



## JUSTITIA AND CHILDREN

I have been thinking a lot lately of the children in my life and how they enrich my daily living. I especially think about my niece and nephew's children (ages 3 to 15), my son, my godsons who are 7 years of age and the children of friends. My niece and nephews and their children live in various regions of the country and every summer we all get together and have a wonderful time. It is amazing how the kids change from year to year. Each child is loving and all value their parents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Being surrounded by all of these beautiful children has me thinking more and more about what I want to pass along to them. I keep asking myself what legacy do I want to leave these children? What can I provide that will make their journey in this world more rewarding and peaceful? How can I help them realize that the world doesn't have to be one of good versus evil and that our existence doesn't have to be dominated by fear? What values or guidance can I provide that will help them in determining what is a good life? What determines the worth of each of us? Is it related to what we can afford (consumerism, commercialism, competition for goods) or is it due to serving each other? How can I help them counteract the violence they see in the community, families, world, on the nightly news or in the world of entertainment?

I'm sure everyone has his or her own questions to add to the list. As the questions are important, what is more important is the dialogue we need to have with children and each other so as to better provide for the future of our children. I believe the

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## CHILDREN, JUSTICE AND SCHOOLS: REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

*Susan L. Caulfield, Western Michigan University*

"Tell me of good and evil," I asked.  
The old Indian replied,  
"Inside of all people is  
a good dog and an evil dog."  
"Which one wins?" I asked.  
He smiled a smile that only comes  
with old age and wisdom, and said,  
"The one you feed the most."  
(Kritek, 1994, xxi)

We all know the saying that there can be no justice without peace; the implication follows that when the environments within which we interact are not grounded in peaceful means, just practices and outcomes will be difficult to attain. Justice is often viewed merely as a hoped-for outcome to a process. However, justice is also found in the social arrangements of daily living. While this is true for all environments within which we interact, the focus here is on the school and the implications for children to achieve justice in their lives.

Schools are microcosms of the larger society; therefore the social arrangements are mirrored as well. Schools can be a place where children feel unappreciated, have no voice, are not given opportunities to express their needs, and have difficulty developing into active, caring adults, or a place where children are allowed to pursue their potential, to have meaningful roles within the school structure, and to have their basic needs met.

Schools receive a lot of attention in the media, from scholars, and within local

communities. Unfortunately, too much of the attention of the last decade has focused on strengthening systems of control, rather than on addressing the underlying environment and its social arrangements. Especially in reaction to events such as the tragedy at Columbine High School in Colorado, adults have advocated for a tough response to the potential for violence. Just actions are promoted even though, as Glasser (1992) notes: "Most of us do not realize that no matter how much coercion we use, we cannot consistently control other people" (72-73). One has only to look at the horrendous acts of violence in Iraq, where the U.S. attempt to control and coerce is met with daily acts of resistance and violence. When youth attempt to resist authority in schools, they are often expelled, an act made far easier through policies of zero tolerance.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Compadres/Comadres:

Those of you who couldn't make it to Hartford were missed and you missed the on-going evolution of JSA and our "best conference ever"! While the attendance was not what we hoped, those who were there were treated to the innovation, practice, and reality of restorative and social justice. Here's your invitation now to start thinking and scheduling your June 8-10, 2006 calendar and plan to come to our 8th annual conference on the campus of the University of California in Berkeley. The focus will be on issues regarding the young and is titled, "Where Do the Children Play: Contemplating Future Generations through Peace, Restorative, and Social Justice." Attend, present, participate. I'll see you in Berkeley.

Because he has publicly announced his intention to engage in the process of retirement from his professional and scholarly life, and that one of the stages he must pass through on this journey is to remove himself from all responsibilities and many of the activities having to do with JSA, I want to offer my appreciation and say "thank you" and "gambatte" to someone I consider one of my best friends, to the individual who would be holder of membership card #1 if we actually issued membership cards, Dr Dennis Sullivan. It is safe to say that if you are reading this message, in some way or another, your life has been touched by this very special, endearing, energizing, engaging, entertaining, and certainly at times annoying man.

