

voice

Spring 2001 vol. 3 no. 3

Teachers bring learning to life

ETFO'S NEW PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN



Young Negotiators | The School That Equity Built | Enrichment Tips for Teachers

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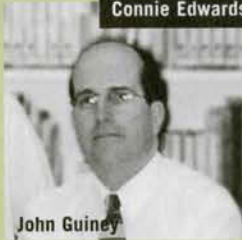
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John Guiney

Elle May Laikve, currently Vice-Principal of Vaughan Willard Public School, Durham District School Board, initiated the Program for Young Negotiators at Gandatsetiagon Public School, Pickering.



Elle May Laikve

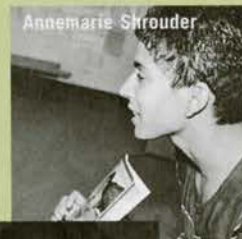
Judy Kwasnica teaches early literacy at Elgin Court Public School, St. Thomas.

Annemarie Shrouder teaches grade 5 at Dunrankin Drive Public School, Mississauga.

Mary Storey has just retired after serving 25 years as an elementary classroom teacher and 10 years as a computer consultant in York Region.



Judy Kwasnica



Annemarie Shrouder

Cover photo by **Joël Benard**.

Peter Deck, an ETFO member in Greater Essex with student **Mariel Barkey**. This photo will be appearing on billboards across Ontario as part of ETFO's Seeds of Learning campaign. Two other billboards using photos of other teachers and students have also been created for the same campaign.



Mary Storey

voice

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From the President | WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH...



Phyllis Benedict, President, ETFO

For the last decade, the mantra of school reform has been sweeping schools around the world. Everywhere, reform has been characterized by changes in curriculum assessment and a focus on teacher accountability.

We can't return to simpler times. Our only viable option is to try to ensure that what occurs in education is at least informed by the best interests of students, teachers and education workers.

Changing times have not left us behind. Elementary teachers have changed too. We have become stronger and more united. In collective bargaining, we are refusing to take second best. As a result, our members are making significant gains.

In professional development, our members' willingness to share their expertise has enabled ETFO to become a leader in the field.

Our efforts to influence change are showing results. For example, when teacher testing was announced, ETFO released *Ensuring High Professional Standards in Ontario Education*. We have used this first-class document to defend our members' rights. While we are unlikely to approve of all aspects of the final "testing" model, it appears our efforts have initiated the worst aspects of this legislation.

We use our meetings with the Minister of Education and the Ministry's various committees and task forces to stress the importance of elementary education. Again and again, we have urged the Minister to devote more funds to elementary education. We ensure that our members' concerns about workload are on the Minister's agenda.

ETFO's is the only voice speaking clearly on behalf of Ontario's public elementary teachers, education workers and students. Our actions are making a difference.

From the General Secretary | TEACHER SHORTAGE NO SURPRISE



Gene Lewis,
General Secretary, ETFO

News reports that parents, volunteers and lunchroom supervisors are being pressed into service as classroom teachers should come as no surprise – a shortage of qualified teachers has been predicted for years. Most recently, the Ontario College of Teachers has said that Central Ontario alone will need 16,500 new teachers by 2010.

Yet where are those people to come from?

Years of cutbacks, badly managed change and teacher bashing by the government have left teachers feeling undervalued and demoralized. We know this from the thousands who retire immediately when they reach the 85 factor, the many new teachers who leave in their first few years, and the significant drop in applications to the faculties of education.

What can be done?

- The government must change its attitude toward teachers and students. The work we do must be promoted and encouraged. Students' achievements and efforts must be recognized and supported.
- Salaries must increase significantly to attract the brightest and best.
- Retired teachers must be allowed to work where and when they choose without their pensions being affected.
- School boards must seize this opportunity to hire teachers who more closely represent Ontario's citizens. We need more teachers from diverse racial and ethnocultural backgrounds, more Aboriginal teachers and more male teachers in our elementary schools.

If the government wants to avoid a full-blown crisis in our schools, it must act now to ensure that classrooms will be staffed by qualified teachers in the years to come.

From the Editor

Since the creation of ETFO in 1998, this federation has produced a veritable treasure trove of resource materials for teachers. These materials range from *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good*, a literature-based anti-bias kit that has received high praise from the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, to curriculum units suitable for all grades. Written by ETFO members and staff, these resources are tied closely to the Ontario curriculum. It's safe to say that no one is publishing work that is better or more relevant to Ontario's elementary teachers. In addition, no one is as concerned as ETFO to ensure that an agenda for equity is kept alive and well.

This issue of *Voice* carries an excerpt from one of those documents. *The School That Equity Built* was released at ETFO's Annual Meeting last year. It's 112 pages crammed with ideas on making your school an equitable experience for teachers and students alike. While its integrated 14-lesson Discoveries unit is aimed at grade 2, the book also details how the unit can be adapted for grades 1, 3 and 4. Check the centre pages of this *Voice* for a brief look at this outstanding resource.

This issue also contains information on ETFO's Seeds of Learning public relations campaign. To support the campaign, we asked one of our members to outline how it could be used to support the curriculum in kindergarten to grade 8. Resource and information packages should have arrived at your school. Enjoy sharing this exciting spring initiative with your students and their parents!

Charlotte Morgan, Editor
cmorgan@etfo.org

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Race Relations Foundation Honours ETFO

"We're Erasing Prejudice for Good," ETFO's anti-bias curriculum kit, has been honoured by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation. The kit was selected by the Foundation's Awards Jury as one of the top nominees to be honoured at its 2001 Award of Excellence Symposium. At that time, the kit may also be named as the winner of an Award of Excellence or Award of Distinction. ETFO is very proud of the members and staff person who made "We're Erasing Prejudice for Good" such an incredible resource for Ontario teachers and students from kindergarten to grade 8. Congratulations to **Jill Aoki-Barrett**, Niagara; **Christine Rodriguez**, Thames Valley; **Adam Peer**, Peel; **Sherry Ramratten Smith**, Waterloo; and **Beverly Saskoley**, Coordinator of ETFO's Equity and Women's Services.

Toronto Student wins Mathieu Du Costa Award

Celeste Milborne, a grade 6 student at Rosedale Public School, Toronto, won a Mathieu De Costa Award from the Canadian Teachers' Federation. Three other students in her class received honourable mentions. This year, close to 450 entries (essays, short stories, poems or artwork celebrating the contributions of people of Aboriginal or diverse ethno-cultural origins who built Canada) were submitted to the Awards program, and nine winners were honoured at a special ceremony in Ottawa. In mid-

December, Rosedale's teacher-librarian, **Hripsik Sarkissian**, approached Celeste's teacher, **Bessie Anastopoulos**, inviting participation in the awards program. Although time was short, Bessie told her students she would submit any appropriate finished piece of work that was brought to school in January. Of her 28 students, 17 returned with the work done; others finished it later. Celeste's winning essay told the story of the Hungarian-born Toronto doctors John and Paul Reka. In the 1950s, the brothers founded Toronto's Central Hospital (now the Reka Centre) and provided interpretation services because they were concerned that minority-language speakers were not being understood in other hospitals.

Teaching and Technology

Rob Stringer, an information technology consultant with the Hamilton-Wentworth DSB, produces a quarterly electronic newsletter highlighting integration ideas and resources for grades 1 to 8. Free to interested educators, the newsletter comes in PDF format. Subscribe by visiting www.egroups.com/group/Teaching_and_Technology. This enables you to receive current issues and access past ones.

Rainbow Teacher Elected

In last November's municipal elections, **Algis Tribinevicius**, a teacher with the Rainbow District School Board, was elected Councillor for the Township of Central Manitoulin.

Environmental Grants for Toronto Schools

In February, four Toronto public schools received grants of \$2,000 each. Toronto-based Stuart Energy, a leading developer of hydrogen-generation and supply systems, established the grants to support projects on sustainable development.

At Charles G. Fraser, the class is creating a hermetically sealed cabin to show how astronauts meet their needs in space. At Duke of Connaught, the money will be used to buy books, videotapes and posters and to fund trips to locations where hydrogen-fuel technology is showcased. Broadacres Junior Public School will use the money to install an outdoor classroom in the gardens with enough seating for a class of students to sketch and observe and to have lessons on the environment. W.J. McCordic students will grow plants in the winter and buy four or five native trees to plant in the school's asphalt playground. Congratulations to Toronto teachers **Gwen Johnstone**, **Patrick Darkhor**, **Catherine Caulfield** and **Angie Schrofer**.

Waterloo Supports Breakfast Programs

On February 10, ETFO Waterloo hosted its Ninth Annual "Give Your Heart to Kids" dance in a local community centre. The proceeds went to support school and community-centre breakfast programs. The event was organized by an ETFO committee chaired by **Rosemarie French**, a teacher at Parkway Public School, Cambridge.



ETFO *Voice* is pleased to provide "PD Notes," a column written by the ETFO Professional Development Services Staff. It introduces issues, new programs and publications.

What Kind of World?

What Kind of World? is an educational program designed to teach youth about the United Nations and global issues from a Canadian perspective. It draws links between local and global issues and highlights the role of Canada in the UN and the UN in daily life. In grades 5 and 6, the three workshops can be integrated into the "Canada and World Connections" segment of the Social Studies curriculum. In grades 7 and 8, they can be integrated into the "History and Geography" curriculum. Specific learning expectations are identified for all three workshops Canada and the United Nations System: An Overview; Canada, the UN and Global Issues; and Canada, the UN and Human Rights. For more information, visit the website of the United Nations Association in Canada: www.unac.org.

SOQP

ETFO is an approved delivery agent for the Supervisory Officer's Qualifications Program (SOQP). ETFO administers two SOQP programs: the Central program based in Toronto and the Southwestern program, based in London.

The program is designed specifically to prepare candidates for the position of supervisory officer. It is based upon the adult learning model and includes a variety of dynamic,

interactive learning experiences. Candidates frequently work in small groups with a supervisory-officer mentor to whom they are assigned for the entire course.

Visit the ETFO website at www.etfo.on.ca for details about the two programs, or contact Colleen Lee at the Provincial Office.

Regional Conferences

Members appear to love the regional conferences sponsored by ETFO Locals, district school boards and ETFO's Provincial Office. "Teaching from the Heart," which focused on enhancing relationships in the life of a teacher – with colleagues, parents, students – within a planning and curriculum context, was over-subscribed. The conference, held on February 2 in partnership with ETFO Halton and the Halton District School Board, is one of several being offered this school year.

Regional conferences are being planned in Hastings and Prince Edward, Algoma, and Thames Valley. For further information visit the PD section of ETFO's website: www.etfo.on.ca.

