **Help us keep in touch!**

***Please contribute to our future as we support the peaceful world we and children need to thrive.***

We are eager for new members, and active members. Membership is free, although you're encouraged to help us as you can. Spread the word and let us know how you would like to be engaged at [1peaceeducators@gmail.com](mailto:1peaceeducators@gmail.com).

Join Now

Donate

f Follow us on Facebook

Join the NAEYC Interest Forum

## **Help bring peace education to the profession and the public!**

If you would like to bring P.E.A.C.E., Inc.'s perspective to more teachers on the ground working with young children, there are opportunities both in person and online.

Particularly on [NAEYC's HELLO open forum](#) we have seen opportunities to engage on these issues.

Join [actforpeace@googlegroups.com](mailto:actforpeace@googlegroups.com) to follow our members' recommended actions and share your own! You can sign up at [1peaceeducators@gmail.com](mailto:1peaceeducators@gmail.com) or directly through Google Groups. We hope you will spread the word about the actions by forwarding them on to others.

**Visit our Website, [peaceeducators.org](http://peaceeducators.org)!**