It is important to do this "l'hommage a' Dennis", because his vision for our lives created the need, direction, and reality of this organization. The story has been told before, but it is helpful to put it into this perspective. After spending a number of years away from academic criminal justice and criminology, Dennis reemerged at the 1996 meetings of the American Society of Criminology meetings in Chicago, which is where I first met him. The first thing I noticed about him was this great hat he was wearing, but that's a story for another day. In a way, this particular ASC conference was Dennis's coming out party. He had recently finished his doctoral dissertation and was making his initial foray back into a world he had left behind years earlier. And

that is what struck him. The academic criminal justice and criminology world that he had left decades earlier had not changed, or even barely evolved in over twenty years. He had left a world steeped in the consideration of multiple regression analysis and to the much more sophisticated world of logistic regression.

Enough! What was still missing from the conversation was the "n"...the people; the notion that criminal justice was still about justice and justice was about people. Into this hole maintained by the academy Dennis poured the ingredients of what is now JSA. Many of us heard and believed. His overarching belief that we can all do better, that the abstract conversation of what makes a successful or unsuccessful policy or whether or not your chi-square value is significant ignores our true units of analysis: people, human beings. In our own struggles to get around to our daily lives, we forget about the people. Justice Studies Association is an organization committed to not forgetting about people. The soul of this organization is this very special person.

Thanks, Dennis, for the card and coin tricks, the jokes, the consideration, and the perspective. Thanks to all you are and all you have done. Thanks.

In Peace, Dan Okada, President

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## JOIN

In an interview published in The New Enlightenment, activist-historian Howard Zinn was asked how people can help bring about change in the world. Among other things, Howard recommended that the concerned individual "join whatever organization is doing things most congenial to him/her." That recommendation brings me to the Justice Studies Association, literally and figuratively. It is hardly the only organization working toward peace and justice. It is not even the only organization of people studying (in classrooms and through practice) best ways to promote peace and justice. What makes the JSA unique, to my mind, is our emphasis on peace and justice without violence. Join JSA or renew your JSA membership today. It's easy. Go to <http://www.justicestudies.org/membership/membership.html> for all the information you need. You can even pay membership dues on-line. E-mail me at [lpresser@utk.edu](mailto:lpresser@utk.edu) if you have any questions about your current or future membership.

Lo Presser, Membership Chair

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## CHILDREN, JUSTICE AND SCHOOLS: REFLECTIONS ON COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

If we want our schools to be places of meaningful interaction for youth, we need to look at the structure and processes of the school. A key element to any structure or process can be found in the sense of community. To what extent can schools be structured to and engage in practices that foster elements of community? There is much that can be said here; the focus will be on peer mediation, one program that can aid in this endeavor. Mediation cannot and should not be viewed as a panacea for the troubles faced by any institution. Mediation, especially peer mediation, is but one form of restorative justice practices that can have a positive impact on school environment. As we have realized in my community, peer mediation has a better chance of being adopted than other restorative justice practices, such as conferencing, because it is more immediate – it is a practice that youth and adults can initiate and use on a daily basis. It is a practice that does not require an outside agency to do intake and schedule a meeting. More importantly, it is a practice in which members of the school community, especially youth, can have ownership.

In my community, we have slowly but steadily built peer mediation programs in schools in a three county area. There programs are in elementary, middle and high schools. Learning of peer mediation via the grapevine and newsletters, requests are made to the staff at Dispute Resolution Services (DRS) to train students in the skills of peer mediation. Barry Burnside, Director of DRS, makes it clear that such relationships are not entered into casually. Usually the principal and other interested parties are interviewed about why they want peer mediation in their schools. They are also asked about their rate of discipline and the types of problems they hope to resolve. It is stressed that peer mediation may not be the best approach for all schools or all problems. The school must have administrative support and a committed and dedicated staff person. The latter is often a school counselor, paraprofessional, or teacher who takes on this program in addition to her/his regular duties. Time is spent interviewing interested students. Students who complete the training sign a contract of

commitment. Someone from DRS, often an intern or volunteer, holds a monthly in-service at each school, meeting with the peer mediation team. Participating schools must demonstrate buy-in to the program, by contributing \$1000 to offset the costs of training manuals, forms, in-service visits, and other materials.

