



# A Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World Newsletter

A CURRICULUM OF HOPE  
FOR A PEACEFUL WORLD

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## Founder's Message

"The whole world has changed," proclaimed the headline of the morning newspaper. Yet when I glanced out the window to see the change, there was nothing different: the sky was its usual bright sunny blue; the green grass and trees were dewy from the overnight rain; and the air was crisp, clean and already warming from the sun. I couldn't see the change, but of course I knew it was a true fact. The whole human world has been changed by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Everyone on planet Earth has been affected in many different ways. Millions of people are gone. Not gone in a normal way but one day here, more or less healthy, suddenly very ill, then gone. Gone from our human family forever. It is heartbreaking.

We all have been affected by this trauma, some more than others. Nevertheless each person has been traumatized, including you and me. SO let's all give ourselves a timeout to just deep breathe, emotionally relax, reflect on what has and is happening to our global family everywhere, and to be grateful. Be grateful for now being protected by a vaccine. Be grateful for our own lives.

Recognize and be grateful for ten blessings you have. Write them down, then add to the list every day. Gratitude is a wonderful blessing in itself, as it focuses on positivity, which is a prerequisite for a peaceful lifestyle.

Now reflect on what you have learned in the past year while sequestered at home—about yourself, family, friends, others, your community, your country, the world at large. Who proved to be resilient, resourceful, petty, negative, creative, independent, depressed, stodgy, etc.? What and who surprised you in some way? What are your values now? Have they changed? Who is reliable in your circle? Keep thinking of things that are important to you. If you have a family, ask them to reflect with you. Be sure to write it all down. Make it a part of your family history.

Then move your focus to the time ahead. What are your future goals? Start with long term, like five years. Where would you like to be, or what would you like to have accomplished in five years? Then break it down to three years, and one year. Now think of what you want to accomplish by next month, in three months, and six months, on the journey to accomplishing your five year goals. Disclaimer: I learned this technique forty years ago at a high powered corporate meeting. It helps in keeping you centered and comfortable, knowing that you are working toward a goal instead of spinning your wheels and getting nowhere. However, do not expect to meet all time lines, you will catch up if you get behind. You are not a failure if you want to change things as you move forward. Life is ever changing!

Remember to be good to yourself, tolerant, patient and kind as you would be to others. We are each important in finally getting the virus scourge under control world-wide. We are each important to the fate of our individual countries and of our planet. Be helpful to anyone in need of extra caring. Be an activist for our world family.

Draw upon the peace that you have within you, bring it forth to share and spread to everyone. Peace will carry us forward with serenity and renewed happiness. Thank you for all your efforts to bring peace closer to reality.

Jeanne Morascini, Founder



# Social and Emotional Learning

Team work~Goal Setting~Growth Mindset~Critical Thinking  
~Managing Emotions~Conflict Resolution~Build Self-esteem

**Project Based Learning (PBL)** Project Based Learning is similar to inquiry-based instruction. The concept has been revamped and reenergized, and is gaining serious momentum as an instructional model. Students answer a driving question by working on a project over time that engages them in solving an authentic real-world problem or answering a complex question. Students demonstrate their knowledge and skills by creating a product or presentation that is shared with a real audience—developing content knowledge, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills. Teachers connect strategic direct instruction to the standards in both reading and math. Excellent resources, including videos of projects in action and ways to get started, can be found at the **Buck Institute for Education PBL Works** [www.pblworks.org](http://www.pblworks.org)

**Understood** is a non-profit dedicated to serving the millions of families of kids who learn and think differently. The site contains videos and information for families, educators, and young adults. Among the topics for teachers are resources for understanding IEPs, and for working with families, which are available in English and Spanish. [www.understood.org](http://www.understood.org)

**5 social-emotional learning games to play with your child** by **Kate Kelly** Families can help their children develop social and emotional skills by playing these simple “games” found at: [www.understood.org/articles/en/social-emotional-activities-for-children](http://www.understood.org/articles/en/social-emotional-activities-for-children). The goal of one, called Starfish and Tornados, is to help kids notice how much energy they are feeling inside. When they know they have too much energy, they can either use their own calming skills or ask for help from a trusted adult. This article has some great ideas and information on working with children to help them learn to cope with feelings, set goals, get along with others, deal with their emotions and manage their body movements.

