

editorial

"Peace is in our hands"

The year 2000 was indeed a special year. It was declared the International Year for the Culture of Peace by the United Nations General Assembly. In fact, it was so important that the United Nations has also declared the International Decade for the Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

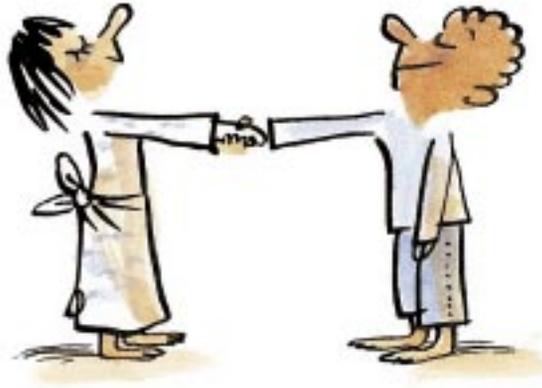
It is obvious that YOU, the elementary teachers, have much to offer and to contribute to this important International Decade for which UNESCO has been designated as the International Co-ordinating Agency. In preparing for the Year, a group of Nobel Peace Prize laureates drafted the **Manifesto 2000**. Included in it are six main forms of behaviour and action that contribute to building a culture of peace:

- 1. Respect all life**
- 2. Reject violence**
- 3. Share with others**
- 4. Listen to understand**
- 5. Preserve the planet**
- 6. Rediscover solidarity**

The slogan of the International Year "Peace is in our hands" is a reminder that all of us – from young children to older persons in the community – can and should do our part in translating the ideals mentioned in the Manifesto into daily practice.

We are aware that many schools at the elementary school level participating in the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) are already involved in activities promoting such concrete action and behaviour to foster peace in the classrooms, the playground, the school, the family and the community.

Hence, we are particularly pleased to offer you this "Peace Package" which we hope will provide you with some new ideas and approaches to complement what might be an ongoing process for many of you to ensure that "Peace is in our hands" so that the root causes of violence, conflict, aggression and tension can be prevented and eliminated.



*It will also hopefully serve as a useful and practical resource material to strengthen the four pillars of education advocated by the International Commission of Education for the Twenty-first Century: learning to know; learning to do; **learning to be; and learning to live together!***

These pillars of learning are proposed as the foundations of education in preparing children and youth to face and deal with the complexities of a rapidly changing world, where violence and conflicts are ever present.

In many societies, violence and aggression are increasing. Once considered a safe if not almost sacred place, schools have unfortunately become in recent years targets where violent behaviour is expressed. In some places, metal detectors have even been installed in school entrances in order to prevent weapons from entering the school premise. Hence, one of the major challenges facing us today is to ensure that the school is a haven for peace and non-violence and can play a vital role in the community in this respect.

As we are about to enter a new Millennium, may the children of the world acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and commitment to contribute to real and lasting peace. May the teachers of the world use the fullest of their expertise, imagination and foresight to ensuring a culture of peace in the classroom. May the parents of the world, in co-operation with the teachers, do their utmost to convert the ideals of MANIFESTO 2000 into daily practice. Together we can all make a difference to ensure a peaceful world for today and tomorrow


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