



TOWARDS A CIVILIZATION OF PEACE

“As a result of participating in the EFP project, my way of teaching has changed, my relationship with students has changed, and my relationship with my family has changed... all for the better.”

—Teacher, Secondary School, BiH (2001)

VISION

The greatest challenges before humanity at the start of the 21st century are conflict, violence, terrorism, and war along with their terrible consequences of poverty, disease, despair, environmental destruction, and poor leadership. These challenges are felt at all levels of human life—the family, school, community, society, and globally. While considerable resources have always been and still are spent to offset the costly ravages of conflict, violence, and war and to pay for the high price of military defense and security measures, there are relatively few programs dedicated to a systematic, sustained plan of action to educate children and youth in the principles of peace. Consequently, every new generation repeats the mistakes of former generations, and conflict and violence become permanent facets of human societies.

Paradoxically, our greatest opportunity at this time in history is the fact that we have sufficient resources to create a civilization of peace—united and diverse, equal and just, prosperous and benevolent, scientifically progressive and spiritually enlightened, technologically advanced and environmentally healthy. Education is the most essential tool for achieving this historic opportunity.

Peace and education are inseparable aspects of civilization. No civilization is truly progressive without education and no education system is truly civilizing unless it is based on the universal principles of peace. However, our schools have become increasingly conflicted and violent. School textbooks, and theories upon which their contents are based, are predominantly written from the perspective of conflict and “otherness.” While we rightly expect schools to be safe and stress-free environments, in reality they are the opposite—unsafe and stressful. Our schools, therefore, inadvertently promote a culture of conflict and violence and their students do not learn the ways of peace.

The Education for Peace (EFP) program is one effort to respond to these monumental challenges and opportunities.

EFP PROGRAM

The International Education for Peace Institute (EFP-International) is a research, training, development, and service institution dedicated to the cause of peace. EFP-International began its work in June 2000 by launching a two-year pilot project of Education for Peace



in three primary and three secondary schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), with the participation of more than 400 teachers and school staff, 6,000 students and their parents/guardians.

The project had the support of education ministries, municipal leaders, and international authorities. The primary aim of the project was to create a *culture of peace*, a *culture of healing*, and a *culture of excellence* within and among the participating school communities representing the three main ethnic populations—Bosniak (Muslim), Croat (Catholic), and Serb (Orthodox Christianity)—in the highly conflicted post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The pilot program yielded significant positive results and gained the recognition and endorsement of all participating school communities, the BiH Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all thirteen BiH Ministries of Education and eight Pedagogical Institutes, as well as the International Community in BiH, including the Office of the High Representative (OHR) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). The BiH government subsequently invited EFP-International to create a strategy for introduction of its programs in all schools in the country.

By 2006, The EFP Program has been implemented in some 112 schools with approximately 80,000 students; 5,000 teachers, school staff, and administrators; and thousands of parents/guardians. Currently, a 5-year plan (2007–2012) is underway with the aim of incorporating the EFP Curriculum into the BiH education reform process, thus involving all 2,200+ schools with about 1.5 million students and 110,000 teachers and school staff in the study of all subjects from grades 1–12 within the parameters of peace.

Simultaneous with this process, EFP Programs have been introduced into several other countries including Bermuda, Canada, Malawi, and the United States. Currently many requests are being received to introduce EFP programs to many more communities in Africa, Americas, Asia, and Europe.

UNIQUE CURRICULUM

The EFP Integrative Curriculum is based on three premises: (1) unity, not conflict, is the main force in human relationships; (2) worldview is the main framework within which all human individual and group behaviour takes shape; and (3) peace is the main outcome of a unity-based worldview. In the EFP Curriculum, the concept of worldview is defined as the framework within which we understand the nature of reality, human nature, the purpose of life and laws governing human relationships. The concept also includes issues of personal and group identity and narrative.

The Education for Peace Integrative Curriculum comprises the three major areas of focus necessary for the creation of a civilization of Peace: peace-based education, peace-based leadership, and peace-based conflict resolution. Currently, the EFP Curriculum comprises eleven volumes covering a wide range of peace-related issues. (See the list of EFP publications on: www.efpinternational.org.)



PROGRAMS

The International Education for Peace Institute develops and offers effective, context-specific, peace-based programs specifically designed to address the requirements of a civilization of peace wherever these programs are applied. Among these programs are: Education for Peace (EFP) for students of all ages, Leadership for Peace (LFP) for community leaders, Youth Peacebuilders Network (YPN) for youth and young adults, and Conflict-Free Conflict Resolution (CFCR) for all individuals engaged and interested in peace-based conflict resolution.

FACULTY

The Faculty of EFP-International comprises experts in fields of education, psychology, law, conflict resolution, political science, history, religion, peace studies and sociology. A large cadre of educators from various countries with a minimum of two years of intensive training in EFP concepts and methodologies complement the faculty. EFP Training programs of EFP-International are administered by the Academic Council of EFP-International.

APPRECIATIONS

“This is a unique project. It will teach how to create a violence-free environment, in homes and schools and in the country as a whole.”

—The Senior Deputy High Representative, Ambassador Dr. Matei Hoffmann, 28 June 2000

“This project has changed our vision and worldview. I feel that the vision of every teacher and student in this school has been in some way changed through this project.”

— Literature Teacher, High School, BiH (2002)

“Before this project things were imposed in our classes, but with EFP we do it because we love it.”

— Student, Primary School, BiH (2003)

“What I have found in the EFP programs is thoroughly original and revolutionary. EFP represents an inspiring new approach—not only to peace education but also to almost all areas of social and cultural development. It incorporates new ways of thinking about conflict resolution, about leadership and political representation, and about social dynamics and relationships.”

— Trent Newman, Intern from Australia January – June 2005



“The EFP experience for the faculty of Boulder Prep was quite interesting. As the faculty began to see how students being taught from the perspective of peace in all subjects could cause dramatic changes in the outlook of our youth, the faculty themselves began to experience the beginnings of a paradigm shift. A paradigm shift, the whole world but especially our schools worldwide need to experience.”

— Andre Adeli, Co-Founder and Co-Director,
Boulder Preparatory High School Boulder, Colorado, USA (2006)

“This invaluable project was conceived in such a way that the soul-searching process of reflection which the participants undergo as the project unfolds—be they pupils, teachers, parents, administrators, ordinary school workers—results, ... as we have ascertained ourselves, in a heightened holistic awareness of the war period and its tragic consequences, and indeed triggers the desire amongst them to become authentic peace-makers, and precisely provides them with the necessary tools to achieve this goal....”

— Claude Kieffer Director, Department of Education,
Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - BiH Mission (2009)

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION FOR PEACE INSTITUTE

The International Education for Peace Institute is a registered research, training, and community service under Canadian law. It is an independent, not-for-profit, association without any religious or political affiliation. EFP-INTERNATIONAL draws upon the expertise of an international faculty specialized in the fields of curriculum development, peace education, conflict resolution, political science, sociology, religious studies, law, and psychology. The faculty works closely with local educators, pedagogues, counselors, psychologists, and administrators to develop and implement context-appropriate EFP Programs in their respective schools and institutions in various cultural contexts.

“The children all over the world are in need of peace and security. On the occasion of the Summit devoted to the children, we recommend this program [EFP] to all the nations for consideration, as a model of society oriented towards peace, cooperation, and development.”

— Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina,
Mission to the United Nations in New York