Conferences are already being booked for the 2001/2002 school year. If your Local is interested in being involved, contact Diana Tomlinson, Coordinator of Professional Development Services, as soon as possible.



TOP: At the Halton Regional Conference, Jill Haskayne, Halton, and Christine Bretherick, Upper Grand, discuss work from their presentations "I Rarely Think in Word at All," and "Teaching from the Heart."

BOTTOM: Candidates and mentors from the Southwestern Supervisory Officer's Qualifications Program.



Members learn how to create a school website with Claris Home Page. Workshop facilitator: Byron Stevenson.



Members enhance their mathematics program by learning how to integrate IT with the Ontario curriculum learning expectations.



Members learn the basics of digital video production. Workshop facilitator: Scott Baker.

ETFO Information Technology Programs

It's time to make that connection to information technology (IT). Do you want to learn about designing web pages? How would you respond to an interactive session on linking IT to curriculum learning expectations? Imagine becoming a movie producer for a day and digitally editing your work. ETFO IT leaders, experts in their field, have recently shared their skill, dynamism and creative talent with members in the Toronto and Limestone District School Boards. These programs succeeded because of co-operative efforts between ETFO Locals, district school boards and ETFO Provincial Office. The involvement of institutions such as Queen's University and organizations such as the Educational Computing Organization of Ontario (ECOO) has strengthened the efforts of local partners. ETFO Provincial Office continues to seek partnerships with Locals and district school boards in order to offer meaningful professional development IT opportunities to members across Ontario. These are some of our programs:

20-hour Courses

Basic Skills Course – designed to accommodate beginning computer users. Participants learn the basics of using a Windows or Macintosh environment and basic features of a word processor.

Classroom Applications Course – Participants learn to use Ministry-licensed software to meet the needs of teachers' curriculum planning. They also learn the effective integration of information technology with the Ontario curriculum learning expectations.

Internet Connections Course – participants learn to use a web browser to access the Internet and to send and receive e-mail. They also learn how to search for information for professional and personal use.

Locally Designed Workshops

Dickens: Republishing Curriculum Expectations (K-8) – Dickens is a set of grade-specific public-domain Filemaker Pro databases that contain the Ontario curriculum learning expectations. The simple point-and-click tools allow teachers to classify and republish expectations in meaningful combinations for planning. Teachers have found Dickens a great time saver and advanced organizer for establishing rich and effective classroom programs.

Creating School Web Sites With Home Page 3.0 –

Participants plan, build and publish a school website; access online resources; learn common Internet vocabulary; and gain Internet staff-development and curriculum-integration strategies.

Digital Video (iMovie) Workshop –

Motion video is the next step in classroom multimedia projects. Video synthesizes a variety of different disciplines into a single project and can be used to communicate with others, to share experiences and events, to demonstrate experiments, or as the culminating activity for a unit of study. In this hands-on workshop, participants learn the basics of digital video production, from planning to storyboarding to final production and publication to video or web. The workshop is based on Apple's iMovie software and DV iMac. Participants may wish to bring their own digital camcorder to the session.

For more information about ETFO IT programs, contact Jennifer Mitchell at the Provincial Office.

ETFO's Seeds of Learning Campaign Teachers Bring Learning to Life

Shortly after the March break, you will have found something new in your school mailbox. During the break, packages were mailed to all elementary public school teachers in Ontario. Inside those packages were the ingredients for an exciting springtime lesson – one we hope will reach parents as well as students.

It's called the Seeds of Learning campaign, and it's sponsored by ETFO. The idea is simple. Every child receives a package of bean seeds. They plant them, tend them and help them mature into full-grown plants. Along the way, they can learn useful lessons about everything from biology to responsibility.

We've designed the project to be easy to set up with a minimum of time and effort. And for every grade, Debbie Donsky, a teacher on leave from the Toronto District School Board, has prepared curriculum-based lessons so that Seeds of Learning can be used to complement your classroom program. Younger students, by measuring their plant's growth, will learn math skills; others will learn about the life cycle of plants. Older students will receive an over-sized bookmark listing books and websites related to science.

Along with the seed packets, you will have received booklets to help younger students chart their plant's growth. You can choose whether and how to use these. Many teachers will have the children fill them out in the classroom and take them home for their parents to see. Others may send the booklets home with students and ask parents to help their children complete them.

Either way, you're helping parents to see the kind of work we do every day – and giving them a taste of the passion we have for teaching. The reports include a message to parents explaining the Seeds of Learning campaign and linking it to the hopes we share with them for their children's success.

Seeds of Learning is part of our broader effort to improve our links with the parents of our students. It's essential that parents understand that elementary teachers are working with them to ensure a successful future for their children.

That's important because parental involvement in their children's education is vital. From active co-operation in homework assignments, to volunteering with field trips, to sitting with their children and reading in the evening and on weekends, parents can make all the difference. And they deserve to know that we understand how a parent's love and encouragement can be just as important to learning as a teacher's dedication.

It's also important because we want to co-operate with parents to ensure a decent quality of public education throughout Ontario. Neither parents nor teachers can go it alone when it comes to dealing with the issues affecting children's education. We must work together.

As our slogan puts it, teachers are bringing learning to life in classrooms everywhere. This project is a great illustration of how we share the thrill of discovery with our students.





Starting in early April for one month, these photographs will appear on more than 200 billboards across Ontario.

LEFT TO RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM:

Rayan Graham, Mariel Barkey, Angelie Barkey.

Zola McAdie, Mariel Barkey, Peter Deck.

Julian Scheffer, Erika Kanduth, Corinne Wyatt.

We expect thousands of Ontario elementary students will join in. ETFO's leaders, both provincially and locally, will be working as well to promote the campaign across the province. You'll see news stories, magazine advertisements in *Canadian Living*, *Chatelaine*, *Maclean's*, *Today's Parent* and *The Green Teacher* and billboards telling parents and the public about this project.

In this way, the Seeds of Learning campaign fits in perfectly with ETFO's initiatives of the past several months, such as the Teachers Bring Learning to Life billboard campaign and Working Together with Parents brochures, and our World Teachers' Day public-awareness advertisements. And it demonstrates the pride we take in the work we do.

We thought you would also like to know that the photos we are using in this campaign are not those of professional models. They are, in fact, the faces of ETFO members. For example, the face on the cover of this *Voice* belongs to Peter Deck, a teacher in Greater Essex. With Peter is Mariel Barkey.

You'll be seeing a slightly differently designed version of this photograph on the billboards. Other teachers whose photographs appear in the campaign are Angelie Barkey, Durham District School Board, and Corinne Wyatt, Toronto District School Board. Thanks also to students Erika Kanduth, Rayan Graham, Zola McAdie and Julian Scheffer for helping us bring the Seeds of Learning to life.

However, what's most important is what Seeds of Learning will teach. Nothing can replace the thrill that children will have when the seeds they've planted sprout and grow. Nothing can replace the thrill a teacher gets from watching children learn. Many will never forget the lessons they learn from this project and from you. And that, of course, is what teaching is all about.

Thank you for doing all you can to ensure that this campaign is a big success and reaches as many parents as possible. All the research tells us that classroom teachers enjoy high levels of credibility with the public – much more than anyone in the Ministry of Education, for example. ETFO needs your help to challenge the negative way the government portrays us.

We want the public to see the real faces of Ontario's elementary teachers and catch a glimpse of the wonderful work we do. Working together, we can ensure that happens!



ETFO Sponsors Conference for Women Members

“...and still
We rise”

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Presenter Joanne Baird Mallouk (left) consults at her Homeopathy workshop.
Veronica De Santos (in black) leads a group through the ABCs of Self-Defence.
Participants engage in the Status of Women and Collective Bargaining workshops.
Gayle Lesperance (standing) presents Redefining Retirement.
Author Naomi Klein signs copies of her book *No Logo*.



A conference designed specifically for the women members of ETFO, "... and still We rise," was held February 7-9 in Toronto. More than 400 members from all parts of Ontario attended this first event of its kind ever presented by ETFO. As well as attending two major plenary sessions, participants chose from an eclectic range of training sessions, workshops and cultural visits – everything from the nuts and bolts of bargaining to the ABCs of self-defence and guided, focused tours of nearby cultural attractions.

Phyllis Walker, an ETFO member with the Toronto DSB, opened the conference by reading "Still I Rise", a poem by Maya Angelou, a leading literary African-American voice and lecturer.

In the conference's opening address, Rosemary Brown, feminist writer, lecturer and social activist, said, "In spite of the North American and European media's misconception that feminism has had its day and is no longer necessary, I'm here to tell you that it's alive and well! The momentum from The World March of Women carries us forward. And women in the developing world are finding their voices as never before."

Naomi Klein, an outspoken columnist with the *Globe and Mail*, told a packed lunchtime audience that the few remaining commercial-free public spaces need our protection. "School, of course, is probably the most important part of the public commons because it is where future citizens learn about the concept of the commons – by experiencing a place that is not about buying and selling," she said. "We are losing it, not only to the occasional advertisement. We are losing it to a blurring of the line between the idea of teaching and the idea of selling."

A display and sale of the work of women artisans provided a colourful backdrop to a Celebration of Women through Song, featuring Lesley Andrew, a motivational speaker and singer who performs at the Stratford Festival and with various symphony orchestras. On Friday morning, participants were invited to an Aboriginal Smudge Ceremony, led by Mary Lou Smoke, a leader in the First Nations community.

Here's what some of the participants had to say about "... and still We rise."

- ... *Very well organized and provided a variety of venues to grow as a professional and on a personal level.*
- ... *Excellent day! Thought-provoking but not overwhelming.*
- ... *This was my first conference and I benefited greatly from it.*
- ... *It was so good to network with other women, to talk about women's issues and to think about the journey we have made and the direction we wish to take.*
- ... *The workshops and organization were excellent.*
- ... *I really liked the professional development combined with the personal component.*
- ... *As a first-year teacher I am overjoyed to have attended.*
- ... *One of the best conferences I have ever attended.*
- ... *An enriching, rejuvenating growth experience.*

Leadership Training Sessions

- Collective Bargaining: Bargaining for Equity; Nuts and Bolts of Bargaining
- Health and Safety
- Presentation Skills
- Status of Women
- Panel Discussion for Lesbian/Bisexual members

Personal Growth Sessions

- ABCs of Self-Defence
- Adapting to Arthritis
- Balancing Career and Personal Life
- Budgeting
- Exploitation Is Never in Fashion
- Family in the Workplace – Recent Developments in the Law
- For the Health of It
- Homeopathy: Bridging the Gap
- Media Pressure: Confronting Yourself in the Media
- Rate Your Plate – Diet and Nutrition
- Redefining Retirement
- Women's Work – Then and Now

Plans are already underway for next year's conference, subject to approval of the budget at ETFO's Annual Meeting.