Having trained youth to be peer mediators, I have witnessed the impact this can have on their lives and on the school community. It is a very powerful experience listening to youth as young as 8 years old tell how they helped other children to resolve a conflict. Hearing how youth at an elementary school asked for forms to be translated into Spanish shows us that youth can take on meaningful roles within the school environment. One very pleased principal wrote: "I have never seen children so excited, dedicated, and proud to be part of a program... Students are not only learning the importance of listening, but also the value of problem solving which enables them to challenge their minds and become independent thinkers. These learned skills will not only be of value at school, but also in their homes and throughout their lives. This program has also taught students to believe in themselves and increased self esteem among many."

David Gil has elaborated on basic human needs (e.g., 1999, 1996). These needs are biological-material, social-psychological, productive-creative, security, self-actualization, and spiritual. Gil notes (1999): "Human survival, development, and physical, emotional, and social health and well-being depend always on an adequate level of fulfillment of these needs" (27). While Gil often relates the issue of needs being met with the structuring of society, his arguments are certainly applicable at the institutional level. When basic human needs are not met, reactive counter violence ensues. Peer mediation programs help address many human needs, such as meaningful social relations, mutual respect, opportunities for self-discovery, emergence of a positive sense of identity, meaningful participation in productive activities, a sense of trust and security, becoming what one is capable of becoming, and giving meaning to one's existence in relation to

other people and the world (1999, 26-27).

Riane Eisler has written much on the partnership way, addressing it specifically to education in the 21st century. As Eisler notes, systems can choose to nurture and support or they can choose to inhibit and undermine. The latter has roots in dominator models of orientation, while the former is rooted in the partnership way. Those who work within schools, at any level, make a conscious choice as to whether their practices will be based in oppression, domination and punishment or in partnership and transformation. We know that children are our future. We know that coercive, punishment-based practices do little to benefit individuals or their societies. We know that restorative justice practices can create meaningful opportunities for people to navigate their daily lives, especially when those lives are immersed in acute or chronic conflict. We owe it to youth to provide them with meaningful and positive ways to navigate their social world, and to assume future stewardship with an eye to peaceful and just measures. The school is a perfect place to provide our youth with opportunities to practice peaceful and just approaches to being in relationship with each other.

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# SEEING THE WORLD THROUGH THE CHILD'S EYES: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AT ITS BEST

*Nancy T. Cupolo*  
*Hudson Valley Community College*

Hannah was only four years old when she was accused of lying. Hannah's mom had prepared two slices of cinnamon toast for her as a snack one morning, however Hannah was not hungry so she slipped them quietly into the trash can uneaten. Her mom, upon the discovering the discarded toast, confronted Hannah and asked, "Why did you throw the toast away?" at which point Hannah vehemently denied putting the toast into the garbage. Her mother frantically shared with me that she was concerned that her daughter would grow up to become a pathological liar so she punished her for what she thought was a "lying" behavior, by placing her in her bedroom to sit alone and to "think about what she had done." Then in an almost quiet whisper mom asked, "Was I right, I mean did I do the right thing?" Meanwhile, Hannah sobbed uncontrollably, alone, not knowing what she had done.

Marty whirled around the classroom, not focusing on anything in particular, but managing to touch everything in sight. He pushed books over, he began to swear at anyone who glanced his way, and slowly, using his fists as a weapon, pushed his classmates books off the their desks while they shuddered in fear. No one seemed to know when Marty would "go off", so the classroom permeated with anxiety, apprehension, and fear. This was Marty's fifth classroom during his 13th year, and it was only October! Exasperated, the teacher said to me, "Do you see what I mean? Nothing works with him."

Children's overt physical and verbal behaviors are often demonstrative communication tools reflective of inner feelings and emotions which often can be re-directed, with appropriate modeling and direct instruction, into pro-social competency skills.

