



WHITE PAPER

The Peace Education Foundation (PEF), a non-profit educational organization, was founded in 1980. Its mission is to educate children and adults in the dynamics of conflict and to promote peacemaking skills in homes, schools and communities throughout the world. This mission is served by providing educational materials, training and innovative programming that make nonviolent conflict resolution not merely a passing interest or fad, but a lifestyle.

I. CURRICULA

PEF offers material for parents of newborns to three years, grade-level specific classroom-tested curricula for Pre-K through grade 12, and other specialized materials. While each curriculum is presented in a developmentally appropriate format, PEF curricula as a whole have a unified scope, sequence of content and sequence of skills. Internationally, these curricula are being used in more than 20,000 schools.

- A reproducible pre/ post test for content is available for each teacher's guide.
- The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) recognizes *PeaceWorks* as a Select Program.
- Each lesson in each teacher's guide has been correlated with Florida Sunshine State Standards; we offer training to help provide similar correlations with any set of state-wide standards.

Birth to Three: *Creating Caring Children*

This book for parents and professional day-care providers describes useful skills and strategies for raising children in a caring, assertive, and peaceful environment. Addressing typical problem scenarios according to the needs of Infants, Mobile Infants, and Toddlers, the authors describe a common adult response, explain the relevant developmental issues, and suggest a more conscious, caring response.

PK/K: *Peacemaking Skills for Little Kids*

This curriculum is the framework for our entire Peacemaking Skills Series. Though we now designate it for Pre-K and kindergarten, it was originally written and remains useful for Pre-K through Grade Two. The exercises teach listening and communication skills, explore emotions and stress cooperation and cultural tolerance. The I-Care Rules introduce to students the PEF's conflict resolution model. (Also available in Spanish and French.)

Kindergarten: *Helping, Not Hurting: Teaching the I-Care Rules through Literature*

The teacher's guide uses children's literature as the basis for teaching the I-Care Rules. Each rule has its own component taught over five days. Most lessons divide the children among three learning centers: one with the teacher, and two independent.

Grade 1: *Peacemaking Skills for Little Kids, Grade One*

The teacher's guide and student activity books offer students a more in-depth understanding of the I-Care Rules through exercises specifically designed for first graders. The lessons stress cooperative learning and develop students' reading, writing and problem-solving skills.

Grade 2: *Peacemaking Skills for Little Kids, Grade Two*

The teacher's guide and student activity books continue to build upon the peacemaking skills provided in the previous books. This interdisciplinary book offers lessons and extension activities that can be infused into traditional academic subjects. The activity book further develops the grade two students' reading and writing skills.

Grade 3: *Peace Scholars: Learning Through Literature*

This literature-based curriculum provides a collection of ethnically diverse stories and folk tales that allow students to enhance their conflict resolution competency while learning invaluable lessons about cooperation, self-esteem, empathy, and other life skills. A unique feature of this unit is a poster that features the I-Care Rules in not only English but also American Sign Language.

Grade 4: *Peace Scholars: Learning Through Literature*

This literature-based curriculum for fourth grade uses a new literature set to continue the approach established in the third grade book.

Grade 4: *Creative Conflict Solving for Kids, Grade Four*

This curriculum, available in Spanish and French, uses the Rules for Fighting Fair and the "Fouls," negative behaviors to avoid. Empowerment skills such as peer refusal and assertive language enhance conflict resolution skills and communication techniques. This book introduces the mediation process and provides role-play scenarios.

Grades 4-8: *Fighting Fair: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for Kids*

This curriculum combines PEF conflict resolution skills with the philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr. His experiences are related to students' real-life conflicts, providing them with opportunities to apply their skills. An award-winning video demonstrates the conflict resolution process by interspersing a typical student conflict with footage of actual events from the civil rights movement.

Grade 5: *Peace Scholars: Creative Conflict Solving for Kids*

This revised and expanded curriculum builds further on the concepts and skills students have learned. It focuses on students' perception of conflict, tying in news clippings and real-life examples of hostility. Students are encouraged to put their conflict resolution skills to use in the community using an action plan and goal-setting techniques.

Grade 6: *Creating Peace, Building Community, Grade Six*

This curriculum is designed to help students gain a strong sense of self-worth, values and the ability to empathize with others as they learn conflict resolution skills. Focus is placed on character development, cultural awareness, community building, conflict analysis and aggression control.

Grade 7: *Creating Peace, Building Community, Grade Seven*

This curriculum builds upon the concepts introduced in the Grade Six curriculum. Focus is placed on effective communication and empathy development; bully, victim and bystander issues; self-empowerment; and applying peacemaking skills in the real world.