“Today, children and youth encounter acts of harm, hostility, and frustration as a part of life. Some of them manage to cope with these difficulties, yet lack the skills needed to protect their social well being. As educators, and concerned citizens, we must insist that our students learn conflict resolution, social problem solving, and peacemaking skills. We also must teach them to behave in socially acceptable ways, to question and challenge injustices, to establish personal and academic goals, to understand their own rights and responsibilities and to assume their future roles as the peacemakers of our society.” (Bey & Turner, 1996)

Young Negotiators

Connie Edwards with Elle May Laikve

As a teacher educator, the above excerpt from *Making School a Place of Peace* perfectly captures my views and provides the rationale for my ongoing efforts to prepare teachers to teach children non-violent ways to resolve the endless conflicts that are an inevitable part of their lives. Fifteen years of working with in-service and pre-service teachers has confirmed that educators need good curriculum and focused training in the theory and skills of non-adversarial conflict resolution. The Program for Young Negotiators (PYN) is one such curriculum.

This article is a collaborative effort between me, a teacher educator and PYN trainer, and Elle May Laikve, the former Vice-Principal of Gandatsetiagon Public School, Durham District School Board. Elle May introduced PYN into the intermediate grades in her school and used the implementation effort as the focus for her Master's program.



Students come to appreciate the benefits of using a systematic approach to resolving differences based on the principles of interest-based negotiation.

The Program for Young Negotiators

The Program for Young Negotiators is a curriculum which consists of 10 sequential levels designed to teach middle-school children the skills of negotiation, decision making and problem solving. The rationale for PYN challenges the assumption that disputes are best resolved when one party in a conflict wins at the expense of the other. Students are encouraged to be creative and find ways to resolve differences that satisfy the needs and interests of all parties involved in a dispute. Author Jared Curhan designed PYN to empower young people with the skills of negotiating, decision making and problem solving.

The PYN curriculum consists of ten 90-minute lessons, and uses games, role playing, video clips, stories and interactive discussion to reinforce the concepts introduced at each level. The case studies used by the students throughout the program are based on issues that are relevant to students' everyday lives. The program concludes with an activity that requires students to develop

plans to resolve issues that are actually part of their lives. Students come to appreciate the benefits of using a systematic approach to resolving differences based on the principles of interest-based negotiation.

In PYN's Levels 1, 2 and 3

students define negotiation and collaboration and compare these to violence and competition. They learn to identify personal and class goals and practise building and sustaining trusting relationships. In addition, they consider how one's attitude affects one's behaviour and they practise using empathy to understand different perspectives.

In Levels 4, 5, 6, and 7

students learn to distinguish between positions and interests. They learn the ground rules and strategy for brainstorming, how to break a problem down and how to generate creative "win-win" options to real-world problems. They also learn strategies that help them increase their bargaining power by developing

The PYN materials provide a tangible, field-tested curriculum that helps teachers teach the skills of non-violent negotiation.

backup plans and employing fair standards. Once students have reviewed their options, a final agreement, called “packaging,” completes the negotiation process.

In Levels 8, 9, and 10

students learn how to deal with angry people. During these three levels, students write about their own conflicts, role-play ways to negotiate those conflicts and then reflect upon the importance of having a plan and a set of skills before putting them into action. In this way, the skills of negotiation practised in the classroom may be transferred to conflicts outside, enabling students to resolve differences and sustain relationships.

The PYN materials provide a tangible, field-tested curriculum that helps teachers teach the skills of non-violent negotiation. PYN allows teachers and students to think about preventing violence so that when they are faced with the inevitable daily conflicts, they can handle them better. The materials include a very comprehensive teacher’s manual, students’ manuals, a video and supplementary teaching aids.

PYN at Gandatsetiagon

Gandatsetiagon Public School is a kindergarten-to-grade-8 school with approximately 540 students situated in a middle-class residential area. The year before introducing PYN, the administration had chosen “respect” as a school-wide theme and had created incentives for students to demonstrate respectful behaviour. In addition, the administration, teachers and students agreed that the intermediate division was in need of some changes.

Traditional, authoritarian forms of discipline were not working. The morale of teachers and students needed bolstering, and some concern was being expressed about it in the community.

Having been introduced to the Program For Young Negotiators in a training series, the Vice-Principal, Elle May Laikve, offered to investigate introducing PYN into the intermediate grades. The initiative took off from there.

PYN Training

Once the decision had been made to introduce PYN, the next step was to provide training for the teachers. Elle May contracted with Connie’s company, Dispute Resolution through Education, to do the teacher in-service. Elle May and Connie decided to provide the equivalent of two days of in-service (one full day and two half days) for her school’s intermediate staff.

Gandatsetiagon decided to invite other schools in the Board to take part in the training too. Ultimately, 24 teachers from eight neighbouring schools participated. Among the 24 participants, there were three administrators and two psychometrists. With one exception, every school sent at least two participants. One school released four teachers plus the principal, and the host school released six teachers.

The participants spent the equivalent of two days learning the concepts of principled negotiating presented in Fisher and Ury’s *Getting to Yes*, which is the conceptual foundation for PYN. The participants also undertook many of the same role playing, case studies and games their students would be doing. Ideas about how the concepts taught in PYN could be integrated into the existing curriculum expectations were also

LEFT TO RIGHT (TEACHERS ONLY):
Elle May Laikve, Mario Caputo, Melanie Maxwell,
Geoff Anderson, Sue Muir and Paul York.



discussed. To that end, Elle May selected parts of the grade 7 and 8 History and Language curriculum expectations and asked the teachers to indicate beside each listed expectation whether they thought that the value of teaching negotiation skills would be relevant, irrelevant or somewhat relevant to each expectation. The responses showed that, for the majority of expectations, these teachers thought that integrating negotiation skills into History and Language was either relevant or somewhat relevant. Overall, the informal survey indicated that teachers saw value in teaching negotiation skills, not only as a method of teaching conflict resolution, but also as a way of exploring and interpreting expectations found in existing curriculum documents.

Any effort to promote change through the adoption of a new curriculum is fraught with obstacles, two of the most usual being money and release time. Fortunately, a supervisory officer who had taken the PYN training earlier helped to secure funds. In addition, the Board's Bertelsmann Innovation Fund granted 20 supply days, which were shared among the eight participating schools. The remaining days were covered by the individual schools through internal coverage or with occasional teachers. Attendance fees, paid for from each school's budget, covered the remaining costs.

Finally, Gandatsetiagon's strongly supportive Parent Teacher Association/School Community Council provided money for teachers' manuals and for workbooks for every student in the two grade 7 and two grade 8 classes.



Conclusion

When the PYN initiative began, Gandatsetiagon's staff had been subjected to the changes to the school administration, the curriculum and the staff. Everyone was somewhat weary of change. However, the staff actively and enthusiastically engaged in the PYN training sessions. The time spent relating PYN's negotiation skills to curriculum expectations made the project relevant. The teachers found that the PYN curriculum was user-friendly and required minimal preparation time. Staff members who had expressed concern that PYN would simply be added on to their workload quickly found it to be well worth the time and effort they put into it.

Staff members who had expressed concern that PYN would simply be added on to their workload quickly found it to be well worth the time and effort they put into it.

In addition, teachers who had taken the PYN training immediately recognized that the Teacher Advisor Groups (TAG) program mandated by the Ministry of Education in 1999 and PYN could be natural allies. Among other things, TAG requires that all students in grades 7 to 12 learn conflict resolution.

Since Gandatsetiagon first identified "respect" as its school-wide theme, the atmosphere in the school has improved greatly. Fewer students are being reprimanded for unruly behaviour, and the community is pleased with the improvements they have seen. PYN is one of a number of factors that have contributed to a greater awareness by staff and students of the need for non-violent ways of resolving differences.

It is fair to say that the Program for Young Negotiators has made a difference, not only at Gandatsetiagon, but also at Sir John A. Macdonald Public School, where another of the original PYN participants, Nancy Faint, continues to spearhead the program with the entire intermediate division. At Vaughan Willard, Elle May Laikve has taught PYN to students in one of the two grade 8 classes. Discussions and activities up to level 4 of the program have been implemented. In addition, Elle May, together with Melanie Maxwell, an intermediate teacher at Gandatsetiagon this year, presented the PYN program and demonstrated the teaching of conflict resolution with the help of a student panel composed of students from both schools. This presentation was made at

OISE/UT to the pre-service teachers at their annual Employment Preparation Conference.

Finally, anything worth doing is worth doing well, and so for the Program for Young Negotiators or other conflict resolution programs, awareness and change take time. Since the inception of PYN in 1999, there has been a steady effort by a few individuals to maintain the thrust and impetus of programs such as this. Teachers can feel comfortable knowing that they can teach as much or as little of the program as their timetables and schedules allow. The critical piece is that the foundation has been laid. The process of thinking about non-violent approaches and creating a culture of peace are valuable goals, and the life skills gained from such experiential learning may contribute to greater overall happiness.

Elle May Laikve is Vice-Principal of Vaughan Willard Public School, Pickering.

Connie Edwards is a PYN trainer who can be reached at 416-867-9869 or by email at: connie.edwards@home.com.

Thanks to the staff and students at Gandatsetiagon Public School for their cooperation. Story photos by Brian Pickell.

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Music

Review



Peggy McGuire



By Honey Thomas

I have known Peggy McGuire since I first joined the Mississauga Symphony in 1984. She is the Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Society of Mississauga and the principal second violin of the Mississauga Symphony, and she has played with Sinfonia Mississauga since its inception. Peggy has taught music privately for 35 years and is a passionate advocate of the arts in the lives of children and of the community.

As string players, we lament the lack of a string program in Peel. Young instrumentalists learn brass and wind instruments and eventually play traditional band and jazz repertoire, but they are not exposed to orchestral music. Peggy's mission is to introduce students to the sounds of the string family. As a "musical ambassador" for the Symphony, she performs 40-minute solo programs in which she plays a variety of instruments, including her Giovanni Gancino violin, which was made in 1702. Her performance shows that the violin can perform anything from classical music to the theme song from the students' favourite television shows. At the end of the show, a few children (and teachers) are given a brief lesson so they can perform "Twinkle, Twinkle" in front of the group.

In the past two years, Peggy has expanded her vision beyond solo performance. With musicians from the Chamber Music Society and in collaboration with Barbara York, a Mississauga composer now living in the United States, she has created several 50-minute musical programs for elementary schools. These are a mix of classical music, dance, visual art and theatre. Each one involves five to eight performers, all of whom are professional musicians, dancers, teachers, art therapists or actors who have volunteered their time to rehearse and polish the programs.

These musical outreach programs include the following:

The Magic of Music and Masks, which combines excerpts from classical string quartets with a dance performance using masks of eight basic emotions.

