



A CURRICULUM OF  
HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL  
WORLD

# A Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World Newsletter

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## Editor's Message

The reality is we are a society dependent on plastic, and this dependency has created a global plastic crisis. We only hope that it is not too late, and that a change in our use and the production of plastic will have a successful impact on our environment. Last year's Back-to-School edition featured six suggestions—ways to reduce our personal plastic usage, which I am going to revisit in this message. Since writing that newsletter I have tried to become more conscious of my own use of plastic in order to reduce my family's plastic footprint. Here's what I've learned. It's not easy to break up with plastic.

Some of the suggestions made were doable. It is easy to say, "Hold the straw" (suggestion #1) and join the movement to eliminate the 500 million single-use plastic straws used daily. (Note: I have a reusable straw, but it has sat on my desk for a year.) I also make it a habit of complimenting a restaurant that doesn't automatically bring you a straw. <https://thelastplasticstraw.org/> Suggestion #2 was to remember your reusable grocery bags or invest in cloth bags that can be washed, in order to reduce the 160,000 bags used every second—which amounts to over 700 per person in the world every year. [www.theworldcounts.com](http://www.theworldcounts.com). Honestly, I didn't get good at this one until my grocery store put up signs in the parking lot saying, "Remember your bags." Now, if I've remembered to put them in the car, I've got this one down, and just in time as my town will soon ban the use of plastic bags by businesses. It's a start, but we're still using plastic bags—trash bags, dog poop bags, and newspaper bags to name a few.

Suggestion #3 had to do with investing in a reusable water bottle. I was given a great one last year, and I use it. While I can't say I never use a plastic water bottle, I can say I don't buy them. I also broke my students of bringing plastic bottles of water to school. However, it has been hard to get my husband to consistently use his reusable water bottle. He's a work-in-progress.

Suggestion #4 had to do with shopping at a local farmer's market and bringing your own containers. Not that I don't and can't bring my own bags to the farmer's market. But I confess that I use plastic sandwich bags that zip-close for more than just produce. They are my go-to for pieces and parts, not only at home, but also in my classroom. For this one, I am a work-in-progress.

Suggestion #5 was to read labels to avoid cosmetics, toothpastes, and personal care products with "polyethylene" in the ingredients. These microplastics were added to products as abrasives, and they pass through water systems dumping an estimated daily 8 trillion plastic microbeads into the ocean. Sea animals absorb or eat microplastics beads and then they are passed along the marine food chain—with humans being at the top of the food chain. President Obama signed the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015 into law in Dec 2015. The US banned the production of rinse-off cosmetic products (including toothpastes) containing plastic microbeads in July 2017. The sales of rinse-off cosmetics containing microbeads was banned in July 2018 and the sales of nonprescription drugs containing microbeads will be banned in July 2019. <https://www.beatthemicrobead.org/product-lists/>

Finally, suggestion #6 was to be knowledgeable about plastics and know what plastics are recyclable in your area. Admittedly, I don't have the list committed to memory, and hopefully you won't mind a refresher. It's printed again on page 3.

As you will read in this newsletter, people around the globe are getting serious about our overuse of plastic. Environmental stewardship is infiltrating businesses and corporations, schools and homes, as well as the hearts of individuals who believe that reducing our dependency on plastic is possible. If you haven't done so, take a minute to take stock of where you are on your own "zero-waste" journey.

Janice McKusick  
Editor



## Plastic Edition

### What's the Difference?

When a product is **biodegradable**, it degrades with the help of naturally occurring microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi. The problem with bags that are biodegradable is that they are still made from petroleum. Given the right soil, temperature, air and light conditions, they will begin to decompose within 3 to 6 months. To be labelled a biodegradable plastic, there is no time limit set on when the product breaks down and these plastics can leave behind toxic residue.

