3-1-2002

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Fight Hate and Promote Tolerance

By Mark Szymanski <marks@pacificu.edu>

“Fight hate and teach tolerance.” This call is the banner that greets you when you log on to the Teaching Tolerance web site (1). Before September 11, it was easier for some people to read this banner and pass it off as another slogan for a small number of peace promoting groups whose ideals were far out of the minds of mainstream culture. Now, hate and tolerance are words that represent ideas and actions that we see more frequently. Every morning we awake to headlines describing violent acts followed by acts of retaliation in the Middle East. This cycle has been repeating for so long that it is becoming impossible to keep track of which act is one of violence and which is one of retaliation. When did it start? More importantly, when will it end?

Hate fuels violence, and violence fuels hate. As a result, educators are left wondering what they can do to teach their students to fight hate and promote tolerance. One way educators can help their students move toward tolerance is to use the resources created by the Teaching Tolerance project (1). The Teaching Tolerance project was created at the Southern Poverty Law Center (2). The center, in Montgomery, Alabama, describes itself as an organization that “combats hate, intolerance, and discrimination through education and litigation.” Since being founded in 1971 as a civil rights law firm, the center has become a world leader in funding tolerance education programs. The center developed the Teaching Tolerance Project in 1990 after research they conducted showed an increasing number of youths involved in hate crimes.

The Teaching Tolerance project has a variety of free and low cost resources educators and community leaders can use to fight hate and promote tolerance. These include the Teaching Tolerance magazine (3), published twice a year, which highlights tolerance projects conducted around the country. In addition, educators can find classroom activities (4) that range from how to create a contract for bullying (5) to understanding homelessness and poverty (6).

The classroom resources link provides educators with an abundant array of free and low cost materials. K-3 educators can use the Starting Small curriculum set, which includes a film Starting Small and a 250-page text. The activities in the curriculum promote self-reflection and group discussion about tolerance. In addition, the text profiles exemplary pre-k through 3rd grade
classrooms in which peace, equity, and justice are guiding themes.

Secondary educators can use a curriculum set called *A Place at the Table*, which includes a film, a text, and lesson plans. In the film, *A Place at the Table*, young people describe how their families have found a place at the American table. The book provides a narrative that explores and develops the themes and stories described in the film. The teacher’s guide provides 13 detailed lesson plans for use in the middle and upper grades.

In addition to the packaged resources provided by the Teach Tolerance project, educators can also apply for grants to support their own tolerance projects in their schools and communities (7). The grants are non-renewable and are awarded in amounts up to $2,000. There are no deadlines for submission and the types of projects they fund are conceptual in nature and must have a direct impact on students. As they state on their web site, the types of grants they support are:

- small-scale, resourceful, student-focused projects that promote acceptance of diversity, peacemaking, community service or any other aspect of tolerance education;
- well-focused, integrated and organically appealing, in that they are uniquely suited to the specified needs of particular learners;
- responsive and beneficial to the manifest needs (financial, social, affective) of the wider community from which the proposal originates;
- creatively resourceful and economically responsible, involving staff, community and in-kind contributions wherever possible;
- reflective of ongoing rather than one-time-only events or activities.

The Teaching Tolerance project has created a comprehensive set of resources that are well designed and easily accessible to all educators. Whether you choose to use their curriculum or design a project of your own, if you feel powerless to respond to the escalating violence and hate we see in the media, the Teaching Tolerance project gives you a place to start. Start with your own students. Show them they have the power and can learn the skills that will enable them to fight hate and promote tolerance.

**References:**

(1) http://www.tolerance.org
(2) http://splicenter.org/
(3) http://www.tolerance.org/teach/magazine/
(4) http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/index.jsp
(5) http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?ar=301&pa=2
(6) http://www.tolerance.org/teach/activities/activity.jsp?p=0&ar=295&pa=3
(7) http://www.tolerance.org/teens/grants.jsp

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5 THOUGHTS ON “FIGHT HATE AND PROMOTE TOLERANCE”

headlines
on January 30, 2014 at 1:54 PM said:

I do enjoy visiting your platform, you often make me amaze with good articles.

Lauran Beery
on January 30, 2014 at 6:16 PM said:

Excellent weblog right here! Also your site rather a lot up very fast! What host are you the use of? Can I get your associate link for your host? I want my website loaded up as quickly as yours lol

plotka
on February 1, 2014 at 1:55 AM said:

One far more factor I desire to talk about is that as an option to trying to accommodate all your on the web degree lessons on times that you simply end work (since the majority men and women are tired when they get home), try to have most of the instructional classes on a week-ends and only a couple courses in weekdays, even if it methods a small time away through the saturday and sunday. That is very good simply because on a saturdays and sundays, you might be more rested in addition to concentrated in school work. Thanks a lot for ones several items I have figured out through the site.

prawo
on February 1, 2014 at 2:15 AM said:

Thanks significantly for providing people with such a remarkable opportunity to read crucial reviews from here. It’s often so superb plus packed with a good deal of fun for me personally and my office peers to visit your site minimum Three times each week to
find out the new issues you have. And indeed, I’m also really satisfied with your astonishing tips served by you. Some 2 data in this posting are completely the simplest we’ve ever had.

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on February 5, 2014 at 12:16 AM said:

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