A Butterfly in Time is Peggy's answer to *The Red Violin*. With music written and compiled by Barbara York, it tells the 300-year story of Peggy's Gancino violin. The title comes from the tiny butterfly etched into the back of the instrument, and the text is based on papers that accompanied the violin when it was purchased. The story takes the students on a musical journey, and only at the very end do they discover that the "little butterfly" is in the room with them.

Let's Compose is designed for students who are ready to try making their own conceptual connections. A "live" composer with a chamber ensemble teaches the fundamentals of music theory and composition. Students compose a new piece of music, which the musicians then play for them.

Paint the Music – Play the Picture, Peggy's newest workshop, is an exciting complement to the grade 7 and 8 Visual Arts and Music curriculum. Peggy collaborated with curators of the Art Gallery of Ontario to create slides of paintings from their permanent collection. While a group of musicians (piano, violin, viola, French horn and percussion) performs, images of works from 1500 to 1990 are projected on a large screen above their heads.

I strongly urge you to enter the imaginative world of Peggy McGuire, Barbara York and their creative outreach programs. Our curriculum states that "Education in the arts is essential to students' intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth." Peggy's programs will stretch your students' imaginations, help them express their emotional responses to the arts, expose them to music, dance and visual arts through the ages and encourage them to experiment with their own creativity.

All these programs are sponsored in part by the Chamber Music Society of Mississauga (charitable tax # 86881 806R R 0001) and the American Federation of Musicians.

For more information about Peggy's solo performance as a "Musical Ambassador" for the Mississauga Symphony, call (905) 615-4401. Three sessions cost \$140, and each session can accommodate up to three classes. Peggy is prepared to travel throughout Ontario. For more information, visit Peggy's website www.peggymcguire.com. She can also be reached at pmviolin@sprint.ca.

Honey Thomas teaches at Erin Mills Senior Public School, Mississauga.

Her performance shows that the violin can perform anything from classical music to the theme song from students' favourite television shows.

Professional Relations Services

Spring 2001

Professional Boundaries: You Don't Want to Go There!

BOUNDARIES: A DEFINITION

"Boundaries define personal space and the area you occupy that you feel is appropriately under your control. When there is a mutual understanding of what is appropriate, boundaries are crossed if someone intrudes beyond that understanding or withdraws from it unilaterally."

College of Physiotherapists of Ontario,
Maintaining Profession Boundaries
(a questionnaire workbook)

The most extreme form of boundary violation is sexual abuse of a student. Sexual abuse represents the ultimate breach of the trust reposed in a teacher.

In 1996, a former Ontario teacher pleaded guilty to 14 sexual offences over 20 years involving numerous former students who ranged in age from 10 to 18. Our education system was perceived as failing to protect students. This prompted a judicial review by Justice Sydney Robins. Justice Robins subsequently issued his report, *Protecting Our Students – A Review to Identify and Prevent Sexual Misconduct in Ontario Schools*. Here is some of what he had to say:

"The problem has been created by a small but significant number of teachers. The vast majority of teachers have earned the trust bestowed upon them by students and the community. Teaching is, after all, the noblest of professions. Teachers provide our children with the tools to learn and grow. Teachers who abuse also teach our children. But those lessons – of loss of safety and misplaced trust – are painful ones. Ones they should never have been taught."

The Robins' Report made over 100 recommendations aimed at all the education stakeholders. In response, the Ontario College of Teachers is taking steps to revise the Act and Regulation 437/97, which concerns professional misconduct.

PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

Teachers need to turn their minds to the implications of such revisions, because the notion of professional misconduct is much more far-reaching than criminal acts against children.

The term "Professional Boundaries" is not easily defined. When teachers were interviewed and asked to describe their understanding of such a term,

we learned that it means different things to different people.

But there were some overarching common threads:

- violation of the position of trust;
- abuse of power in a teacher's relationship with a child;
- teachers using their relationship to meet their own needs instead of the needs of their students.

CRIMINAL ALLEGATIONS

Any allegation of inappropriate contact, whether physical or sexual, may lead to a criminal charge against a member.

Any member who hears of any kind of allegation against them should contact provincial office immediately. There is no such thing as a "minor" concern around this issue.

Members are entitled to legal support when an allegation arises directly from the performance of their professional duties.

Do not make statements to, or attend interviews with, anyone (including school board officials, CAS workers, or police) before seeking advice from ETFO.

You don't have to be a convicted criminal to lose your job.

COMPLAINTS TO THE COLLEGE OF TEACHERS

Any act of professional misconduct can lead to disciplinary measures being taken by the College of Teachers (OCT). The most serious consequence of a finding of professional misconduct by the OCT's Disciplinary Committee is the revoking of the member's teaching certificate, which of course translates to the loss of a teaching career.

Teachers who receive notification by the OCT that a complaint has been filed against them should listen but not respond. Provincial Office should be contacted immediately for support and advice.

ETFO will provide legal support where necessary and appropriate.

The onus is on you ...

What makes the issue of professional boundaries an important and dangerous one for teachers is the fact that teachers are responsible for recognizing in themselves whether they are in danger of crossing boundaries and, if they are, subsequently addressing this issue.

Further, teachers have a responsibility to address this issue when they see that a colleague may be crossing boundaries. Administrators and colleagues need to recognize danger signals in other teachers' actions and intervene. In serious situations, reporting suspicion of child abuse may be required.

What places you at the highest risk?

- Teachers insufficiently trained in their roles can become too personally involved with students. This can lead to actual or alleged sexual misconduct.
- Ignorance of the law is no excuse! Teachers need to be informed about legal liability issues and the standards of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Unacceptable behaviour

In general, activities which take a teacher beyond the expectations of the employer could easily qualify as boundary violations. These include:

- Becoming too personally involved with students – as friend, confidant or surrogate parent.
- Seeing students in private or non-school settings.
- Writing or exchanging notes, letters or e-mails.
- Serving as a confidant with regard to a student's decision about his or her personal issues.
- Giving gifts or money to students.
- Inviting students to one's home or cottage.
- Allowing students to stay overnight in one's home or cottage.
- Driving individual students to or from school.
- Giving one student undue attention.
- Being alone with a student except in an emergency.
- Discussing your personal problems with students.
- Disclosing personal information about a student to a third party.
- Initiating physical contact.

Acceptable behaviour

- Understanding that personal attention is important for every student and finding ways to make that clear.
- Listening attentively to all your students.
- Taking part in board-sponsored activities, such as field trips.
- Spending extra time assisting students in a group.
- Maintaining regular contact with parents on a professional basis.
- Congratulating students with a hand-shake or a note of congratulations.

PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES

The best way to protect yourself is to follow that old adage "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Teachers must be ever vigilant and avoid compromising situations.

Ask whether you protect yourself by:

- Learning about the law and your liability as a teacher.
- Teaching with your classroom door open.
- Having another adult present when attending to the personal needs of special-needs students.

- Praising students without touching them.
- Reporting any reasonable suspicion of child abuse to proper authorities.
- Clarifying procedures with your principal regarding potentially threatening situations, such as disciplinary measures, communications with home and emergencies.
- Getting parents' and principals' approval for all activities off school property.
- Letting students know when they are overstepping your personal boundaries.
- Seeking advice from colleagues or other professionals if unsure of the appropriateness of your actions or plans.

Remember ... a caring professional relationship always helps a student to learn. But this relationship has boundaries of time, place, purpose and activity.

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS SERVICES

ETFO's experience in advising and assisting teachers over the years has made us realize that almost any teacher can fall victim to a lack of understanding of professional boundaries. This can result in serious mistakes by teachers – career threatening ones – in their relationships with students.

Even an unfounded allegation of professional misconduct is permanently damaging to a teacher, to his or her family and to the profession.

Assistance is available at ETFO. Call 1-888-838-3836 or 416-962-3836 and speak to PRS staff. This is a confidential service. Emergency legal assistance is available 24 hours a day for members who are contacted by police and are facing work-related criminal charges.

Diane Balanyk-McNeil for ETFO's Professional Relations Services

The School That Equity Built

By Judy Kwasnica, Jan Moxey and Annemarie Shrouder



The search for equity in our schools is a complex task that involves every aspect of a child's daily experience. "The School That Equity Built" began as a gender-based equity initiative with a focus on gender-related violence. But as we began our discussion, it became clear that no aspect of equity can be approached in isolation. Equity emerged as a multi-faceted concept, its fabric a pattern woven with many threads, all of which contribute to a child's life-long sense of self-worth and identity.



Students are not just dealing with their gender. There are many other factors that influence who they are, how they relate to the world, and the experiences they bring to school. Our perception of self and our interactions with others are influenced by gender, cultural background, physical or mental challenge, racial identity, socio-economic class, age, religion, sexual orientation and ability. The interplay of these factors in thousands of interchanges every day is what makes the search for a truly equitable environment so challenging.

Exploring gender equity led us to discussions about knowing each other, having a voice and collaborative problem solving. A school built on equity demands practices that respect, value and ensure the safety of all staff and students. A school built around equity and inclusiveness becomes a community where students feel their voices and experiences are valued.

In such a complex quest there is always more we can do, more we have to learn and ways we can improve. In the end there is nothing more valuable that we can do for our students. Being valued, being respected, being safe and having a voice are truly basic to every child's education.

It is our hope that every child can walk into school and feel accepted, respected and included – open to learning. A school built around equity offers that opportunity to all children, regardless of their circumstances.

An Equitable Teacher...

...guides

- Uses inclusive, non-discriminatory language. A teacher's example is a powerful one and can change the way others think.
- Encourages students to use inclusive language in their speech and writing.
- Discusses the concept of interdependence and how all living things share this planet.
- Allows all students to take turns at helping, such as being playground equipment monitor, plant caretaker, overhead projector operator and messenger.
- Does not allow insulting gestures.
- Assists the children in developing a plan of action that identifies ways prejudices should be eliminated.
- Listens to the children and respects them as equal human beings.
- Conveys to students that attitudes, feeling, desires, strong emotions and various reactions are neither necessarily female nor male, but are human responses.
- Dismisses children and groups of children for discovery learning by several methods. Seating arrangement, house league group, birthday month, sock colour, alphabetical order all provide ways to avoid grouping by gender.

...supports

- Makes it a firm rule that no aspect of a child's identity, such as gender, race, ethnicity, ability, religion, age, socio-economic class, dress or sexual orientation is ever a reason for privilege, exclusion or teasing.

- Comforts and supports the person who is the target of the discrimination.
- Discusses with the class how it feels to be included or excluded.
- Develops pride in students but not superiority.
- Confronts statements made by students outside the classroom and by other teachers that are offensive or that stereotype females or males.
- Interacts with all students and calls on those who are reluctant to volunteer answers or opinions.
- Compliments both boys and girls on their effort and their achievement.