**National Educators Restorative Practices** has a free Connection Toolkit with resources for elementary and high school teachers to help build relationships, classroom connections and teamwork. You can find more about 60-Second Relate Breaks, 2-Minute Connections, 90-Second Spark, Pulse Meters, Treatment Agreement, and GTKY Circles at <https://stephen-murray-nedrp.squarespace.com/ctsixtysecond>. One of the revelations we took away from teaching virtually was that daily check-ins were a way to not only identify feelings, but also to build self-esteem, classroom connections and engagement.

In response to the need to address the learning gaps students will have as we return in the fall, educators are being urged to **“accelerate” not remediate**. This means identifying the most important skills the students will need to know going forward. Refer to this article from the Institute for Education Policy at the Johns Hopkins School of Education [To catch students up, don't remediate. Accelerate. | Hub \(jhu.edu\)](https://www.jhu.edu/article/71111) for more information. It will be critical that educators adopt strategies that enable students to develop a **growth mind set**. When students have a growth mind set, they know that learning is about not knowing...yet. Students understand and appreciate the struggle and challenge of mastering something new. They recognize the growth in their “brain muscles” and understand that their actions help them to overcome obstacles and meet with success. This article has more information to help students, teachers, and administrators believe in themselves and develop the growth mind set needed to meet the new challenges they will face this fall. <https://soeonline.american.edu/blog/growth-mindset-in-the-classroom/>

“Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.”

– **Gilbert K. Chesterton**



## Caring for Our Planet



On the June 25, 2021 **TED Talk, An SOS From The Ocean**, marine biologists Asha de Vos, Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, and Alasdair Harris, and oceanographer Sylvia Earle discuss how we can save the ocean to save our planet. To listen to the podcast go to [An SOS From The Ocean : TED Radio Hour : NPR](#) or download from your App store.

“The next five years may be the most important in the next ten thousand for our planet. There are plenty of reasons for hope, yet every day, doors of opportunity close. We know what to do. Now is the time to act.”

—Dr. Sylvia Earle

*On Netflix:*  
**Mission Blue:**  
 2014 documentary about Sylvia Earle.  
**Chasing Coral:**  
 2017 look at coral reefs.  
**A Plastic Ocean:**  
 2016 film on how millions of tons of plastic end up in the ocean every year.  
**My Octopus Teacher:** 2020 film that shows the connection between the filmmaker Craig Foster and the inner world of the octopus.

**Dr. Sylvia Earle** is a marine biologist, oceanographer, explorer, author, and lecturer. She has been a National Geographic explorer-in-residence since 1998. Earle was the first female chief scientist of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and was named by Time Magazine as its first Hero for the Planet in 1998. Earle is also the president and chair of **Mission Blue**, founded in 2008 as a non-profit dedicated to inspiring action to explore and protect the ocean. Mission Blue identifies **Hope Spots**, ecologically important areas of the ocean that, if protected, can regenerate the ocean back to health. Some Hope Spots are already formally protected, while others still need defined protection. There are over 200 organizations, from large multinationals to small nonprofits, that are Mission Blue partners in support of Hope Spots. Visit <https://mission-blue.org/> to find out so much more.

**Making Sustainable Change** is a collaborative effort of **America’s Plastic Makers®** and their partners seeking to end plastic waste. They have set a goal of making 100% of plastic packaging used in the U.S. reusable, recyclable or recoverable by 2030, and eliminating plastic packaging waste by 2040, by changing the way we look at and value plastic—not as something that is used once and thrown away, but as something of value. If plastic is considered a reusable valuable resource, then designing new products, new types of plastic, and new ways of recycling, can reduce/eliminate the impact of plastic on the environment. Learn more about progress toward this goal, including advances in reuse and in production. You can see their plan to address plastic waste, and goals for creating a circular economy, which is a renewable lifecycle for every plastic product, going directly from being used once, to being used again (and again), to being used for other purposes. [Plastics Innovation and Recycling News | Making Sustainable Change \(plasticmakers.org\)](#)