When a product is **compostable**, it degrades in a natural biological process producing only carbon dioxide, water, inorganic compounds, and biomass, and has no visible or distinguishable toxic residue. Most compostable plastic will not biodegrade in a landfill or home composting system. These special plastics need air, moisture and sunlight to break down properly. Composting facilities have to maintain the required conditions by using energy to create a constant temperature and humidity, increasing their carbon footprint. There are a few compostable plastic bags that can decompose in household composts, but they are typically more expensive. <https://greentumble.com/biodegradable-vs-compostable-plastic-bags-whats-the-difference/>

**“Having vision is not enough. Change comes through realising the vision and turning it into a reality. It is easy to espouse worthy goals, values and policies; the hard part is implementation.” Sir Peter Blake**

**Friendlypak** is a New Zealand company that supplies industries such as export, packaging, waste management, hospitality, food service, and manufacturing with compostable and biodegradable products that contain renewable resources that are grown and manufactured sustainably, enabling reduced dependence on oil. They contain no toxic or harmful ingredients. They also have a reduced environmental footprint, are traded fairly and produced without exploitation or harm to people or animals.

Thirty years ago, **Friendlypak** founding director Kevin Graham helped develop disposable packaging for large food and beverage companies, enabling the switch from glass and metal packaging. However as he recognized the damage and cost to the environment, and the impact that disposable packaging would have on future generations and lifestyles, he spent the last 17 years working to find sustainable alternatives made from plant-based compostable plastics “that do not last forever, do not pollute, do not depend on oil, do not waste non-renewable resources or destroy our increasingly scarce and valuable land with rubbish dumps.”

[www.friendlypak.co.nz](http://www.friendlypak.co.nz)

**World Centric**® certified compostable products are an alternative to everyday plastic and Styrofoam disposables used for food service. They use less energy to manufacture and are made from annually renewable plants like wheat, sugarcane and corn. The products, which include kitchen and yard waste bags, napkins and towels, and straws among many others, break down into healthy soil in a commercial composting facility. World Centric® commits at least 25% of its profits to support grassroots global organizations and non-profits dedicated to reducing human suffering.

<https://www.worldcentric.com/>



### If At First You Don't Succeed...

A year ago we shared the news of **The Ocean Cleanup**—a non-profit organization founded in 2013 by then 19-year-old Dutch inventor Boyan Slat, and the plan to use the ocean currents to clean up some of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The bad news is that when the system was deployed into the Great Pacific Garbage Patch last September two problems were encountered: the system did not maintain a sufficient speed, allowing plastic to exit the system, and a stress concentration caused a fatigue fracture in the HDPE floater. The team has upgraded its design and will begin testing this summer, with the continued goal of having a system that can effectively capture plastic and withstand the forces of the ocean. Read about their progress at

[www.theoceancleanup.com](http://www.theoceancleanup.com)