...problem solves

- Confronts troublesome issues and determines the reasons for the conflict rather than overlooking or covering them up.
- Teaches children to trust their ability to solve problems.
- Allows talking time so that the students can discuss their fears and hopes. This will foster a better understanding of one another.
- Provides opportunities for active listening, assertive speaking and critical thinking.
- Holds a class meeting once a week to assess the successes of the week.

...motivates

- Enables the children to become comfortable with physical differences.
- Encourages children to respect and care for their bodies and not to hurt or harm others.
- Gives all students opportunities to be leaders.

- Insists that all children take equal responsibility in carrying out the necessary jobs for the classroom.
- Rotates students through "Student of the Day or Week." Each person is special and gets a chance to do all the extra jobs that occur during the day or week. This eliminates favouritism.
- Encourages group work, co-operative learning, mixed groups, peer discovery activities, independent work and buddy reading. This will build confidence and reduce the fear of taking risks.
- Allows children the freedom to express their feelings.

...instructs

- Helps children become aware of our shared physical characteristics and humanity.
- Teaches that to be male includes being fearful, compassionate, gentle and vulnerable.
- Teaches that being female includes being intelligent, courageous and successful.
- Identifies the similarities among people, even though they have differences.
- Teaches that differences are good, while oppressive ideas and behaviour are not. Together we are better and stronger.
- Uses the same tone of voice and language with all students, ensuring that there is no difference because of gender, race, ability, etc.

NAMES CAN HURT ME –

A CLASSROOM Lesson FOR GRADE TWO

MATERIALS

- 1 Chart paper and markers.
- 2 The two song sheets included on the following pages: “If You’re Angry” and “Give a Compliment.”

CURRICULUM EXPECTATION

Describe the types of verbal abuse and physical violence, such as name calling, kicking and hitting. (Health: Personal Safety and Injury Prevention).

EQUITY BUILDING EXPECTATION

The students will be able to describe the different types of verbal abuse, and how to deal with them.

LESSON PLAN FOR THE TEACHER

- Put these two headings on chart paper: Helpful Words. Harmful Words.
- Ask the class to recall a time when someone used words to help or harm them.
- Have the students categorize the examples under the correct heading.
- Explain to students that harmful words may be orders, teasing, ultimatums, racist remarks, sexist comments, name calling or put-downs.
- Ask the students how they feel when someone uses words to harm or hurt them.
- Discuss phrases like: “Names will never hurt me.” “That didn’t hurt.” Or “I don’t care.”
- Discuss how to use problem solving when confronted with harmful words. Children will learn to state what behaviour they don’t like, ask the person to stop, tell a grown-up, stay near other people, etc.
- Explain to the class that helpful words may be an apology, praise, greeting, encouragement, congratulations, dialogue or a compliment.
- Encourage students to help each

other make a conscious effort to use helpful, rather than hurtful words.

- Distribute the two songs included with this unit, or show them on an overhead transparency.
- Lead the students in singing the songs together and make up new verses.

FOLLOW-UP AND EXTENSION

Additional curriculum expectations are involved depending on which ideas you choose.

- Students keep track and record how often helpful or harmful words are used on a TV show.
- Use this tally to share the results with the class and then make suggestions for improving.
- Each child’s name is written on a heart-shaped paper. As acts of kindness are performed, the person who sees the good action gives a star or sticker.
- Read *Being Bullied* by Kate Pretty or *Franklin Is Bossy* by Paulette Bourgeois to the class.
- Have a “Positive Day” when each student says at least one positive thing to a minimum of five people. At least two of the people should be students they usually do not play with or someone who has teased them before.
- Activities on verbal abuse may be found in resources such as *Second Step* by the Committee for Children and *Working it Out: Tools for Everyday Peacemakers* by Lions Quest.



ASSESSMENT

Students can evaluate themselves with the Group Work Self Evaluation Checklist or the teacher or a student helper could keep a count of how often helpful and harmful words are heard in the classroom, at lunch, at recess, in the halls, in the washroom, etc.

ADAPTING TO OTHER GRADES

This grade 2 lesson, *Names Can Hurt Me*, can be adapted to grades 1, 3 and 4. Teachers with combined grade expectations and diverse student populations will also find this adaptation useful.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION: HEALTHY LIVING

Grade 1: Describe exploitative behaviour, such as abusive behaviour, bullying, inappropriate touching and the feelings associated with them.

Grade 3: Identify examples of real and fictional violence, such as schoolyard fights, cartoons, movies.

Grade 4: Apply decision-making and problem-solving skills in addressing threats to personal safety from abuse or physical fighting. Apply the same to injury prevention with topics such as bicycle safety, road safety.

All grades benefit from an emphasis on preventing name calling and bullying. The amount of time and detail will be more sophisticated for grade 4, but grade 1 students are capable of understanding how names can hurt.

Work Group Self-Evaluation Checklist

How did your group work?

What was the activity?

Group members' names

BEHAVIOUR	YES	NO	SOMETIMES
We listened			
We took turns			
We used quiet voices			
We gave everyone a chance to talk			
We did not use put-downs			
We encouraged each other			
We asked for help when needed			
We used time wisely			



If You're Angry

Sung to tune of
"If You're Happy and You Know It"

*If you're angry and you know it,
Count to ten, 1, 2, 3 ...*

*If you're angry and you know it,
Count to ten, 1, 2, 3 ...*

*If you're angry and you know it,
And you really want to control it,
If you're angry and you know it,
Count to ten, 1, 2, 3.*

*If you're upset and you know it,
Call a friend, Hello!*

*If you're upset and you know it,
Call a friend, Hello!*

*If you're upset and you know it,
And you really want to control it,
If you're upset and you know it,
Call a friend, Hello!*

*If you're furious and you know it,
Hug a pillow, M-m-m!*

*If you're furious and you know it,
Hug a pillow, M-m-m!*

*If you're furious and you know it,
And you really want to control it,
If you're furious and you know it,
Hug a pillow, M-m-m!*

*If you're cranky and you know it,
Walk away, Goodbye!*

*If you're cranky and you know it,
Walk away, Goodbye!*

*If you're cranky and you know it,
And you really want to control it,
If you're cranky and you know it,
Walk away, Goodbye!*

If you're _____ and you know it,

_____ and you know it,

*If you're _____ and you know it,
And you really want to control it,
If you're _____ and you know it,*

Give a Compliment

Sung to the tune of
"Frère Jacques"

*Give a compliment,
Give a compliment,*

*To your friend,
To your friend,*

*Say something positive,
Say something positive,
Brighten the day,
Brighten the day.*

*When you get a compliment,
When you get a compliment,*

*From a friend,
From a friend,*

*Say thanks sincerely,
Say thanks sincerely,
That's the way,
That's the way.*

*I like your T-shirt,
I like your T-shirt,*

*And your jeans,
And your jeans,*

*Thank you very much,
Thank you very much,
They are new,
I like them too!*

This unit is adapted from *The School That Equity Built*, a 112-page publication prepared for ETFO by Judy Kwasnica, Jan Moxey and Annemarie Shrouder. Published in 2000, it includes a 14-lesson "Integrated Discoveries" unit, a glossary of terms and annotated lists of references and resources. While the unit is aimed primarily at grade 2, directions are given for adaptations to grades 1, 3 and 4. *The School That Equity Built* is available from ETFO's ShopETFO for \$15, plus taxes, shipping and handling. ShopETFO on line: www.etfo.on.ca.

Judy Kwasnica teaches early literacy in Thames Valley. Annemarie Shrouder teaches grade 5 in Peel. Jan Moxey is an Executive Assistant in ETFO's Professional Development Service Area.

ETFO thanks the principals, staff and students at Clarksdale Public School, Halton, and Dunrankin Public School, Peel, for their assistance in the photography for this resource.

Lesbian and Gay Pride Week *in an* Elementary Classroom

*By John J. Guiney, with students Crystal Bonnicks,
Suzanne Millington, Amar Mohla, Rajat Mohla,
and Ashley Routledge*

Throughout my career as an elementary school teacher, during which I have taught students from grades 4 through 8, my philosophy and practice have been to include students as much as possible in the planning and the delivery of programs. I have found that when students are given the opportunity, they eagerly and creatively take responsibility for learning.

One approach I have used to create a more inclusive learning environment has been to set up class committees and allow the students to choose the committees on which they wish to serve. The committees have specific purposes and a specified lifespan. Once the goals of a committee have been reached, the members are thanked for their work and the committee is disbanded. Everyone gets involved in committees throughout the year. As committees plan, prepare, and present, they keep in mind their role of service to others.

I believe that this practice responds to the statement by the Royal Commission on Learning (1994) that "... schools should help prepare students to become responsible citizens."

Another belief that has guided my practice is that students need to see their own lives, and the diversity of Canadian society, reflected positively in the curriculum. The Violence-Free Schools Policy (1994) states that the "school environment must be welcoming to everyone learning and

working in it" and that the "curriculum must be free of bias and must reflect the diverse groups that compose our society." When students see themselves as valued and celebrated members of the class, their self-esteem, as well as their achievement, increases. Further, when students learn to value and celebrate others who may have had different experiences from their own, a respectful and safe learning environment is created. Students are remarkably resourceful and willing partners in bringing about such an environment.

The Ontario Health and Physical Education curriculum states that "strategies for encouraging ... awareness and mutual respect among students include ... creating a class atmosphere that helps students develop consideration for, understanding of, and respect for each other." While specifically addressed to Health and Physical Education in coeducational classes, this is sound advice when teaching any subject to any class.

Throughout the 1999-2000 school year, my grade 6 class at Westvelts Corners Public School, Peel, sought to have an inclusive curriculum in an inclusive classroom where awareness and mutual respect were present. Weekly class meetings and specific class committees were

part of the structure we used to bring this about. We began the year by studying Martha Black, her life in the Yukon and her role in Canada's history. We studied some of the historical views of women. We also discussed how and why those views have changed, and we identified more changes that were needed.

When the Terry Fox Run, the AIDS Walk, and the Run for the Cure were happening, we talked about, and some wrote about, how living with illness changes our lives and the lives of those around us. Some students had already experienced the death of a friend or close relative. An opportunity to talk or write about those experiences was educational for all.

As the winter holidays approached, we prepared and presented a major study of winter celebrations. The focus was on the diverse religious, spiritual and cultural communities that are a part of Canada. Chinese New Year, Christmas, Diwali, Hannukah, Kwanzaa, Ramada and Eid, and Solstice were researched and presented by small groups. Our teacher-librarian, Mrs. Moe Asquith, was involved, and displays were set up in the library. Classes came to view the displays, as well as to hear the presenters. Later in the year, we studied Black History Month, International Women's Day and Aboriginal Day.