Grade 8: *Conflict Resolution in American History*

This curriculum draws on lessons from American History to teach basic components of peaceful-problem solving. Immigration, national expansion, historic and modern music, war, diplomacy and democracy all come together to show how the principles of conflict resolution apply in the past and present.

Grades 9–12: *WinWin!*

This curriculum tackles the toughest issues that teens face, including violence, anger, cultural differences and sexual harassment. Students learn the skills they need to resolve conflicts without violence. This curriculum comes with an award-winning video that gives students a chance to analyze realistic conflict situations. In the near future, the *WinWin!* series will be expanded with subject-specific student magazines for Grades 10, 11 and 12 that focus on anger and violence, male/female conflicts and communication skills.

In-School Suspension: *What Went Wrong?* (Elementary); *How Did I End Up Here?* (Secondary)

These booklets may be used for writing or as guided discussions to help students reflect on and evaluate the actions that led to any form of in-school suspension.

R.I.D.E.: Resolving Issues Drivers Encounter (for Bus Drivers)

This curriculum and training offers bus drivers some quick, practical approaches to addressing routine misbehavior on the bus.

After-School and Physical Education Programs: *WinWin! Games*

Based on the original *New Games*, this provides a range of activities that not only are fun in themselves, but also provide a means of introducing and discussing group dynamics, problem-solving, leadership, cooperation, interdependence, etc.

School Safety: *Prepared for Action*

This manual provides school-site and district administrators with a comprehensive overview of how to prepare for and respond to virtually any critical incident on school grounds. Includes a CD-ROM containing sample forms for documentation, and letters for parent/community notification.

II. TRAINING

PEF provides comprehensive and systematic Conflict Resolution and Mediation training to enhance classroom, school and district-wide program implementation. Some aspects include:

Handling Student Conflicts: *A Positive Approach*, the fundamental training model, provides background in both content and process of Conflict Resolution. The participant's training manual provides supporting theory and a rationale for teaching the content. To help participants prepare better for providing training in their own work sites, each lesson also suggest extension activities and provides transitions to the following unit.

Regional Institutes in cities throughout the United States and Canada, which have involved more than 2,000 education and youth development professionals to date.

On-site workshops, tailored to the specific needs of any school or organization. More than 4000 participants representing more than 200 sites have participated.

The Early Childhood Institute that is developmentally appropriate to meet the specific needs of professionals working with young children.

Peacemaking as a Catalyst for Change, a three-day training that explores the change process as it applies to creating a culture of peace in the home, school or community.

A diverse group of trainers, comprised of education and mental health specialists, who are experienced in working with multi-ethnic student and adult audiences.

In addition to trainings throughout North America and the Caribbean, in recent years our Spanish-speaking trainers have begun conducting workshops in Central and South America.

III. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A. Conflict Resolution

Conflict Resolution is a body of knowledge and skills that equips people with the ability to use a nonviolent, constructive approach when dealing with life's inevitable conflicts. Given PEF's mission, Conflict Resolution is the major thrust of its program. The focus is on children and the adults who facilitate children's social, emotional and intellectual growth. Since much of this growth occurs in schools, PEF designs its programs with schools in mind. Experience shows that PEF's Conflict Resolution

programs have the power to make schools safe and more disciplined, improve school climate, make instructional strategies more effective and foster resiliency in children. In order to institutionalize Conflict Resolution, that is, to make it “standard operating procedure” in schools, PEF programs are purposefully linked to school improvement and related initiatives.

For example, many of the aspects that measure school climate (respect, a sense of community and continuous growth of social competency skills) are integral to PEF’s Conflict Resolution programs. Similarly, the skills and qualities needed to make instructional strategies such as cooperative learning flourish (trust, communication skills, leadership and conflict management) are enhanced and supported by PEF Conflict Resolution programs.

Children aren’t born with the natural ability to resolve conflicts peacefully. They must see the behavior modeled, be taught the content, have opportunities to apply what they have learned and receive feedback and recognition regarding the use of their skills. This is the premise upon which the PEF Conflict Resolution program is based.

Content

The content of the PEF Conflict Resolution program encompasses a broad range of social competency skills. We group them into six essential components:

1. Community Building: Building trust, exploring common interests and respecting differences.
2. Developmentally Appropriate Rules: The framework for appropriate behavior and the associated skills, such as I-messages, listening, assertion and problem-solving. We teach the *I-Care Rules* for grades PK–3, *Peace Scholar Rules* for grade 4, and *Peace Rules* (or *Rules for Fighting Fair*) for grades 5-12 and the *FamilyTime Out!* Training. Central to the PEF Conflict Resolution program, these rules encapsulate the principles of nonviolent conflict resolution and promote a peaceful, disciplined environment. The Rules also provide a constructive alternative to the Fouls, inappropriate behaviors which attack the dignity of others and escalate conflict (put-down, sarcasm, bringing up the past, hitting, not taking responsibility, getting even, not listening, making excuses, etc.). All PEF curricula include a colorful, age-specific Rules poster, which is a helpful visual reminder for all members of the school community.
3. Understanding Conflict: Defining conflict, the elements of conflict, escalation and de-escalation, different conflict management styles.
4. Perception: Understanding different points of view, enhancing empathy and increasing tolerance.
5. Anger Management: Pros and cons of anger, triggers, anger styles, increasing tolerance of frustration, anger management plans.
6. Communication skills: I-messages and related basic skills of expressing feelings in order to help resolve conflicts constructively and peacefully.

