

Educating for Peace through Countering Violence:
Strategies in Curriculum and Instruction

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Chapter 12

A Holistic Approach to Peace Educational: Experiences of Putumayo, Colombia

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Appendix

Peace Education Strategies

Re-signify play (replace play with weapon): children can give up toys that symbolise war. This can be embedded in play, for example, a tunnel that symbolises new forms of play in which war is avoided or replaced by alternatives. This is about re-signifying the playground and having children decide on new forms of play that excludes violence and its language.

Play: games that involve the use of language, a new form of understanding how people relate to one another. For example, traditional sports and competitions where the main goal is enjoyment and learning about others. Competitions that involve creativity and knowledge of history could be of help. If any form of symbolic transition towards non-violent forms of play has taken place, it should be reminded and rehearsed throughout.

Storytelling: this creative form of expression can take place in many ways. For instance, storytelling can be carried out through writing on multimodal level (on paper, diaries, posters, blogs, photography, or any digital medium available), video or audio. This can transcend to forms that allow distant audiences access those stories. This is also

important as it allows members of the community (children, young people, and adults) make sense of their experiences and those of others and, at the same time, weave new forms of making sense of themselves. A radio programme, a video or a magazine can constitute forms of transitioning to richer forms of understanding the past and moving to new futures. It is fundamental that children/young people can read others' stories. It is in the exercise of imagination where empathy and solidarity emerge.

Reading activities: if these activities involve an inter-generational approach, they can be more effective. This can include literacy, crafts, exploration of hobbies or interests. If this is carried out in communities, people should have a say about the type of reading material they want to access. Likewise, discussions and forms of dialogue that engage with the reading material are fundamental. It allows to interrogate the text and the readers, their experiences, and interests.

Social life skills: some reading/writing activities have the potential to help members of the community access opportunities. This emerges from active listening to the community and their difficulties/needs. For example, writing a complaint letter or carrying out certain processes/activities in order to access rights require certain skills. Places like schools or local libraries (or other social movements) can detect where those skills are relevant and teach members of the community so that they can navigate social life more effectively.

Radio activities: this can be an activity during school breaks. It can motivate learners to express themselves using creative forms, which also include their dissatisfaction and complaints. Language and music can re-invent non-violent forms of communication. Children and young learners can find a space to express and build a sense of community where they have a voice. This is not aimed to unify people's voice. On the

contrary, diversity is pursued here. What is important is to provide the space for communication outside violence, and dissent is fundamental. This is a challenge for schools as it needs to be a place for diverse thinking and dissenting voices.

Theatre: this is a powerful strategy where young learners and children can communicate their experiences and re-imagine their identities and views of the world (generally influenced by the conflict). Theatre provides opportunities to create not only stories, but it also provides cultural references, language and dynamics that help children and young people envisage new possibilities outside the precarity of conflict and its trapping dynamics (Carter & Guerra, 2022). It helps people rehearse the capacity to aspire to new worlds and provides the spaces for creative thinking. It can also be articulated with other cultural groups, which creates networks of teachers, students, and other actors of the community (e.g., NGOs or State organisations).