Lesbian and Gay Pride Week in Toronto is celebrated at the end of June. Other Canadian communities may celebrate it any time between late May and late August. In early June, a committee of student volunteers began preparing a unit on Lesbian and Gay Pride Week. Since lesbian and gay realities remain virtually invisible and silenced in elementary schools, it is not surprising that our unit received some interest beyond our classroom that our previous equity and diversity work had not. That interest included an interview I had with Andy Barrie on CBC's Metro Morning. My students, however, while aware that this scene may not be playing itself out in every grade 6 classroom across the province, saw the unit as part of their learning. The committee prepared and delivered excellent educational activities. The committee members and I have since been asked to write about the experience, identifying curricular connections. This article is a result of that request.

What follows is an account of the unit in the students' voices. I have added curricular connections throughout. Where overall or specific expectations have been stated, they have been limited to the grade 6 program since that is the program we used, but the committee and I invite students and teachers in other grades to plan their own unit on Lesbian and Gay Pride Week, so that lesbian and gay life will be represented more in our schools because "every young person has the right to feel at home in the public schools in Ontario" and because "... the public school system's mandate is to serve all its students." (Royal Commission on Learning, 1994).

"We are now grade 7 students. Last year, in grade 6, we volunteered to be on a committee for Lesbian and Gay Pride Week. We put together three days of fun and informative games, book readings, activities and drama. The members of the committee, with the guidance of our teacher, Mr. John Guiney, planned and presented the unit by working co-operatively."

The Ontario Language curriculum, 1997, requires that students "contribute and work constructively in groups" and that they "use constructive strategies in small-group discussions."

"Our committee did a skit based on a book called Gloria Goes to Gay Pride. The story is about a little girl, named Gloria, who goes to the Gay Pride Parade with her two moms, Grace and Rose. Gloria has lots of fun. In the play that we did, we continued the story after they came back from the parade. Gloria asked a lot of questions, like 'What does the rainbow flag and the pink triangle mean?' Our classmates found the play interesting. We put in some serious points, but we mainly had fun so that the class would be entertained."

The Ontario Drama and Dance curriculum, 1998, requires that students “interpret and communicate the meaning of ... material drawn from a range of sources and cultures.” and “create, rehearse, and present drama and dance works to communicate the meaning of poems, stories, paintings, myths, and other source materials drawn from a wide range of cultures.” The Ontario Language curriculum, 1997, requires that students “produce pieces of writing using a variety of forms, techniques, and resources ... appropriate to the form and purpose.”

“For our art activity, we made rainbow flags from popsicle sticks, manila tag and paint. The colours of the paint we used were red, orange, yellow, green, blue and purple. Each of the colours has a meaning. They are red, light; orange, healing; yellow, sun; green, serenity; blue, art; and purple, spirit. Our classmates painted six popsicle sticks, one for each colour. They glued the popsicle sticks on the manila tag. We did this activity on the first day, after the skit. Some people made extra flags to give to friends or family as gifts. When we asked him what the flag meant, our teacher said that it represented the diversity of the gay and lesbian community.”

The Ontario Arts curriculum, 1998, requires that students “produce two- and three-dimensional works of art that communicate a range of ideas (thoughts, feelings, experiences) for specific purposes, using a variety of familiar art tools, materials, and techniques” and that they “identify the function of visual arts in their community.”

“For one of our activities, we decided that we wanted a visitor to come and talk to our class. We went to Mr. Guiney and asked him if we could have a visitor who was gay or lesbian to come and talk to our class about what Lesbian and Gay Pride Week means to them. Mr. Guiney suggested that we invite Ms. Bryonie Baxter, another teacher in Peel, and her partner, because

they just had a baby and this year Lesbian and Gay Pride Week might have a special meaning for them. We were happy and we e-mailed Ms. Baxter. She accepted, and a week later came to our class with her partner, Ms. Sandy Jeffery, and their son, Merlyn Baxter-Jeffery. Ms. Baxter and her partner told us a lot of information. They talked about Stonewall, the Rainbow Flag and the Pink Triangle. She also said that she and her partner can't get married and how she felt about that. When someone in the class said some people feel that it's against the Bible for people to be gay, Ms. Baxter said that all religions teach us to respect other people. We learned a lot from the presentation. We presented our skit to Ms. Baxter and her family and we gave them a rainbow flag to thank them for coming to our class.”

The Ontario Language curriculum, 1997, requires that students, “ask and answer questions to obtain and clarify information.”

“On the third day, we played a game that was based on the information we got from the book we had read, Ms. Baxter's visit with her family, and also from the Internet. We divided the class into three groups; then we asked one person at a time from each group to pick a question out of the bag. If the group got the question right, they would get a point. At the end of the game, we read a book, Uncle What-Is-It Is Coming To Visit!!. The book is about two little kids, named Tiffany and Igor, who find out that their uncle who is coming to visit is gay, but they don't know what gay means, so they ask some people and they hear a lot of stereotypes of gay people. They aren't sure what to expect, but when their uncle does show up ... The story is in a picture book, but it is aimed at people our age.”

The Ontario Language curriculum, 1997, requires that students “read aloud, showing understanding of the material and awareness of the audience.” It also expects that students “identify a writer’s perspective or a character’s motivation.” In the opening section “The Importance of Language”, the Ontario Curriculum, 1997, states that when students learn to use language in the elementary grades, they do more than master the basic skills. They learn to express feelings and opinions, and, as they mature, to support their opinions with sound arguments and research.

I leave it to the student committee members to conclude by expressing their feelings and opinions following their work on the unit and this article. My feeling is that I am very proud of them.

“ Everyone in the world is different and it’s not right to stereotype others because of the group they’re in. I felt good about myself when I joined this committee. Being on this committee and spending a year with Mr. Guiney changed me in a way. I want to thank Mr. Guiney for helping me understand not just gay and lesbian people, but all the different people of the world.” – *Crystal*

“ Now I know it’s not about what you are, but who you are. I have a relative who is gay. After being on this committee, I can understand her better.” – *Suzanne*

“ I think that this was a great opportunity to learn about Lesbian and Gay Pride Week. I learned that Stonewall was a gay and lesbian bar. I also learned that gay and lesbian people were persecuted by the Nazis.” – *Amar*

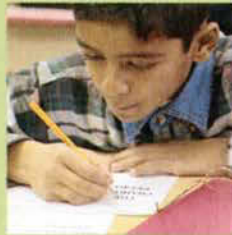
“ You shouldn’t judge someone, treat them differently, or make fun of them because they’re gay or lesbian. I didn’t know that gay and lesbian people can’t get married in Canada.” – *Rajat*

“ I think that this is a good thing to do with your class because it teaches other people to accept gay and lesbian people because they are human, too. I really enjoyed doing all these fun activities.” – *Ashley*

John Guiney is a teacher with the Peel District School Board. Members who are considering integrating this topic into their program should consult with their principal.

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Tips for Teachers

Meeting the Needs of Gifted Learners in the Regular Classroom

By Cathy Telfer

Many characteristics of bright students, and many of the skills to be developed are also characteristics and skills of teachers who are most suited to guide gifted learners.

Be alert to those students who don't display "schoolhouse giftedness" but who have potential, who demonstrate "creative/productive behaviour" in other settings and who, as a result, require differentiated learning experiences beyond what is expected in a specific grade or curriculum.

These tips are offered, not with a focus on teaching, but with a focus on learning and its relationship with teaching.

Enrichment is not elitist: enrichment is available to all

- Provide opportunities for students to select from a variety of assignments.
- Guide students to appropriate tasks from the choices offered.
- Establish criteria with students before they begin.
- Consider learning styles and multiple intelligences when designing programs.

Enrichment is not for everyone: enrichment is individualized

- If all students can complete tasks with equal ease and quality, the tasks probably will not challenge many gifted learners.
- Offer students the option to participate, and provide choices within assignments.
- Consider independent study or personal programs.

Enrichment is not consumption of content:
enrichment is creation of concepts

- Consider how students relate what is learned to previous information and experience.
- Consider a KWL chart – i.e.:
K = What I know;
W = What I want to learn;
L = What I learned.

Enrichment is not more of the same:
enrichment is differentiated
to extend learning – not just
“different” but differentiated
as suited to talents, interests
and abilities

- If assignments completed quickly are followed with work of similar nature (or even the same work with different numbers or examples), students quickly learn to hold back or hide completed work until others have finished, or to settle for mediocre quality.
- Seek student input re interests, possibilities.
- Students may complete an interest inventory.

Enrichment does not penalize bright students:
enrichment stimulates, encourages
and challenges bright students

- Few students will work harder for less reward; if the work is more challenging but their marks drop, students may settle for easier work of questionable value.
- Offer anecdotal or reflective comments in place of marks for creative work and selected products.
- Consider a learning contract.
- Investigate “negotiated learning.”

Enrichment is not additional work or work from
the next grade: enrichment is an
integral part of the program

- Although acceleration is one form of challenge for gifted learners, it is not the only solution, nor is it appropriate for all students.
- Consider curriculum compacting, with time saved used for enrichment.
- Planning should account for individual learning styles and needs.

Enrichment is not separate entity learning:
enrichment is interrelationships

- Gifted learners have an advanced ability to see connections between concepts and also connections to the ideas of others.
- Teach the use of graphic organizers, such as webbing or mind maps.
- Offer opportunities for students to investigate unique solutions or “off-the-wall” connections.

Enrichment is not following prescribed
curriculum: enrichment is following
off-shoots of the curriculum

- Provide or be open to extensions from the curriculum content.
- Allow students to investigate a topic in greater depth or breadth.
- Find ways to integrate skills and expectations from more than one subject area.

Enrichment is not totally different from the
curriculum: enrichment is related
to concepts and themes within
the curriculum

- Consider big understandings, i.e., those concepts that are universal and transferable and have a broad base of understanding.

Enrichment is not reproductive thinking:
enrichment is productive thinking

- Stress creative responses where appropriate.
- Encourage students to brainstorm, to think of lots of different ideas, to “freewheel,” to “piggyback” on the ideas of others and to suspend judgement during the brainstorming.
- Use the productive-thinking model in which students develop ideas with fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration.

Enrichment is not acceptance of data collected:
enrichment is problem seeking and solving

- Teach research skills with a framework such as the basic inquiry model.
- As students mature, provide different research frameworks of increasing complexity.
- Teach students to use primary sources and a variety of media to obtain information.
- Help students to combine and balance creative thinking with critical thinking.
- Talk to students about how they think – i.e. metacognitive styles or “thinking about thinking”.
- Learn more about a framework for creative problem solving.