In Hannah's case, mom's use of adverse punishment, focusing blame on the child, and imposing isolation illustrates a pattern of retributive justice that I am sure can be traced back to familial patterns of parenting for generations within the family.

Hannah is left with a feeling of shame and guilt. Mom has overlooked the wonderful opportunity to teach pro-social coping skills and she has failed to recognize Hannah's hidden message which is "I do not know how to communicate to you mom when I do not want something that you have made me which you feel is so special and needed at the time. I do not want to hurt your feelings because I am only four years old and developing my sense of initiative versus inferiority."

As I gathered more information regarding this situation, I learned that it was mid-morning and mom was preparing to feed Hannah's nine month old sibling. In order to "keep Hannah quiet" while she fed the baby, she had prepared Hannah's favorite, two pieces of toast with cinnamon on top. Mom turned her back to open the refrigerator, and when she looked back there sat Hannah smiling with two untouched pieces of toast on top of the garbage. When confronted, Hannah stated boldly, "I did not put them in there." When one looks beyond the interchange, collects data, and develops a holistic view of the child, it becomes apparent that the issue is much greater than uneaten toast. Hannah was displaying the inability to express her own opinion, wants, and needs. She was not hungry, however, mom reinforced that she had made "Hannah's favorite dish."

Developmentally, Hannah wanted to please her mom causing inner emotional turmoil and cognitive dissonance begins. I encouraged mom to focus on problem solving by allowing Hannah to express her feelings and needs. "I am not hungry now," and deciding together "What can we do with this toast now that we do not want or need it.?" Hannah of course, only as a child could, said, "Let's feed the birds" and thus restorative justice had begun. Hannah was empowered to think, create solutions, come to an agreement, make restitution and act accountably. Hannah's mom also reinforced for Hannah, that when you don't like something in our home you can express how you feel even if it seems to

displease others. Mom could offer ideas for a solution and problem solve different ways of doing things, thus mentoring Hannah in her ability to cope with difficult situations in the future.

Lev Vygotsky, a Russian theorist, believed that children learn within a social context in which dialogue and discussion are abundant.

John Dewey, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, introduced the conceptual idea of citizenship in education and the need for an individual to recognize that one's actions and subsequent consequences impact society as a whole.

Dewey's interest in morality and virtue as an educational idea is evident in the multitudes of "character education" programs in schools today. He believed that schools should teach problem solving by helping children to learn how to think rather than through rote memorization and those children should learn how to work cooperatively. Dewey wrote "In a complete society, ability to understand any sympathy with the operations and lot of others is a condition of common purpose which only education can procure." A restorative approach would promote negotiation in a classroom, mediation among peers, reflective dialogue, problem solving, mutual respect and student empowerment.

In Marty's case, the classroom teacher has admitted defeat; she believes he is hopeless, unable to change his aggressive behavior. Punishment for Marty would foster continued hostility and further alienation because he lacks centration, the ability to see how his behavior is impacting others. He appears incapable of perceiving the view of another person. In this case, I recommended that the entire class create a "circle time" every fifteen minutes in which all classmates, using appropriate language, and keeping their hands to themselves, could hear the viewpoint of each classmate. The group, led by a student, explored alternative ways of acting toward Marty and decided to "shun" Marty or any student within the classroom setting, who did not

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follow the rules established by the student group. They also created a photo folder which they could place on their desk to help them re-focus away from Marty when he would begin to roam around the room. The class as a whole began to model pro-social group behaviors and sent a clear message to Marty that should he decide to continue to destroy their property they would ignore him during class time and group time.

Marty came from a home in which he was beaten by his father, he learned early in life that force and bullying gave one power, he slowly began to empathize with his peers because as Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs points out, "to belong" is a basic human need. Marty's classmates became "his family"; his behavior began to change in a positive way because his peers modeled the pro-social behaviors that he had never been exposed to before.

In order to achieve academically, Marty needed to be equipped with decision making tools to guide him in altering his behavior for the benefit of the whole classroom community. In order to achieve socially, Marty needed to see and feel the consequences of his behavior upon others and to long for a meaningful relationship with his peers. The entire classroom community was involved in facilitating a restoration of his behaviors and his classmates were empowered with the ability to establish their own rules for behavior and social interaction with one another.