## Know Your Numbers



PETE



HDPE



PVC



LDPE



PP



PS



OTHER

<p>soft drink bottles, some water bottles, fruit juice containers, cooking oil</p> <p><b>PET</b> plastic is intended for single use only. Repeated use increases the risk of leaching and bacterial growth.</p> <p>PET plastic is <b>recyclable but not reusable</b>. The plastic is crushed and shredded into small flakes which are then reprocessed to make new PET bottles, or spun into polyester fiber. This recycled fiber is used to make textiles such as fleece garments, carpets, stuffing for pillows and life jackets, and similar products.</p>	<p>milk jugs, laundry detergents, shampoo bottles, body washes, some plastic bags, toys</p> <p><b>HDPE</b> is the most commonly recycled plastic and is considered one of the safest forms of plastic. HDPE is used to make picnic tables, plastic lumber, waste bins, park benches, bed liners for trucks and other products which require durability and weather-resistance.</p> <p>Products made of HDPE are <b>reusable and recyclable</b>.</p>	<p>trays, bubble wraps, and food wraps, teething rings, pet toys</p> <p><b>PVC</b> is a soft, flexible plastic. It is commonly used to make plastic pipes and parts for plumbing. Because PVC is relatively unaffected by sunlight and weather, it is used in many products used outside our homes.</p> <p>PVC contains numerous toxins which it can leach throughout its entire life cycle.</p> <p>Products made using PVC plastic are <b>not recyclable</b>. While some PVC products can be repurposed, PVC products should not be reused for applications with food or for children's use.</p>	<p>shopping bags, shrink wraps, dry cleaner bags, squeezable bottles, bread bags</p> <p><b>LDPE</b> is considered less toxic than other plastics, and relatively safe for use. <b>It can be recycled but is not generally accepted by municipal recycling programs.</b></p> <p>LDPE plastic is used for plastic lumber, landscaping boards, garbage can liners and floor tiles.</p> <p>Products made using LDPE plastic are <b>reusable</b>, but not always recyclable. check with your local collection service to see if they are accepting LDPE plastic items for recycling.</p>	<p>toys, some car parts, luggage, furniture, cereal box liners, disposable diapers, pails, plastic bottle tops, margarine and yogurt containers, potato chip bags, straws, packing tape and rope.</p> <p><b>Polypropylene</b> serves as a barrier against moisture, grease and chemicals. Recycled PP is used to make landscaping border stripping, battery cases, brooms, bins and trays.</p> <p><b>PP is considered safe for reuse. To recycle check with your local curbside program.</b></p>	<p>CD cases, Styrofoam cups and take out containers, egg cartons, plastic silverware, packing peanuts</p> <p><b>Polystyrene</b> breaks up easily and is the plastic found on beaches all over the world. This is the plastic commonly ingested by animals</p> <p>Polystyrene may leach a possible carcinogen into food products, especially when heated in a microwave.</p> <p><b>Recycling is not widely available</b> for these products and they account for about 35% of US landfill material. <b>Polystyrene should be avoided where possible.</b></p>	<p>baby bottles, sippy cups, water cooler bottles, car parts</p> <p>The #7 category was designed as a catch-all for polycarbonate (PC) and "other" plastics.</p> <p>#7 plastics are <b>not for reuse</b>, unless they have the PLA compostable coding. When possible it is best to avoid #7 plastics, especially for children's food. Plastics with the recycling labels #1, #2 and #4 on the bottom are safer choices and do not contain BPA. PLA coded plastics should be thrown in the compost and not the recycle bin since PLA compostable plastics are not recyclable.</p>
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**Loop** is an initiative from **TerraCycle**, [www.terracycle.com](http://www.terracycle.com), an innovative waste management company whose mission is to Eliminate the Idea of Waste®. Operating nationally across 21 countries, TerraCycle partners with leading consumer product companies, retailers, cities, and facilities to recycle hard to recycle waste. Loop has been designed to address the issue of waste at its source by providing consumers a circular shopping platform while encouraging manufacturers to own and take responsibility for their packaging in the long term. **Loop** officially launched a pilot program in the Mid-Atlantic region of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Washington, D.C., in May 2019, as well as announced The Kroger Co. and Walgreens as the founding retailers in the United States. **Loop** enables consumers to responsibly consume a variety of commonly used products from leading consumer brands in customized, brand-specific durable packaging that is delivered in a specially-designed reusable shipping tote. When finished with the product, the packaging is collected, cleaned, refilled and reused – creating a revolutionary circular shopping system. Consumers in the pilot region who want to sign up for Loop are encouraged to visit [www.loopstore.com](http://www.loopstore.com) and apply to become a participant or log on to [www.thekrogerco.com/loop](http://www.thekrogerco.com/loop) or [www.walgreens.com/loop](http://www.walgreens.com/loop). In the future, the partners aim to enable more consumers to purchase Loop products online and in stores in select Kroger and Walgreens markets.

"**Loop** was designed from the ground-up to reinvent the way we consume by leveraging the sustainable, circular milkman model of yesterday with the convenience of e-commerce," said Tom Szaky, founder and CEO of Loop and **TerraCycle**. "**TerraCycle** came together with dozens of major consumer product companies from P&G to Nestle to Unilever, the World Economic Forum Future of Consumption Platform, logistics and transportation company UPS and leading retailers Kroger and Walgreens to create a simple and convenient way to enjoy a wide range of products, customized in brand-specific durable and reusable packaging."

