



P.E.A.C.E. News for March 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 TODAY



***Please keep using your mask, with
social distancing & hand washing until
we're all safe again.***

ACTION ALERTS!

Stimulus Package Includes Much for Early Childhood!

If, when you read this, it's not yet passed, please help it along.

The version of the 2021 Stimulus Bill passed by the House of Representatives in late February included almost \$40 billion for the Child Care & Development Block Grant, \$1 billion for Head Start, a number of provisions aimed at helping struggling small businesses like child care providers, and huge benefit increases of all kinds for low income American families with young children, some of which could go toward making good child care affordable for them. All this help is vitally needed as soon as possible. If the Bill hasn't passed by the time you read this, please call (202) 224-3121, and ask to speak to both of your Senators and your Representative, urging them in your own words to get this Bill passed and implemented soon. Much of the child-care benefits of the Bill will be administered by the States, so you'll need to work on your State Governor and legislators as well, to get the money out where it's needed quickly. Thank you!



Picture courtesy of CNBC

More Calls for Public Child Care Infrastructure

[In a recent article in the Washington Post](#), Anne Branigin called for the US to join most other developed countries in supporting a national child care system that is affordable for all parents, high quality for all children in care, and providing sufficient education, training, pay and benefits to attract and keep great teachers involved in that care. There's still hope for this to come about.

Dear Olive Branch

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



Dear Olive Branch:

We are struggling with getting one of our teaching assistants to adopt best practices. This teacher assistant is assigned to primarily focus on one child who needs lots of help with their behavior. The assistant has not yet learned to stay close to the child or communicate effectively with the child. A part of her responsibilities includes assisting the rest of the children when her primary child is not in need

of help. An example of her behavior that is problematic is that “she sits.” She stays sitting in her chair when she should be on her feet assisting the children – like when it is time to transition outdoors. The children need help getting their coats on, and buttoned or zipped. While the rest of us are helping ALL of the children, she sits. Then we all have to wait for her to get her own coat on so we can all go out with the required ratios. We have tried many things, like removing adult chairs, but then she finds a child’s chair and uses it. Our requests for more focus on the children’s needs seem to fall on deaf ears. We would love to see her become a participating member of the team using best practices. What can you suggest that we do that would help?

Helpless in Wichita

Dear Helpless,

This is a very complex problem indeed. Below are some suggestions from our team that may provide possible solutions to unglue the assistant teacher.
(Olive)

Answer 1

A possible solution to the problem of needing the aide in the classroom to move from her chair when asking a particular child to change what they were doing, is to change the format of the class. If it is possible, see if the learning time could be more flexible, and if there is access to a bus, the teacher could have decided to go on field trips to the nearby parks and other recreational areas, thereby causing the aide to leave her chair, and shadow the child who was having difficulty following directions. Once the child and the aide spend some time together, developing a relationship, the child should be able to respond to the aide's requested directions. All of the children could enjoy a trip to the local park, and a weekly trip to the local pool for swimming lessons or maybe to go for dance or gymnastic lessons.

Professional development time could be instituted where the teacher and the aides in the classroom sit down and work together on a behavior management plan for the child, and then do some floor time with the child to get the child to connect more closely with the aides and the teacher. (D.S.)

Answer 2

In thinking about teacher behaviors that will give children the most respect and best teacher involvement possible, I like to consider two strategies:

1. An orientation practice that helps teachers know each other better creates opportunities for people to share stories about their childhoods. Queries that pull in family cultures and traditions, locations where folks spent their childhoods, even what that first school or group experience away from home was like, can give a better understanding of how teachers view the world. Such queries framed around these topics help teachers get to know one another better, share a bit of their own culture from family and place, and remind them of what it was like to be a small child. In addition, storytelling can be a great ice-breaker to help build community!