Ruby Payne, in her book [A Framework for Understanding Poverty](#), stresses that trust in relationships are the cornerstones of changes for individuals. Restorative justice also stresses the importance of relationship over rules and regulations.

Everything we say and do as we interact with a young child, help or deter that child from becoming a competent and confident decision maker in adulthood.

In response to the need to stress the importance of early intervention and the early development pro-social competency skills in early childhood, the Teacher Preparation Department at Hudson Valley Community College integrates the conceptual framework of the *High Scope* curriculum into all of our student teaching courses. This approach fosters decision making, student empowerment as young as 3 years of age and establishes a community of learners within a classroom as a basis for all learning. The High Scope approach is based upon a longitudinal study in which students in the Perry Pre-School program were tracked until early adulthood and the research found that this group of students had a lower divorce rate, lower incidence of substance abuse, unemployment, teen pregnancy and criminal activity later in life.

To meet the needs of the child in today's world and to stress the need for the development of strong pro-active support systems in early childhood, we have also developed a new course, "*The Child in an Ever Changing*

*World*," to explore the principles inherent in restorative justice at an early age. Children often encounter a variety of personal experiences that impact their daily interactions and learning within a classroom, such as violence, illnesses, substance abuse, homelessness, poverty, war, terrorism, and non-traditional family living, which often impacts their daily needs. Teachers often have to deal with children who may be in crisis in the school setting. This course examines many of the current societal issues facing children today and explores possible resources and solutions. Students explore theories surrounding child development, best teaching practices, and teaching methodology which will assist them in responding to challenging behaviors which may present themselves in a classroom setting as a result of a child's personal life experiences. This course is available through the continuing education office at Hudson Valley Community College, (518) 629-7338.

The principle constructs inherent in restorative justice begin in preschool.

Reference:

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## KIDS CREATE PEACE

### Who We Are

Kids Create Peace is an organization committed to bringing peace into the world through art and dialogue. Our mission is to produce a variety of artistic projects, created by children, that stimulate discussion and ideas with peace, interfaith and inter-cultural themes. We believe that this art and dialogue creates leadership in children, and can therefore greatly influence the generation to come.

### Our Vision

Imagine a world with no wars, no gangs, no violence...a world where people of all nations, religions and cultures live together in peace. How do we hold onto that vision in such a difficult time in the world? It takes vivid imagination, innovative thinking, a lot of dialogue, and the space to express our ideas.

Ultimately, our best hope is improved understanding and relationships. At Kids Create Peace, we believe much of that hope lies in our young generation. If our kids have a place to express their desire for peace, they can create dialogue with one another and learn to celebrate their similarities and their differences.

Our future world leaders need to be nurtured now, and given the space to explore what peace means to them. Children are living in a confusing time, and many feel they don't have a voice on issues of conflict. After all, they're not old enough to go to war, and many don't feel that they have much to contribute to their community at such a young age. But they have much to contribute. Their visions, their ideas, their hopes, and their fears need to be expressed now. This is how peace leaders are created... one child, one project at a time.

# CHILDREN: TO SURVIVE OR TO THRIVE?

*Christa Drew*

Mismatched chairs line the tattered room; the carpet stained with juice and littered with wrappers and crumbs. The overhead fan drones in sync with the murmur of fifty people waiting, clutching numbered sheets of food promised. Children sprawl on the floor and spill forth from legs and laps into the crowded hallway. Perhaps they're clutching a crayon or book or perhaps they're clinging only to their directive to again wait patiently; play quietly. The children are playing here in the waiting room at the food pantry as their parents and guardians seek assistance to feed them. These children represent the 1 in 3 who come from homes where there is hunger and food insecurity; where there is not enough food to meet their basic needs. They comprise nearly half of the total recipients of our emergency food distribution. And their youth is spent waiting and "playing" at food pantries, Welfare and WIC (Women, Infants and Children) offices and in cars. Often when they go home their desire to play outside is prevented by neighborhood surroundings seething with drug deals, violence, prostitution and other activities born of despair and hopelessness. Inside their homes, adults are often focused on basic survival and the environment is not very conducive to creativity and laughter.