Enrichment does not ask questions to which all students have the same answers:
enrichment asks open-ended questions leading to creative and divergent thinking

- Begin questions with:
What would happen if ...?
In what ways might we ...?
Suppose
- Provide opportunities for students to use analogies and metaphors.
- Assist students, not just with answering questions, but also with how to ask effective questions.

Enrichment is not booklets tied with string:
enrichment is presenting information in many different ways to appropriate audiences

- Expect students to go beyond completing an assignment and handing it in for the teacher to mark.
- Other students are enriched when new and unique learning is shared.
- An audience (classmates, other students, parents, community) encourages students to develop and share.
- Some students may need help in bringing investigations to a conclusion or keeping to a schedule.

Enrichment is not a series of projects,
enrichment is a variety of products

- Encourage a variety of media and forms, e.g.: Audio: chalk-talk or debate.
Visual: journals, logs, model or illustration.
Multi-media: video or computer presentation.

Enrichment is not a variety of activities:
enrichment is planned, purposeful engagement in learning

- Know what you want students to know and plan how to get there.
- Consider how you will know they have fulfilled the expectations by setting criteria for a culminating activity.
- Explain assessment criteria with students before they begin work.
- Balance individual, small-group and whole-class instruction.
- Offer opportunities for heterogeneous groupings for gifted learners to work with age and social peers as well as homogeneous groupings to provide time for gifted learners to work with intellectual peers.
- Provide opportunities for students to demonstrate “stick-to-it-iveness” or intense concentration when they have a passion for a topic or area of study.



Enrichment is not learning things as they are:
**enrichment is considering things
as they should and could be**

- Value the dreamer with sometimes far-fetched ideas.
- Allow a free-flow of ideas for individuals and small groups.
- Encourage students to think of the future.
- Give students a variety of fiction – make-believe and fantasy stories and poetry.

Enrichment is not packaged: **enrichment is responsive to needs and situations**

- No kit or program will do all that you want it to, even if “enrichment” is stamped on the cover.
- Be alert to possibilities.
- Seek ideas from parents and community members as well as from students.
- Be a risk-taker as well as valuing risk-taking in students.

Enrichment is not courses of study:
enrichment is strategies

Focus on process and learning-to-learn skills, such as:
research
decision making
brainstorming
social skills

Enrichment is not always planned:
**enrichment is the outcome of
instruction and interest**

- Talk to students about their responsibility for their own learning and the importance of setting goals.
- Up-date the interest inventory as students mature and their interests change.
- Consider the teacher’s role as facilitator and guide.

Enrichment is not the responsibility only of the teacher: **enrichment is a shared responsibility between teacher, school, home, community**

- Establish opportunities and time for enrichment.
- Offer a wide variety of experiences, topics and themes.
- Provide opportunities for students to share exemplary products with community members.
- Encourage mentoring – to match students with adults with expertise and interest in an area beyond the curriculum.
- Include the community by sharing your philosophy, plans and dreams for gifted learners in the classroom.

Cathy Telfer is a Supervisor of Special Education with the Lambton-Kent District School Board.

As a joint project of the Ontario Ministry of Education and Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, ENO/REO's primary goal is enhancing school-based educator professionalism through electronic networking.

Exclusive to Ontario's Education Community – www.enoreo.on.ca

By Mary Storey

As elementary educators in Ontario, we can participate in an outstanding free Internet service. Most teachers now have access to computers at school or home or both, and Internet use is becoming commonplace. Joining the Education Network of Ontario, at no cost, gives you:

- full access to the Internet and all websites;
- an e-mail address;
- access to many professional on-line conferences;
- opportunities to have your students involved in several web projects based on the Ontario Curriculum.

The Educational Network of Ontario/Réseau éducatif de l'Ontario (ENO/REO) is an independent, non-profit corporation. As a joint project of the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, its primary goal is to enhance school-based educator professionalism through electronic networking. ENO/REO brings this exceptional resource to the educational community of Ontario: currently the 80,000 educators, administrators and support staff who constitute the ENO/REO on-line community. ENO/REO has also developed partnerships with organizations such as the Ontario Teachers' Federation, TVO, Statistics Canada and Canada's School Net to bring professional and educational opportunities to its members. Available in French and English, it does not depend on where you live or work in the province as toll-free telephone numbers are available everywhere.

ENO/REO is much easier to use and more reliable than it has been in the past. Several teachers, including me, have switched back to its use after finding many aspects of its operation have been improved. Instant professional development and e-mail with colleagues are just two of the many advantages.

On the ENO website there are many discussion groups such as:

- Assessment, evaluation and reporting conferences;
- Curriculum conferences;
- E-STAT Support Conference – ENO Statistics Canada Project;
- Leadership in schools, departments and working groups;
- Federation, organizational and regional conferences; and
- Informal talk and recreation.

These working conferences are available for members who wish to read or to participate in the relevant, on-going discussions. Educators can work co-operatively with colleagues in planning, implementing and evaluating curriculum and discussing best practices.

Continued **page 33**

Sound Bytes

That thud you hear is the sound of ETFO Local negotiators running into brick walls. The footsteps are the sound of teachers hitting the bricks. This round of negotiations has been nothing if not painful.

As school boards continue to dig in on issues great and small, they have increasingly turned to some of the more dramatic legal instruments at their disposal, such as lockouts and final offer votes.

Final-offer votes under the *Labour Relations Act* enable an employer to by-pass a union and put its latest bargaining position to a vote of the members (in the three such votes in ETFO's history, the membership rejected the employer's offer by 83.7%, 98.2% and 96.3%).

Nevertheless, with much effort, collective agreements for ETFO teacher members are being achieved across the province, though negotiations for occasional teachers are moving much more slowly. The 260 teachers of Keewatin-Patricia braved a two-day strike, an eight-day lockout, a final-offer vote and Dryden's unique brand of January, but ended up with a collective agreement they can be proud of. ETFO's largest Local has also recently reached an agreement. It took a lengthy administrative work-to-rule and the solidarity of 11,000 members, but Toronto teachers finally

Salary Rates as of August 31, 2001*

Board	A3 Minimum	Rank	A4 Maximum	Rank
Algoma	\$ 35,477	14	\$ 67,900	15
Avon Maitland	35,298	15	68,123	12
Durham	35,998	13	66,816	19
Grand Erie	38,218	3	68,281	11
Greater Essex	36,888	12	68,716	4
Halton	37,260	9	67,466	18
Hastings & Prince Edward	37,312	8	68,346	10
Keewatin-Patricia	40,319	2	67,863	16
Lakehead	37,871	4	68,660	5
Limestone	37,424	7	68,460	8
Niagara	37,099	11	68,109	13
Peel	37,611	6	69,137	3
Renfrew	34,779	19	68,101	14
Superior-Greenstone	40,471	1	70,660	1
Thames Valley	35,122	17	67,478	17
Trillium Lakelands	34,906	18	68,579	6
Upper Canada	37,788	5	68,405	9
Waterloo	35,219	16	68,576	7
York Region	37,134	10	70,008	2

*For agreements ratified at time of writing

have a collective agreement which enhances salary, working conditions and rights.

Compensation has been, for obvious reasons which the economists so neatly refer to as "pent-up wage demand," critical for many teacher bargaining units this year. Teachers, after all, have experienced a collective pay cut over the last eight years – the combined effect of all-but-frozen wages and the erosion caused by inflation.

Yet the real story of this round of bargaining may well turn out to be those quality-of-working-life factors that school boards are so persistently reluctant to address and that

teachers are just as persistently determined to improve.

For example, as of mid-February, of the 23 teacher settlements for this school year, 17 contain improvements in the area of preparation time. Five teacher Locals have made gains in their class-size provisions, and five have improved their clausal language with respect to instructional time.

Moreover, new waters continue to be charted. York Region teachers (following a work-to-rule), now have a provision that limits yard and supervision duties to no more than 60 minutes per week. Upper Canada teachers will now be able to receive time

off during a PA day to compensate for parent-teacher interviews held outside the school day.

Extra-curricular activities have also been the subject of much discussion at bargaining tables this year. In fact, 10 Locals have made recent improvements in their collective agreements on this issue, bringing to 20 the number of Locals that have forced their employers to recognize formally the voluntary nature of extra-curricular activities.

In short, workload issues remain high on everyone's list of bargaining priorities and will doubtless continue to do so – even if it means making a little noise.

The chart sets out A3 minimum and A4 maximum salary figures for ratified settlements across the province. Category A3 starting salaries (a typical placement for a new teacher) are low and can vary widely, depending on where one teaches. Given the expense of a university education these days, dramatically rising debt, for new graduates, and the looming teacher shortage, one can only hope that school boards and the provincial government will begin to address entry level salaries – sooner rather than later.

*Christine Brown for ETFO's
Collective Bargaining
Service Area*

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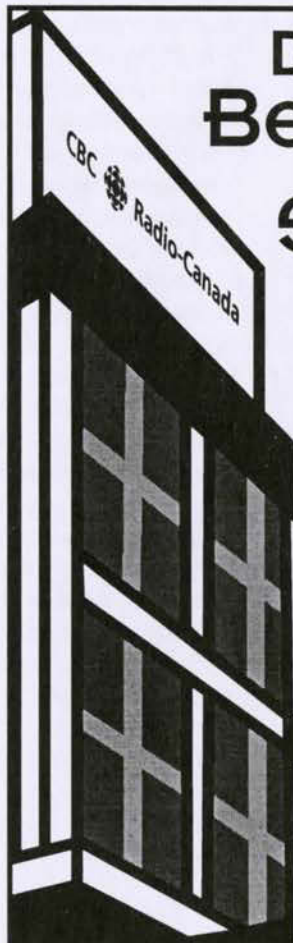


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CTF Report



Marilies Rettig, President of CTF

It is disturbing that so many major network television programs for children and youth depict scenes of extreme violence. Whether it is the World Wrestling Federation (wWF) or animated programs, shows that exhibit violence are directly linked to increased aggression in the children we teach.

As teachers, we see the clear link between violence in the media and the behaviour of children in our schools. Whether on yard duty or supervising a lunch room, teachers have reported incidents of students as young as grade 1 imitating wWF or other violent TV characters in play or, more distressingly, as a means of resolving disputes with other children.

A report released recently by the American Surgeon General reaffirms what teachers have been saying about media violence and children. According to the California Surgeon General, David Satcher, "Media violence, and this is primarily TV, can in fact in the short term increase aggressive behavior. I don't think that is a good thing."

The entertainment industry understands that children are a large part of its audience, but does it realize to what degree these programs are harmful to our children's development?

As teachers, we must heighten the awareness of our colleagues, of parents and of our students of the direct link between violent behaviour in children and violence in the media. Moreover, we must work with parents and students to raise this issue with a greater public in an effort to reduce violent programming.

The Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and the Centrale des syndicats du Québec have jointly initiated a project to highlight the issue of media violence. In the next few months, the two organizations will launch "Youth Vote 2001," a school-based Canadian program designed to heighten awareness in children and youth of violent messages in television programs, commercials, video games and music videos.

For the first time in Canada, primary and secondary students will be asked to vote on the most toxic, as well as the most peaceful television and video programs. The campaign will bring to light the sexist, racist and violent undertones of some programs, as well as those programs which contain messages of peace, tolerance and acceptance, multicultural understanding, gender equality and environmental protection.

When the votes have been cast, CTF and CSQ will develop a proactive strategy to reduce prime time media violence. We hope that the voting process and results will make our children critically aware of the violent and intolerant messages delivered by various forms of media. Moreover, we hope this heightened awareness will translate into different choices in television and video viewing.

Together, teachers, parents and students must continue to pressure our political leaders and others to ensure that producers of violent programs get a strong message – media violence is a threat to the safe and caring atmosphere that every one of us seeks to maintain in Ontario's schools.

Find out more about CTF's programs and services by visiting www.ctf-fce.ca.

Continued from page 29

Teachers can also involve their students in several on-going projects. The opportunity to discuss topics with other students in the province is invaluable. These are some of the current projects:

- **Canadian National Marsville** – shows students how they can play a role in establishing the kind of society they want for the future. Marsville has been designed for students in grades 5 to 8. While the primary educational emphasis of Marsville is math, science and technology, the project uses a cross-curricular, holistic approach that integrates various disciplines. Follow the adventures of Canada's student space explorers as they plan for the first habitation of the planet Mars.
- **Flat Stanley** – an international literacy and communications activity for primary and junior teachers and their students.
- **GrassRoots** – a funding project to assist K to 12 schools in the creation of interactive learning projects on the Internet.
- **Community Project** – students at the middle school level are presented with the challenge of designing and constructing a model Community and Cultural Centre in the community of Enoville. To have their construction companies considered for the project, student teams (engineer, architect, land developer and town planner) must complete a community profile of their local area. This is submitted on line to the "municipality" for approval. Once approval has been gained, students must complete a series of tasks throughout the project, including a public meeting using video-conference technology.
- **Weather Reporters** – students report the weather from various parts of the province and use the data to create predictions, reports and weather stations.
- **Robotic Challenge** – design challenges that make use of the LEGO Robolab and LEGO Control Lab materials are presented.

Interactive web sites and student conference areas provide opportunities for students to showcase their work and receive feedback from mentors.

- **Seeds in Space** – schools receive a package of materials prepared by NASA. Each package contains three separate packets of tomato seeds that were prepared identically and then exposed to different treatments during a nine-day period. Students across the province grow these seeds and compare results on the ENO website.

All of these student projects make learning authentic, exciting, motivating and creative. If you are looking for an innovative way to teach your students, at least one of these projects will suit your needs. All materials, including teachers' instructions, can be found online on the ENO web page.

Instructions for connecting to the ENO web page www.enoreo.on.ca are on the website. If users require further information or assistance when using the site, technical support can be reached (from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) at 1-888-556-2012 or 416-410-0937. Fax 416-640-0245 or email: enohelp@enoreo.on.ca.

As Ontario educators, we are fortunate to have a no-charge Internet service available to us. We have full use of the World Wide Web, can communicate with each other on educational matters and can give ourselves some valuable professional development. See you online!

Mary Storey has just retired after 25 years in elementary classrooms in York Region and 10 years as a computer consultant. She is teaching a course on the Internet with Nipissing University. Mary can be reached at marystor@enoreo.on.ca.



Barbara Sargent, OTFO's OTF Table Officer and Past President of OTF

As I mentioned last Fall, the OTF Board of Governors has approved a list of five priorities for OTF for this year.

- **Rethinking OTF** – a process to review roles, responsibilities and structures of OTF.
- **Pensions** – using our role in the pension partnership to protect and maximize teachers' pensions.
- **College of Teachers** – ensuring that the actions, policies and procedures of the College treat members fairly and equitably.
- **Government Initiatives** – providing the Affiliates with the opportunity for sharing research, information and resources, and the opportunity to discuss their positions on government initiatives openly.
- **Garnering Public Support** – raising awareness about the necessity for a high-quality, well-funded public education system.

I would like to update you on the progress that has been made on each of these priorities so far this year.

Rethinking OTF

Since the annual board meeting in August, the Committee of General Secretaries of OTF has been reviewing several options for moving forward on this issue. In December, the Committee was charged with developing a proposal for the roles and responsibilities of OTF with a report to the January 26, 2001 Executive Meeting. The Executive received a confidential report from the Committee of General Secretaries, which was referred for study to the Affiliates who reported back to the Executive Meeting on February 22-23, 2001.

Pensions

As I write this, the actuaries of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan are completing the valuation of the Plan for January 1, 2001. This valuation is one of the steps in the 1998 agreement with the government that gives OTF the sole discretion over the expenditure of the next \$6.2 billion in gains in the Plan. At the January meeting of the OTF Board of Governors, a proposed list of priorities for the expenditure of the gains was approved. Visit the OTF website at www.otffeo.on.ca for the latest information on the Pension Plan.

College of Teachers

The OTF Workgroup on the Ontario College of Teachers continues to work with the newly elected councillors to the Governing Council of OCT. One of their current issues is a proposal from the College concerning distance education for teachers. Another issue being discussed is the OCT's proposed fee increase.

Government Initiatives

Currently, OTF representatives are involved in Ministry of Education initiatives concerning effective schools, extra-curricular activities and the first phase of the teacher testing program.

Talks are also near conclusion for a third round of Summer Curriculum Institutes funded by the Ministry of Education and coordinated by OTF with the Affiliates.

Garnering Public Support

On Wednesday, January 24, 2001, Collingwood was the site of the most recent community forum. Seventy community leaders joined us there. An Owen Sound second-stage community forum has been rescheduled until later this spring. Other community forums are scheduled for Port Elgin in April and for Thunder Bay.

The community forum website will soon be up and running. You can link to it easily from www.otffeo.on.ca.

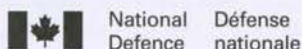
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Canada

Calendar of Events

Teaching Exceptional Children Workshop TORONTO

APRIL 5, 2001, Muscular Dystrophy

APRIL 6, 2001, Spina Bifida

MAY 3 & 4, 2001, Cerebral Palsy
Bloorview MacMillan School

\$90 for one day,
\$180 for two-day series

Contact: Pamela Speed

Tel: 416-424-3831

Fax: 416-425-2981

E-mail: pspeed@bloorview
macmillan.on.ca

APRIL 4, 5, 6 TORONTO

Embracing Educational Change

Educational Staff Development

Council of Ontario (ESDCO)

Toronto Colony Hotel

Contact: Karen, Kim or Janice

Tel: 416-395-9901

Fax: 416-395-4855

E-mail: kflutz@interlog.com

APRIL 6-7, MAY 11-12 TORONTO

Aboriginal and Racial Minority Women Leadership Experience

Elementary Teachers'

Federation of Ontario

Registration deadline:

February 21, 2001

Contacts: Sherry Ramrattan

Smith or Bev Saskoley

Tel: 416-962-3836 or

1-888-838-3836

Fax: 416-642-2424

Website: www.etfo.on.ca

APRIL 19-23 TORONTO

2001 Psychodrama Odyssey

American Society of Group

Psychotherapy And Psychodrama

59th Annual Conference

For more information contact:

ASGPP, New Jersey

Tel: (609) 452-1339

Fax: (609) 936-1659

E-mail: asgpp@ASGPP.org, or

Website: www.ASGPP.org

APRIL 20-21 TORONTO

Financial Management for Women Conference

"Taking Charge of Money Matters"

Elementary Teachers'

Federation of Ontario

Registration deadline:

March 9, 2001

Contact: Jennifer Mitchell

Tel: 416-962-3836 or

1-888-838-3836

Fax: 416-642-2424

E-mail: jmitchell@etfo.org

Website: www.etfo.on.ca

APRIL 23 CANADA

Canada Book Day 2001

The Writers' Trust of Canada

Contact: Heather Wiley

Canada Book Day Coordinator

Tel: 416-504-8222, ext. 241

E-mail: hwiley@writerstrust.com

Canada Book Day materials will

be distributed to schools at the

beginning of March 2001

APRIL 26-28 TORONTO

2001 - Charting Pathways to Learning

Ontario Association of

Supervision & Curricular

Development (Ontario ASCD)

Contact: Mary Nanavati

(conference chair)

Tel: (905) 890-1010, ext. 3087

Fax: (905) 451-3100

E-mail: marynan@idirect.com

Website:

members.home.net/nbenton

MAY 3, 4, & 5 COLLINGWOOD

Curriculum 2001 -

Bridges for the Future

Keynote Speakers: Sue Augustine,

Lindwood Barclay, Skid Crease

Contact: Frank Boddy

Tel: 705-728-1321, ext. 385

Website: www.mariposa.scdsb.on.ca

MAY 10, 11 NORTH YORK

Equity in the Classroom

York University

Plenary Speakers:

Wayson Choy, author

Heather Menzies, writer/producer

Contact: Marlene Richman,

Conference Coordinator

Tel: 416-736-2100, ext. 40204

E-mail: mrichman@yorku.ca

MAY 24-26 TORONTO

Annual Cooperative Learning Conference: Working Together

Sponsored by GLACIE

(Great Lakes Association for

Cooperation in Education)

For further information:

Fax: 416-393-9624

E-mail: TJMcCreight@aol.com

JULY - AUGUST TORONTO

Adult Education in the Arts Program

For information contact:

Susan Brown

The Artists' Garden Cooperative

345 Balliol Street

Toronto, ON

M4S 1E1

Tel: 416-487-0705

AUGUST 19-24 AUSTRALIA

New Ideas in

Mathematics Education

Palm Cove, Tropical North

Queensland

Contact: Dr. Alan Rogerson

Tel: +48-61-6620528

E-mail: arogerson@vsg.edu.au

SEPTEMBER 2001 TORONTO

School Reunion -

Toronto Normal School

Class of 1949-50

354 Victoria Park Avenue, Toronto

Contact: Jack Teggart

Tel: 416-690-5999

E-mail: teggart@window-net.com

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ETFO'S PARTICIPATION IN GAY PRIDE ACTIVITIES!

At the march meeting of the ETFO Executive a motion was passed encouraging and supporting ETFO's participation in Gay Pride activities. As a result, members from across the province are invited to participate in the 2001 Toronto Gay Pride Parade, marching in solidarity under the ETFO flag. All members are welcome! For more information, contact Mary Bricco at ETFO's provincial office – mbricco@etfo.org 416-962-3836 1-888-838-3836

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