2. "An ounce of prevention" might be helpful when orienting new staff to your program. Set up positive teacher expectations answering questions such as:

- When can phones be used in the classroom? For documentation? Personal business?
- When is it appropriate for teachers to sit down in the classroom and out in the yard?
- When giving instructions to the children, is calling across the room okay?

You can finish this list of expectations for your teachers and then review it at teacher evaluation time as well. (S.H.)

Answer 3

A possible solution to motivating the assistant teacher is to provide clear instructions about what she is expected to do to shadow or guide a student. Using “I messages” the director or lead teacher can be very direct. For example, “I want you to stand next to the child so you can hear what he is saying and write down the behaviors you are observing.” “I want you to be next to the child. That way you can describe to the child what you are seeing, so you can give the child the words for what he is doing. It will also help you ask open-ended questions to develop the child’s language skills.” (J.D.)

Answer 4

As the Education Supervisor and Director of the program, whenever I had a staff issue I reviewed 1) the personnel policies, 2) the job description, 3) Employee Orientation and topics covered.

If there is anything in any of the three documents covering expectations of the job, specifically relating to the issue, I made two copies. Then I asked myself, "What do I want to have happen?"

If the issue was covered in The Orientation and if specifics were stated in the job description, I would schedule a meeting with the employee. This meeting would be "A Refresher" of the employee's responsibilities and a clarification of what is expected as a team member. I would give the employee a copy of appropriate documents and open the discussion with, "I want to review the job requirements with you again. You may not have understood what is expected." I followed up with a memo to the employee summarizing our discussion.

The meeting gave the employee an opportunity to ask questions and to learn more about the position. If the problem persists another meeting is in order. That's another ballgame. (P.L)

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.

Poetry for Children

(March 21- World Poetry Day)

The Sun in Me

By Moira Andrew

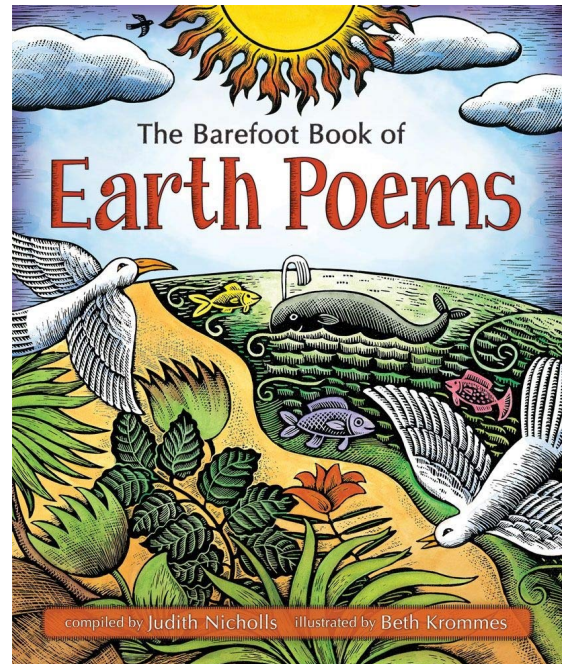
The sun is in me.
Pale morning flames
Setting my still-sleeping
Heart alight.

The wind is in me.
clear blue breath
leading my bare feet
Into a new day.

The sea is in me.
deep green waves
whispering wild music
in my ears.

The river is in me.
dark brown waters
swirling its questions
around my head.

The moon is in me.
sad silver beams
painting my dreams
with shadows.



The Song of the Stars

From a Passamaquoddy Nation
Song

We are the stars which sing.
We sing with our light.
We are the birds of fire
We fly across the heaven.