**The Philippines** is the world’s third biggest plastic polluter. Waste material, even from municipal collections, gets into the rivers and into the Pacific Ocean. Most people do not have access to industrial recycling and shipping waste to China is not an option. Some waste in the Philippines is reprocessed locally. But people living in remote, rural areas do not have much of a choice. They can either bury it, burn it, or repurpose it. The country now has an innovative, artisanal plastic-craft movement. Some of the crafts include strands of plastic beads out of bits of waste plastic, using old CD cases and fast food spoons – anything with a bit of gloss. The beads are copies of traditional tribal designs and are used in local cultural performances and shipped all over the world for demonstrations of Filipino culture. Another example of creative re-purposing comes from the nearby gold mines. Mine workers weave the yellow, red and pink plastic wrappers of blasting cap detonators into traditional baskets. People are starting to see that plastic is no longer just garbage. Instead, it has the potential to become something new and different, and is a way of asserting local creativity and identity in a global world. <https://theconversation.com/the-good-news-about-plastic-waste-83742>

## Peacemakers at Work

### Swords to Plowshares



Since the Spring of 2017, a collaboration among the Newtown Action Alliance, the Episcopal Church in Connecticut, the CT Conference of the UCC, Yale New Haven Hospital, the New Haven Police Department, the CT Department of Corrections, RawTools of Colorado, and Bishops United Against Gun Violence has focused on taking guns that have been voluntarily turned in through buy-backs in Greater New Haven and turning them into gardening tools. The process includes destroying the guns and forging them into tools using blacksmithing techniques and equipment. The first ‘crop’ of tools will be given to High Schools and Community Gardens in Greater New Haven. The program in CT is part of a nationwide Swords to Plowshares program, whose mission is to help teach new ways to solve problems through relationship, dialogue, and alternative means of justice. <https://rawtools.org/>

### Save Our Monarchs Foundation

**Save Our Monarchs Foundation** is a non-profit organization dedicated to saving monarch butterflies. Save Our Monarchs believes that we can save the monarchs by planting more milkweed seeds. They are reaching out to individuals and organizations and asking them to help the monarchs by planting milkweed in the right location and making sure that the seeds are planted and cared for properly. They work with school districts across the country to educate students about the plight of the monarch, and spread the word throughout their community through various fundraising efforts and outreach. Their goal is to get every school to plant a 10’ x 10’ garden plot designed just for pollinators, including monarch butterflies and bees, creating more than 20,000 Pollinator Gardens in 2021.

[www.saveourmonarchs.org/schools.html](http://www.saveourmonarchs.org/schools.html)



**Gotta Have Sole’s** mission is to provide homeless youth with brand new shoes to help them feel confident, comfortable, and special. Founder Nick Lowinger was inspired to start **Gotta Have Sole®** when, at a very young age, he saw children in homeless shelters in Rhode Island who didn’t have shoes or had shoes that were used and falling apart. He started donating his gently used clothing and footwear. Several years later as a community service project for a 2010 religious coming-of-age ceremony, he started Gotta Have Sole®. He has donated new footwear to



over 100,000 children in homeless shelters across every state in the US. Find out more, including how you can help at:

[www.gottahavesole.org](http://www.gottahavesole.org)

**Mari Copeny** is a 13 year old from Flint, Michigan known as Little Miss Flint. She first came into the public eye with her letter to President Obama about the Flint water crisis, which led to the approval of \$100 million in relief for the city. Since then she has continued her involvement and continues to make an impact. Mari works with the anti-bullying group Trendsetters Productions. She is a member of the Flint Youth Justice League. Mari has spoken at the March for Science about how the Flint water crisis has affected her community. She sits on the Flint Youth Justice League and the MDE Anti-Racism Student Advisory Council. Mari has used her platform to not only bring awareness to her community but to give back. She has raised over \$500,000 for her Flint Kids projects including giving out over 16,000 backpacks stuffed with school supplies, a yearly Christmas event with thousands of toys, Easter baskets, movie screenings, and more. She has a book project where she gets books by authors of color into the hands of local children. Her “Dear Flint Kids” letter project has received thousands of letters of support to the children of Flint from people all around the world. She has also raised over \$250k and given away over a million bottles of bottled water. But, according to her site, she takes the most pride in pivoting away from single-use bottled water to partnering with a company (Hydroviv) to produce her very own water filter, that is shipped all over the country to those that are facing toxic drinking water. To date she has raised over \$400k to produce her filters. Learn more at [www.maricopeny.com](http://www.maricopeny.com)