Sometimes when children are in my office, I note their restlessness and see a sadness and fatigue in their eyes. Already they are immersed in the struggles of the world. Often an older child is caring for a younger sibling, tending to the tears and fussing of a baby whose parent is consumed with basic survival. Their parents are the ones whose presence and vote doesn't swing political attention to the audacity of hunger, homelessness, the high cost of living, unemployment, and the excessive oppression of having a criminal record.

One day during a typically chaotic food distribution, a mother of three children returned to see me after receiving her bags of food. Her young children had stayed in the car as she navigated the crowded rooms and lengthy wait. This woman came back inside, gently touched

my arm and said, "Thank you. Thank you. My children are outside crying because they're so happy to have food." I too began to cry.

In serving as an organizer and participant with a group called Ex-Prisoners and Prisoners Organizing for Community Advancement, I'm developing a new awareness about children. Our organization meets frequently to discuss and implement ways of decreasing the impact of past choices/behaviors on current opportunities to secure employment, housing, education and societal acceptance. Sometimes members bring their children to our meetings and events and their presence and innocence serves as a poignant reminder that children suffer tremendously from a system and society that oppress and punishes people who have made mistakes and become involved in criminal behaviors and addictions. Conversations about the kids very rarely include where, what and how children are playing, but rather how to fundamentally provide for their basic needs. There is not a collective focus and awareness about the prevailing injustices and horrors so many children face and their limited future based upon the fate of their parents.

I am not a parent and I do not consider my organizing, work in social services, and commitment to justice to be primarily focused on children. I typically intersect people long after their youth, usually when life has become a struggle due to financial strain, addiction, domestic violence, unemployment or incarceration. Considering the 2006 Justice Studies Association conference theme of, "Where Do the Children Play?" has are caused me to pause and to really see the children in my midst. Too often children forced to play wherever they can as their parents struggle through a largely unjust world. And sometimes children aren't able to play at all.

I hope this year's theme will challenge you to see with new eyes and to embrace the opportunity to acknowledge, discuss and address the many injustices facing our children. Please join us in Berkeley!

The following are links to child advocacy Web sites

**American Association of Pediatrics**  
<http://www.aap.org/advocacy.html>

**Child Advocacy International**  
<http://www.child-advocacy-int.org>

**Children's Defense Fund**  
<http://www.childrensdefense.org>  
The Children's Defense Fund is the children's advocacy organization. The site includes national and state-by-state statistics, policy agendas, as well as practical tips for advocating for children.

**Child Welfare League of America**  
<http://www.cwla.org/advocacy/>  
The Child Welfare League of America is the oldest child advocacy organization in the United States. The site includes a large amount of useful information and links.

**Families and Work Institute**  
<http://www.familiesandwork.org>  
The Families and Work Institute is a non-profit organization that addresses the changing nature of work and family life. It is committed to finding research-based strategies that foster mutually supportive connections among workplaces, families, and communities. The site includes useful information and links.

**Family and Corrections Network**  
<http://www.fcnetwork.org/>

**I Am Your Child**  
<http://www.iamyourchild.org>

**National Association of Child Advocates**  
<http://www.childadvocacy.org>

**National Association for the Education of Young Children**  
[http://www.naeyc.org/childrens\\_champions/default.asp](http://www.naeyc.org/childrens_champions/default.asp)

**Stand for Children** <http://www.stand.org>  
On June 1, 1996 parents, teachers, and others concerned about children from across the United States gathered on the mall at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC to insist that young children be a priority. That was just the beginning of standing for children as advocates returned home to begin the work in local communities. This site offers many resources, including the ability to send a letter to Congress direct from the site.