How does **Loop** work? Consumers go to [www.loopstore.com](http://www.loopstore.com), [www.thekrogerco.com/loop](http://www.thekrogerco.com/loop) or [www.walgreens.com/loop](http://www.walgreens.com/loop) to place an order. They will receive their durable products in **Loop's** exclusively designed shipping tote. After use, consumers place the empty containers into their **Loop** totes and go online to schedule a pickup from their home. **Loop** will clean the packaging with cutting-edge technology so that each product may be safely reused and will promptly replenish products as needed to the consumer. [www.loopstore.com](http://www.loopstore.com)



**"It always seems impossible until it is done."**

**Nelson Mandela**

**Canada** announced in mid-June that it was joining the global movement to ban single-use plastics by 2021. The ban will cover plastics like single-use straws, grocery bags, cutlery, plates and stir sticks. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC ) reports it will also cover plastic cotton swabs, balloon sticks and food packaging like containers and cups made from expanded polystyrene. According to a statement issued by the government, less than 10 per cent of the plastic used in Canada currently gets recycled. Globally, the statement says, one garbage truckload of plastic waste enters the ocean every minute. One million birds and over 100,000 sea mammals worldwide are injured or die each year when they mistake plastic for food or become entangled in discarded items. The government reported that Canadians throw out 15 billion plastic bags annually and use 57 million straws daily. The ban is one feature among a set of Canadian initiatives to address the country's plastic pollution. At the 2018 G7 summit, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the European Union adopted the Ocean Plastics Charter, which lays the groundwork to ensure plastics are designed for reuse and recycling. The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment is working on a plan to implement the Canada-wide Strategy on Zero Plastic Waste. "The health of our oceans is vital to the economic, cultural, and social well-being of Canada's coastal communities," Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, said in a statement. "We know plastic pollution harms Canada's oceans, wildlife, communities—and our economy. It's a problem we simply can't afford to ignore." <https://sports.yahoo.com/canada-ban-singleuse-plastics-by-2021-181605027.html>



### **Kids Against Plastic**

Amy and Ella Meek, teenage girls from the UK who were being homeschooled by their parents, began learning about the UN Millennium Goals. While they knew that plastic pollution existed, they were shocked to find out that the plastic items they used and disposed of without much thought would actually be around on the planet forever, or that such a thing as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch existed. They found out about the issues with the recycling of plastic bottles, how very little of them are actually made into new things, and also about the thousands of microbeads that make up the shampoo and body scrubs and toothpaste we use every day. But their biggest shock of all came when they discovered that if eco-conscious consumers did want to make more sustainable choices when buying items like bottled water, they weren't given the option. That's when they founded their campaign, **Kids Against Plastic**. Their first goal was to get UK supermarkets to stock non-plastic packaged water alternatives on their shelves, and to get single-use plastic bottles off them. It was a big goal, but they were determined – and still are – that they could and would make it happen.

As of today, **Kids Against Plastic** has picked up over 60,000 pieces of single-use plastic litter (and developed an app to log it). They have done a TEDx talk about how they think people should not try to be plastic free (as they think that is pretty impossible), but instead should become **Plastic Clever**. They've gathered a team of environmentally-conscious kids around the UK who are tackling plastic pollution. They have also launched many more campaigns within **Kids Against Plastic**.

Their site is loaded with resources for educators to use in their classrooms to educate and to inspire their students to do something about the problem of single-use plastics, beginning with the big 4 plastic polluters: coffee cups + lids, plastic bottles, straws and plastic bags.

[www.kidsagainstoplastic.co.uk/](http://www.kidsagainstoplastic.co.uk/)

<http://www.kidsagainstoplastic.co.uk/do/be-plastic-clever/>

### **Plastic-Free Schools**

**Plastic Free Schools** is a program that strives to reduce plastic pollution on school campuses around the world, with a special focus on the reduction and ultimately the elimination of plastic bottles, plastic straws and utensils, and plastic food packaging. Any school or student group with the intention of fighting plastic pollution is eligible to join.