Six

By Jacqueline Jones LaMon



Picture courtesy of Time.com



Picture courtesy of the New Yorker

(The Children's March, 1963)

The water pressure from a fire hose can stop a moving bullet, can ransack a door wedged shut, and extinguish any embers, including those we cannot see. Bull saw us all as threat- the lot of us, the endless stream that poured out of the church and into the street. We sang and held hands. We held onto our purpose- to be true our God, true to our native land, to Birmingham, like the thirsty sponges we were. We sang a song we'd practiced and knew by heart. We were not letting them turn us around. I was six and needed something more than what I thought I knew, a freedom song, a choice of where to play of who could teach me lessons, the very content of my dream of what I wanted to be when I grew up, if I grew up,

When I grew up and took my very next breath. But let's get back to that bullet, stopped by an unequal force, confronted by mere droplets corralled into sinister duty. I heard those dogs before i saw them -growls, snarls- trained to see nothing of my size, my gentleness. I knew the water in the air just before it launched me airborne, ramming me into disbelief, then tree trunk, then a crowded mass of children's hips and legs. I was six and my song ordained that I be seen as change, or silenced, arrested and contained. I lost my shoes and my blue hair ribbons. I was wearing a muddy crinoline and learned the coolness of both iron bars and the beady eyes of hatred, a jailor's sputum gelling on the side of my face that I refused to touch.

Published by Poem-a-Day by Academy of American Poets

Book Reviews



Home Is In Between

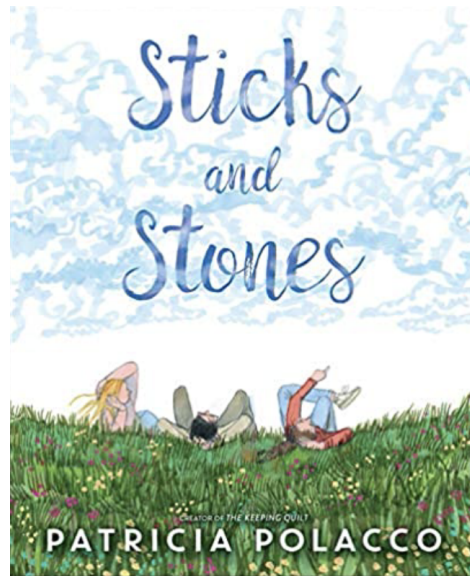
author Mitali Perkins, illustrated by Lavanya Naidu, Macmillan, 2021

This new picture book is a perfect introduction to immigration as young Shanti has much to teach all of us, children and adults. The book opens with Shanti and her family moving from their Bengali village in India to America. Shanti says goodbye to her monsoon rains and hello to the orange and yellow leaves in America. Now she is straddling two cultures every day and realizes that she is “good at making anywhere feel like home. / Especially here. / In the space between cultures.”

Anyone who is or has been anxious about "fitting in" will be able to relate to this personal story. We follow along and get to experience how she navigates, weaves and embraces these cultures. She dines on biryani rice while her classmates eat hot dogs and PB&J sandwiches. "Remembering the village./ Learning the town."

This picture book is delightful, full of joy and timely. The colors are vibrant and the page designs are inviting. You want to know more about how Shanti will blend her two "lives". She needs to learn so much and yet has so much to teach AND share with her new friends, family and classmates.

I am also recommending a longer picture book "Sticks and Stones" author / illustrator Patricia Polacco, Simon Schuster, 2020.



This book is based on a personal experience and dedicated to those who march to a different drummer. The story illustrates how the negative behavior of a bully ends and how those bullied have a positive experience. The illustrations are marvelous and the story is for grade 2 and up.

Submitted by Karen Kosko

Quote of the Month



"I would say that I am a nonviolent soldier. In place of weapons of violence, you have to use your mind, your heart, your sense of humor, every faculty available to you . . . because no one has the right to take the life of another human being. That's all nonviolence is—organized love."