## Resources

### ***Teaching about the Holocaust***

If you are teaching about the Holocaust, be sure to visit the **Holocaust Museum's** website to find free educational resources and professional learning opportunities. The Museum offers a variety of programs dedicated to promoting accurate and relevant teaching of the Holocaust. In addition to lesson plans and videos, you can download poster sets to use in your classroom that cover topics like propaganda and the roles of individuals during the Holocaust. Primary sources with detailed descriptions and English translations, including diaries, letters, testimonies, art, and other materials from the Holocaust are also available. A virtual field trip for classrooms, families or individuals, hosted on Google Arts & Culture, allows visitors to explore nine interactive galleries at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

[www.ushmm.org/teach](http://www.ushmm.org/teach)

### ***Teaching about Civics***

iCivics was founded by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor in 2009. It has become the nation's leading non-profit civic education provider of high-quality, non-partisan, engaging, and free resources to more than 7.6 million students annually, in all 50 states. **iCivics** digital civic library includes more than 260 curricular resources, digital literacy tools, professional learning materials, and educational video games.

In 2018, iCivics founded and now leads the CivXNow Coalition: a growing movement of 150+ members calling for a civic education revival in America. The National Endowment for Humanities tasked iCivics, along with partners at Harvard, Arizona State and Tufts Universities, to lead a coalition of 300 experts in assessing the state of, and best practices in, the teaching of American history, civics, and government in K-12 education in order to prepare young Americans for informed and engaged civic life. [www.icivics.org](http://www.icivics.org)

### ***Teaching about Race and Ethnicity, Religion, Ability, Class, Immigration, Gender and Sexual Identity, and/or Bullying and Bias***

**Teaching Tolerance** has had a name change to better reflect their mission, and is now **Learning for Justice**. You can search their library of short texts that offers a diverse mix of stories and perspectives. This multigenre, multi-media collection aligns with the Common Core's recommendations for text complexity and the Learning for Justice Social Justice Standards. Choose from informational and literary nonfiction texts, literature, photographs, political cartoons, interviews, infographics and more. You can also filter by text type, grade level, subject and topic. Make sure you check out their film kits that are free to employees of K–12 schools, schools of education, houses of worship and youth-serving nonprofit organizations, as well as lesson plans and professional development opportunities.

[www.learningforjustice.org](http://www.learningforjustice.org)

### ***Teaching about Climate***

The **Zinn Education Project** promotes and supports the teaching of people's history in middle and high school classrooms across the country. The website offers free, downloadable lessons and articles organized by theme, time period, and reading level including lessons on the climate crisis.

The Zinn Education Project has launched a campaign to "**Teach Climate Justice.**" You can find free classroom-tested lessons, workshops for educators, and a sample school board climate justice resolution. Many of the lessons come from *A People's Curriculum for the Earth: Teaching Climate Change and the Environmental Crisis*, a teaching guide published by Rethinking Schools.

[www.zinnedproject.org/campaigns/teach-climate-justice](http://www.zinnedproject.org/campaigns/teach-climate-justice)

**“If you are planning for a year, sow rice;  
if you are planning for a decade, plant trees;  
if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people.”**

**– Chinese proverb**



## The Last Word

### The Little Wave

A little wave was bobbing along in the ocean and was having a grand old time. He was enjoying the wind and the fresh air as he travelled— until he noticed that all the other waves in front of him were crashing against the shore. “Oh My God, this terrible,” the little wave thought. “Look what is happening to all the other waves and I will have to face the same fate!”

When the little wave was in the state of panic another wave came across and asked the little wave, “Why are you distressed my friend?”

The little wave said, “We are all going to crash against the shore and face our end! All of us waves are going to be nothing! Isn’t it terrible?”

The second wave answered with a smile, “No, you don’t understand. You’re not just a wave, you are a part of the ocean.”

—Anonymous

[Short Stories about Life: 20 Inspirational Short Stories about Life | All Time Short Stories](#)

If you would like to receive a color PDF version by email, please contact **Linda Shea**, Subscription Manager [hshea@snet.net](mailto:hshea@snet.net)

Curriculum of Hope is a Standing Committee of Connecticut State Organization, DKG.

Our intent is to promulgate resources and information, not to endorse products.

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