#### STEP ONE: EDUCATION

Learn in the classroom, conduct a peer education campaign, or bring in outside presenters to give a brief summary of plastic pollution, myths and common misconceptions. Make sure you understand exactly what items contribute to plastic pollution.

#### STEP TWO: COLLABORATION

Get a team together, including peers, educators, and administrators.

#### STEP THREE: INVESTIGATION

Find out how much and what kind of disposable plastic your school uses in a year, a month, or a day. This is your school's plastic footprint.

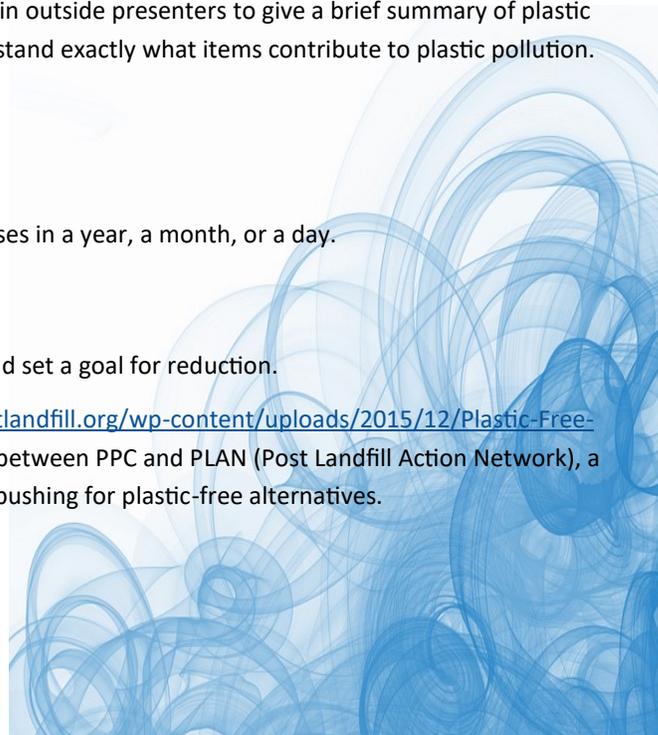
#### STEP FOUR: ACTION

Take on the biggest contributors to your campus' plastic footprint, and set a goal for reduction.

You can download the Plastic-Free Campus Manual (<http://www.postlandfill.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Plastic-Free-Manual-12.2.15.pdf>) to get you started. The guide is a collaboration between PPC and PLAN (Post Landfill Action Network), a network of zero-waste student groups on college campuses that are pushing for plastic-free alternatives.

There are many more resources for all grade levels at the Plastic Pollution Coalition site:

<https://plasticpollutioncoalition.zendesk.com/hc/en-us>



# Opportunities



September 13-15, 2019  
Hartford, CT

Spirit of Change Festival • YOGA | MUSIC | WELLNESS | DANCE • Riverside Park & Mortensen Riverfront Plaza • Hartford, CT  
For more information: <https://spiritofyogafestival.com/>

## New England League of Middle Schools Upcoming Events

### Leadership and Coaching Skills

August 15, 2019  
Kit Caldicott,  
Senior Facilitator,  
Impact Performance Group  
Lowell Five, Tewksbury, MA

### Meridian Stories: Digital Creation Projects for LA, History & Steam

August 20, 2019  
Brett Pierce  
PeoplesChoice, Saco, ME

<https://www.nelms.org/>

### Inspired Educator, Inspired Learner: Experiential Approaches to Social Emotional Learning and Academic Engagement

September 24 & 25, 2019  
Multiple Locations

### PeaceBoat

Peace Boat carries out various projects and campaigns to promote peace, human rights and sustainability. Do you want to know more about getting involved with PeaceBoat either as a participant, an onboard volunteer, or as an intern on land?  
<http://peaceboat.org/english/get-involved>