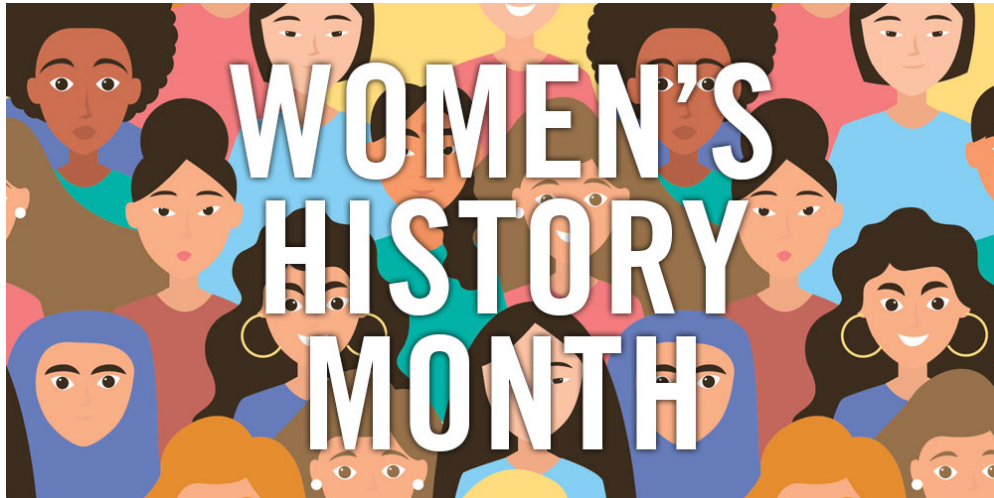
—Joan Baez, American singer, songwriter, musician, and activist

(via Pace e Bene- This Nonviolent Life- Daily Inspiration for your Nonviolent Journey)

Days of the Month

March

Women's History Month



Picture courtesy of Rutgers University

In 1987, after several years of petitioning, Congress passed PL 100-9 which authorized a designated week in March to become “Women’s History Week”. The fight continued during the years 1988 and 1994, and finally since 1995 a series of annual proclamations were issued and March was designated as “Women's History Month”. The proclamations emphasize and celebrate the contributions women have made throughout history and still continuing, to this country in many different fields. [Access the different resources here.](#)

Another great resource is the [National Women's Law Center](#), who advocate against issues girls and women currently undergo in this country. This group is striving to change culture and find solutions toward gender equity.



A Campaign of the National Women's Law Center

March 8 - International Women's Day



[Picture courtesy of IWD](#)

On March 8, International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated annually; however, their global campaign continues throughout the year in encouraging women to take action. The [IWD website](#) provides guidance, free resources and detailed information for everything IWD. The theme for 2021 is:

“A challenged world is an alert world. Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day.

We can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality. We can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements. Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world.

From challenge comes change, so let's all choose to challenge.”

March 21- World Down Syndrome Day

Since 2012, March 21st has been designated by the United Nations as the [World Down Syndrome Day \(WDSD\)](#). The WDSD website provides great resources, stories, and how to take action when thinking about the rights of people with Down Syndrome.

The [#LotsOfSocks campaign](#) exists to raise awareness about Down syndrome. This campaign helps us to get people talking on WDSD.

All you need to do is choose some socks that are going to get noticed - they might be mismatched socks or your craziest and most colourful socks, whatever takes your fancy!

If someone asks you about your socks you can tell them, *"I'm wearing them to raise awareness of Down syndrome"*.

Get yourself informed so you can tell them about Down syndrome!!

We also would like to share a [free resource for teachers](#) on supporting students with Down Syndrome in your classroom. This PDF provides information on the disability, common myths, communication and physical skills, as well as how to adapt your curriculum.



March 22- World Water Day

Photo courtesy Genna Brand, [Creative Commons license](#)

Since 1993, March 22nd is an annual UN observance day that celebrates water and raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. [Read more about the campaigns and how to take action here](#)



We also would like to share a [free resource for teachers on water classroom activities](#), provided by the California Childcare Health Program (CCHP). This PDF provides lessons on how to add water to your daily routine and curriculum.

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.

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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 to follow our members' recommended actions and share your own! You can sign up at 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!