Once the essential components have been mastered, students’ social competency can be enhanced by adding more sophisticated content and skills from the scope of PEF components. These additional components include:

- Affirming self-identity
- Peer refusal skills
- Self-empowerment
- Dealing with bullies
- Self control
- Goal setting
- Acting with courage and conviction
- Understanding violence
- Boyfriend/girlfriend relationships
- Being a peacemaker

Process

The teacher is key to the success of PEF’s Conflict Resolution program because the teacher facilitates the process by which students hone their skills. This process involves five strategies:

- Step One: Model

The teacher professes the attitudes and practices the behaviors expected of students. The goal is to let students know how, in “real life,” to apply the appropriate set of Rules and associated skills such as reflective listening, I-Statements and problem solving.

- Step Two: Teach

Teach the students what to do and why to do it. Break it down into understandable parts. Give students the chance to practice the techniques in role-play situations. The goal is for students to learn the vital techniques in order to repeat the vocabulary and techniques when prompted.

- Step Three: Coach

Assist students with using the techniques appropriately in real-life situations. Offer support and corrective feedback when needed. The goal is for students to translate knowledge and abstraction into practical application.

- Step Four: Encourage

Give students brief reminders to use their skills. Express confidence in their ability to succeed. Recognize students’ appropriate use of skills. The goal is for students to use appropriate behavior and expand upon their ability without a dependence on adult presence.

- Step Five: Delegate and Export

After students reach proficiency, give them a role in teaching or coaching less experienced students. The goal is to allow students to demonstrate their competence and to acknowledge the value in habitual use of the skills.

B. Mediation

When a school has a skilled student population, the incidence of conflict decreases. However, some conflicts may require skilled, neutral intervention — a mediator. PEF’s Mediation program, therefore, is the next step in the logical progression of a well-implemented Conflict Resolution program.

PEF recognizes three basic mediation models:

- Classroom — All students in a class are trained in mediation and resolve their conflicts at a “peace table” located in the classroom.

- School-wide — A limited cadre of students are trained as peer mediators to handle conflicts which are referred to mediation.

- Adult — Adults are trained to intervene either formally or informally in student conflict.

PEF publishes mediation curricula which provide complete, step-by-step instructions for training peer mediators and monitoring a school-based mediation program.

Grades 4-7: *Mediation for Kids*

This guide includes a series of activities that help students to improve their communication skills and understand the causes of conflict. The Teacher’s Guide offers tips for implementing this program. The text is also available in Spanish and French.

Grades 8-12: *Mediation: Getting to WinWin!*

This peer mediation training guide contains a more comprehensive look at the mediation process and advanced mediation techniques, such as caucusing. *Mediation: Getting to WinWin!* includes a number of realistic situations that students can practice mediating themselves. An available companion video demonstrates each step of the mediation process.

C. Parent Component

Parent involvement in and support for a school-based Conflict Resolution program is critical. To meet that need PEF provides *Time Out! Resolving Family Conflicts*. This fun, illustrated text offers families a chance to reinforce problem-solving skills at home by introducing communication skills, anger management techniques, and basic mediation.

Time Out! for Families Trainer’s Implementation Manual

With several scripted presentations, forms and even advertising suggestions, this manual contains everything needed to successfully implement the Parent component of a conflict resolution program.

PEF has collaborated with a number of school districts throughout the country to implement a parent and/or community component to their conflict resolution programs. Through this collaboration, we have developed several different models:

- A large group, 20-40 minute presentation
- A longer session for small groups with interactive activities
- A two-session training with a component for the entire family

This guide also includes a wealth of practical information on promoting, organizing and facilitating a workshop, including a fully scripted presentation and activities, and color transparencies.

D. Implementation

The level to which PEF programs are institutionalized is directly correlated to the success of their implementation. Through its years of experience, PEF has devised a variety of implementation models which can be utilized in a single classroom, school, feeder-pattern or entire school district.

- Curriculum Initiated — Thousands of teachers have used PEF curricula to implement their own classroom-based programs. Most are able to do so without specialized PEF training because the materials are so comprehensive and teacher-friendly.