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<http://www.ChildAdvocate.org>

Historically, children have been and are still the most oppressed, exploited and victimized group of human beings on the planet. Children remain the most voiceless and the most discriminated against group of people in all societies. While every adult group has fought for and won basic human rights protections and freedoms (USA), children remain the only group of human beings without the same rights to equality, respect, protection from bodily harm and freedom of speech. In an era in history when social injustices are decried and combated aggressively, it is unthinkable that we have stopped short of fully including children when we fight for and establish basic human rights protections for all people. The purpose of this web site is to educate the public about the overlooked ways in which children's human rights are not protected; how these abuses have contributed to dysfunction in society; and how we can become true advocates for kids.

## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Seeking contributors for the Encyclopedia of Juvenile Violence, to be published in 2006 by Greenwood Press. The Encyclopedia of Juvenile Violence will be a comprehensive text addressing history, trends, theories, laws and organizations, interventions, and victims of juvenile violence. It will feature approximately 200 entries of varying length. Contributors may write up to ten entries, depending on area(s) of expertise. All contributors will receive a complimentary copy of the book, and some will receive a small honorarium.

Those interested should contact the editor, Dr. Laura Finley, for a list of topics. Upon receiving the list of topics, interested persons should e-mail Dr. Finley a current vitae as well as an outline of the topics they would like to contribute.

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# BEING A GRANDPARENT

*Dennis Sullivan (For Peter Sanzen)*

When I became a grandfather two years ago my life changed radically and I hadn't done a thing to effect it. While my daughter-in-law, Noelle, was in the early stages of pregnancy I asked my Catholic Worker friend, Fred Bohrer, what his father thought about being a grandfather and Fred said he didn't know; it had not been discussed.

I asked Fred because I had been thinking long and hard about this grandfather thing. The kids had been out of the house for a bunch of years and here were new kids I had no "direct" relation to coming along and entering my wife Georgia's and my life.

What kind of contact would we have with them? What kind of contact did we want? Georgia had never had children biologically and I knew the coming of our first grandchild would have greater, no, different, meaning for her. And it has; she has been a wonderful grandmother.

But what I noticed first when our two-year old grandson Christian showed up was that the stage of life we were all acting out our parts on, shifted, and by that I mean the actual floor. Before the grandkids, even though our kids were out and about with their own lasting relationships, I felt that my wife and I stood at the edge of the stage addressing the audience. The kids, while interacting with us, were in back, more to the center of the stage. We were the frontier, especially after our parents had died.

But when the first child was born (and it's intensified with dear Molly) the floor of that stage whisked forward with the kids and grandkids shooting to center-stage-front while simultaneously Georgia and I were whisked to where the kids had been. Context had modified text or is it the other way around?

How non-coincidental then that in the past few years I have become quite interested in getting down my family's story and telling everybody-the kids, the grandkids, my sisters and brothers, cousins, aunts and uncles, everybody.

Also, non-coincidentally, to get this story I've been to archives in New York City, the New York State Library in Albany, Dublin and Kilamey, and to reading rooms in church rectories in Sneem and Kenmare, County Kerry where the O'Sullivans are from.

I even took a road to the Coomnackilla/Blackwater Bridge area of Kerry, where my grandmother is from, that was so narrow I could hear weeds slapping at both sides of the car. I do nothing that I am not interested in so I did this as well for my grandchildren. I wanted to know all I could about the ways and means of my grandparents so this grandfather, me, could tell his grandchildren about their grandmas and grandpas-a span of five generations and even more-through a first-hand account!

In the past few months I've written wonderful little essays for the kids, one on my practice of penmanship as a young boy for Molly. I wrote essays for Christian and Mary Florence about the place I first went to when I joined a religious order of the Roman Catholic Church. I've told them things my father told me that no one else knows and, if I do not tell them, the stories will have died with him. Horrid.

I feel compelled to tell you this because I really love my family, my immediate family and my extended family, especially that whole Francis crowd! They're all alive and I've even come to take the pains in the ass in stride.

So the rest of my life will be dedicated to gathering and telling the family story and all because I became a grandfather, but I'm sure there's a lot more to it as well.