### Responsive Classroom One Day and Four Day Workshops and Institutes

are held throughout the summer in a city near you.  
Find out more at  
[https://  
www.responsiveclassroom.org/  
courses/institutes/](https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/courses/institutes/)

### International Literacy Association 2019 CONFERENCE

New Orleans, LA October 10–13, 2019  
Ernest N. Morial Convention Center  
Speakers include:  
Chelsea Clinton, Pedro Noguera,  
Renée Watson and Hamish Brewer

<https://literacyworldwide.org/conference>

### Paper and Plastics Recycling Conference North America 2019

October 23—October 25th  
Marriott, Downtown Chicago  
[https://www.cvent.com/events/2019-  
paper-plastics-recycling-conference/](https://www.cvent.com/events/2019-paper-plastics-recycling-conference/)

### 2019 NCSS/NCGE/TCSS Conference

National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), Texas Council for the Social Studies (TCSS), and National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) invite you to attend the largest annual gathering of K-12 social studies classroom teachers, college and university faculty members, curriculum designers and specialists, district and state social studies supervisors, international educators, and social studies discipline leaders. November 22–24, 2019 Austin, TX  
<https://www.socialstudies.org/conference>



**2019-2020 Social Justice plan book—Planning to Change the World—** includes important social justice birthdays and historical events, references to online lesson plans, quotes and tips from social justice teachers across the country. [https://  
www.zinnedproject.org/materials/planning-to-change-the-world/](https://www.zinnedproject.org/materials/planning-to-change-the-world/)

“Hope sees the invisible, feels the intangible  
and achieves the impossible.”

~Anon~



## Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World

### Newsletter Subscription Information

Dear Readers,

It is that time of year when we ask each one of you for your continued support. We greatly appreciate those of you who are subscribers and patrons. Your dedication to our peace efforts and generosity toward our monetary needs are vital to our continued work on several projects. We have made the move to digital subscriptions which has saved on paper and postage, helping us be more environmentally and fiscally responsible. The PDF version is in color and has live links, making it more convenient to use.

This Newsletter is sent to over 1,400 individuals and organizations in 22 countries and it is often distributed onward to others. The creation and mailing process are done by dedicated volunteers. Copying is done willingly by our State Executive Secretary. The cost of paper, toner and labels is borne by Connecticut State Organization which also contributes 25% of the proceeds from its annual fund raiser. All other expenses are covered by subscriptions and contributions. We are blessed with 25 patrons whose generosity has helped to sustain us throughout the years. Now, in our 33rd year of continuous publication, our distribution continues to increase. If you are aware of schools or individuals who would benefit from our publication, please let us know.

Please mail or email your wishes or changes to Jeanne Morascini, 9 Old Willimantic Rd., Columbia, CT 06237.

**Current email subscribers will continue to receive the newsletter until you request to be removed.** Any questions or comments, contact Jeanne at [Jemora@aol.com](mailto:Jemora@aol.com) or 1-860-228-9293. In advance, we thank you.



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My check for \$8.00 payable to Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World is enclosed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to be a Patron for Peace to support your work.

(Any amount of \$20 or more is greatly appreciated.)

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# The Last Word

## The Pencil's Tale

One day, a pencil master was about to pack a brand-new pencil into a box and he said to it, "There are five things you need to know before I send you into the world. Always remember these five rules—never forget them—and you will become the best pencil you can be!"

"Remember, you will be able to do many great things, but only if you put yourself in someone else's hands.

From time to time you will experience a painful sharpening, but remember that this will make you a better pencil.

Don't forget that you will be able to correct any mistakes you might make along the way.

The most important part of you is what's on the inside.

And remember, upon every surface you are used, you must leave your mark. No matter what else happens, you must continue to write."

It seemed the pencil listened to him and promised he would remember these five things so that he could live his life with heart and purpose.

<https://sjprinter.wordpress.com/2019/04/22/the-pencils-tale/>



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 Alpha Kappa State Connecticut.  
Our intent is to promulgate resources and information, not to endorse products.

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