

From Armaments to Human Needs

UNESCO declared 2000-2010 the Decade of a Culture of Peace. In honor of this decade, Educating Cities Latin America, the Municipality of Rosario and Scouts of Argentina developed the program *Por que la Paz y el Desarme?- Why Peace and Disarmament?.* The main goal of *Por que la Paz y el Desarme?* is to reduce violence facing youth today by uniting civil society organizations, municipalities, schools, teachers, businesses, and the community to participate in peace education activities. *Por que la Paz y el Desarme?* raises awareness, promotes reflection and encourages action for social change by and for children and youth.

In 1999, during the festive month of December, *Por que la Paz y el Desarme?* launched pre-paid metro cards¹ which bore the program logo and logos of its partners. Metro cards also carried the message, “This season give us the present of non-violent toys,” to encourage adults to buy peaceful toys and games for children. Moreover, posters were hung in shops and schools and fliers and stickers were disseminated all around the city by children, youth and scouts groups.

In 2000, new pre-paid metro cards included the legend, “UNESCO 2000 International Year of Culture of Peace” where six variations of metro cards carried different articles of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights. The combination of all six metro cards completed a puzzle illustrating the program logo. Individuals who created a complete “Peace Puzzle” won a prize. Individuals who created a complete “Peace Puzzle” won a

¹ See Attached “Sample Metro Cards.”

unique prize: "A Day in my Life" with the Argentinian Nobel Peace Prize Adolfo Perez Esquivel, paying a visit to his home and coaching his working day.

While a grand prize provides great incentive, this activity offers a rewarding experience for all involved and it can be applied to various school events. For example, in preparation for an upcoming theatrical performance, talent show, fundraiser, or dance/prom, students should be encouraged (if this is not already common practice) to choose a theme for the event. This lesson suggests ways to create events that raise individual and social consciousness for nonviolence. It can be organized by an existing student organization i.e., student government or by a new Peace Education Chapter in the school.

Source: Adapted from the "Jugarse Por la Paz" Program

International Association of Educating Cities

Educating Cities Latin America / Regional Office

Director Professor Alicia Cabezudo

Buenos Aires 711, 2do. Piso

2000 Rosario, Argentina

Websites: www.edcities.bcn.es / www.rosario.gov.ar

Email: ce_americalat@rosario.gov.ar

Subject: Social Studies, Mathematics, Extracurricular Sports, Drama/ Theater, Fine Arts

Material: Poster board, markers, pencils, crayons, construction paper, and/ or other art supplies.

Duration: A series of sessions over the course of a week or month

Learning Objectives: To collaborate on building a culture of peace in schools by:

- Developing a common goal for common good
- Raising awareness about the causes of violence and social spending
- Making conscious decisions about how we spend our time and money in terms of needs and wants
- Learning to disarm
- Increasing interaction among students and teachers (potentially parents and the community, too) in a meaningful way
- Learning the difference between national security and human security
- Transforming the nature of social events to improve community

Procedure: Inquiry, Reflection, Brainstorming, Collaborative Group Work, Life Skills

Step One: In class (social studies class, for example), ask student the following questions to open dialogue:

- *What are some things that concern you about the community of this school (both its physical environment and the level of friendliness)?*
- *What are some needs associated with these concerns?*
- *What wants do we have to improve our school appearance and culture?*
- *What needs do you have as a student i.e., do you plan to further your education?*

Step Two: Suggested activities for integration after the dialogue include asking students to develop a class or school survey on (1 person per 20-25 students should be responsible to tallying up results).

Step Three: In class (as part of a mathematics assignment, for example), compare figures and create informational pamphlets to share at the event or (as part of an art and/ or drama class, for example), ask students to imagine ways to creatively interpret the views and research that has been conducted in the other classes. Some ideas might include creating tickets, informational brochures and/ or posters, a gallery of photos or drawings, and/ or a “living” interpretation of what has been learned.

Step Four: Ask students how they would like to present the information to the audience or attendees. Some ideas include: Would they provide a question and answer session? Would they sell tickets or a raffle for a prize to help raise funds for the school and/ or a cause?

Step Five: Ask students to reflect on their experience and the responses they received in a group discussion and/ or in a reflection paper or journal.

Connection: See *Messages for Peace* in Strand One on Culture of Peace/ Roots of War.

Sample Metro Cards²

² U.S. Nuclear Weapons Cost Study Project, 1998, Brookings. Consultation on these conversions was provided by Frida Berrigan, Senior Research Associate at the World Policy Institute, New York:

METRO CARD 1: Why Peace and Disarmament?

2001-2010: International Decade of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for World Children, UNESCO

"An F16 Fighter Plane = 9 Schools"

F 16 A/B costs \$14.6 million per copy

(Air Force Fact File)

METRO CARD 2: Why Peace and Disarmament?

2001-2010: International Decade of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for World Children, UNESCO

"One Leopard Tank=36 Homes"

One M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank = \$4.3 million

(Federation of American Scientists Military Analysis Network)

METRO CARD 3: Why Peace and Disarmament?

2001-2010: International Decade of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for World Children, UNESCO

"A Battalion Maneuver of Tanks=20 Kindergartens"

One AH-1W Super Cobra Helicopter = \$10.7 million

(Marine Corps Fact File)

METRO CARD 4: Why Peace and Disarmament?

2001-2010: International Decade of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for World Children, UNESCO

"An Aircraft Carrier = 90,000 Homes"

Nimitz Class Aircraft Carriere = \$4.5 billion each

(Navy Fact File)

www.worldpolicy.org/projects/arms. (The Arms Trade Resource Center was established in 1993 to engage in public education and policy advocacy aimed at promoting restraint in the international arms trade).

The figures above for the cost of military weaponry versus human needs are from 1998 sources. Today's prices would be different, but the point we make about relative values remains the same.