*Sanzen, continued from page 1*

## JUSTITIA AND CHILDREN

way to peace is to think and act in ways that provide for the future of our children. The guide post for our decisions should be based on the consequences they have on our children.

I was reading an editorial (July 1, 2005) in the Courier Post (New Jersey newspaper) entitled "Peaceniks busy teaching our kids" written by Michelle Malkin. She states "The left-wing Kumbaya crowd is quietly grooming a generation of pushovers in the public schools. At a time of war, when young American should be educated about this nation's resilience and steely resolve, educators are indoctrinating students with saccharine-sticky lessons on 'nonviolence conflict resolution' and 'promoting constructive dialogues.'" She also adds "Ostensibly, the program [Operation Respect] helps kids deal with petty meanness and name-calling from insensitive classmates. Not by instructing them in self-defense, mind you, but by inflating their self esteem. The organization's stated mission is 'to transform schools, camps and organizations focused on children and youth into more compassionate, safe and respectful environments.'"

Ms. Malkin's article makes me think in terms of negative and positive peacemaking. The definitions of negative and positive peace are defined as follows:

"Peace as the mere absence of war is what Woolman (1985) refers to a "negative peace." This definition is based on Johan Galtung's ideas of peace. For Galtung, negative peace is defined as a state requiring a set of social structures that provide security and protection from acts of direct physical violence committed by individuals, groups or nations. The emphasis is...on control of violence. The main strategy is dissociation, whereby conflicting parties are separated...In general, policies based on the idea of negative peace do not deal with the causes of violence, only its manifestations." (Woolman, 1985, p.8).

Positive peace, in contrast, is:

"...a pattern of cooperation and integration between major human groups... [It] is about people interacting in cooperative ways; it is about social organizations of diverse peoples who willingly choose to cooperate for the benefit of all humankind; it calls for a system in which there are no winners and losers - all are winners; it is a state so highly valued that institutions are built around it to protect and promote it." (O'Kane, 1991-92).

Also, it "involves the search for positive conditions which can resolve the underlying causes of conflict that produce violence" (Woolman, 1985, p.8). (The Nature of Peace and Its Implications for Peace Education by Leo R. Sandy and Ray Perkins, Jr.,

The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution, Issue 4.0, Spring 2002).

Maybe I'm naive and Ms. Malkin's world view is more valuable for children, but is self-defense (negative peace) a lasting solution? Ms. Malkin states in her editorial that "Teaching students to respect one another is all well and good. But a closer look at the program's founder (Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary fame) and its sponsors shows that beneath all the fuzzy-wuzzy, touchy-feely jargon is a clear pacifist agenda."

Pacifism can be briefly defined as the "opposition to war." Is the opposition to war so bad? I dare say, in reality most of us are opposed to war/conflict and therefore pacifist (possibly even Ms. Malkin).

So I go back to the original question - what legacy do I want to leave my children? What can I give them that will help them lead a more rewarding and peaceful life? Therefore this edition of Justitia is dedicated to **KIDS**. In this edition are articles by Susan Caulfield, Nancy Cupolo, and short pieces by Christa Drew and Dennis Sullivan which examine various aspects of addressing the needs of children. Thanks to Susan, Nancy, Christa and Dennis for their insights.

Peter Sanzen

# CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE › JUSTICE STUDIES ASSOCIATION  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY › JUNE 8-10, 2006

**Where Do the Children Play? Considering Future Generations through Peace, Restorative and Social Justice**

We welcome diverse participants, such as activists, providers, policy-makers, practitioners, and academics.

Deadline for proposals: March 1, 2006

Participants are invited to make presentations on any topic dealing with the nature of societies, institutions, communities, families, inter-personal relationships, and our relationship to the environment that bear

on the future of young people. We are particularly interested in reflections on this theme from the perspective of social, economic, political, restorative, or transformative justice.

Send a title and an abstract of circa 200 words to: Judith W. Kay, Religion Department, University of Puget Sound, 1500 N. Warner St., #1028, Tacoma, WA 98416 or to [jkay@ups.edu](mailto:jkay@ups.edu) before March 1, 2006.