- Infusion — Conflict Resolution components are infused into traditional academic lessons. For example, an event such as the Revolutionary War might be analyzed as a conflict. (What was the issue? What escalated the situation? What methods were used to resolve it?)

- Subject Area — The essential Conflict Resolution components or specific PEF curricula lessons are taught in conjunction with particular subject areas. For example, community building is taught in language arts, understanding conflict is taught in social studies, perception is taught through health and so on.

- “Drop Everything for Peace” — Special time is set aside on a regular basis to teach only PEF components and curricula. That basic overview is then reinforced throughout the year using one of the other models noted above.

- Turn-Key Training — A select number of staff is trained in the PEF model. In turn, they train their colleagues who in turn facilitate the knowledge and skill development of their respective students.

PEF’s implementation of one particular district-wide program should be highlighted. This initiative involved a collaborative partnership between PEF and the Palm Beach County, Florida, School District Safe Schools Center, which created the following design for this three-year program.

Year One: Conflict Resolution and Mediation

During first semester:

- Teams of six (three teachers, one administrator and two parents) from each of the districts’ 125 schools received PEF’s Conflict Resolution curricula and training.

- Those teams then provided turn-key training at their respective schools.

- Sufficient materials were supplied to all teachers and administrators.

- Palm Beach County Safe Schools staff and PEF trainers provided special-topic, on-site training as requested throughout the district.

- The same teams of six received PEF’s Peer Mediation training and curricula.

- The teams implemented their respective peer mediation programs.

- Some schools also opted to train all the teachers in mediation.

Year Two: Mediation and Parent Component

During second semester:

- Follow-up special-topic training continued on-site throughout the year.

- Parents were trained in the Fighting Fair for Families model.

- Parents then presented two parent workshops to their respective school’s parent population.

Year Three: Service Learning/Community Service

- Opportunities for students to apply their skills meaningfully (teaching mini-lessons, coaching less-experienced students to use skills or mediating appropriate community-based disputes) were organized.

- These programs took place in the community after school programs and day care centers.

- Special-topic trainings continued by request.

- Parent workshops continued.

- Initiatives to “increase the peace” were devised.

Palm Beach County School District is the 15th largest in the nation. Though not yet complete, their comprehensive project has impacted 129,000 students, over 6,500 teachers and hundreds of parents.

Fortunately for PEF, this collaborative effort created a district-wide “implementation laboratory” where best practices were refined and enhancement methods were developed. As a result, variations of this model have been replicated in school districts throughout the United States.

IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

To further its mission and provide community outreach, PEF has taken on some innovative efforts:

- PEF collaborated with a Jamaican sister organization to create culturally appropriate curricula and training in that country. As a result, more than 2,000 teachers have been trained, and the program has been implemented in all 792 Jamaican public schools, grades one through six.
- PEF collaborated with mediation and education specialists to implement Conflict Resolution programs in the Virgin Islands.
- PEF presented the “Peacemakers’ Conference to Stop the Violence,” bringing together hundreds of Dade County, Florida, student mediators and community leaders to discuss ways to reduce youth violence.
- Students from all over North America participate in PEF’s “Peace Essay Contest.” PEF publishes selected entries in *Young Voices*, a collection of student essays and artwork.
- PEF has honored outstanding peace educators and administrators from Dade County, Florida, at the “Peace Education Luncheon.”
- PEF’s satellite teleconference, “Conflict Resolution 2000,” involved over 300 schools sites throughout the United States and Canada.

V. MAJOR SUCCESS FACTORS

Evaluations of PEF programs demonstrate their effectiveness:

In 1991, PEF Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation programs were initiated throughout Dade County, Florida, Region II Public Schools. Training for school staff was provided in order to establish both classroom-based and school-wide student mediation programs and infuse school curricula with conflict resolution instruction.

- A review of mediator reports showed that 86% of conflicts mediated were resolved.
- Student Case Management Systems, a system of incident reporting, showed a statistically significant reduction in the rate of referrals for general disruptive behavior in the elementary schools with the highest levels of implementation.
- Conflict Resolution affected student attitudes toward resolving conflicts positively. Results from student surveys indicated that those who received training were more willing to respond to conflict situations with actions other than threats and violence.

In 1994, staff teams from seven alternative and two middle school with a high percentage of at-risk students received training in the PEF Conflict Resolution model. Post-intervention surveys showed that:

- Student attitudes toward conflict changed significantly after learning the PEF model.
- Students were more inclined to explain, reason, compromise or share in order to resolve their conflicts.
- Students were less likely to appeal to authority figures or use aggression and threats when in conflict.
- Teachers surveys indicated that they felt more respected and less frustrated as a result of implementing the PEF model.

Evaluations of the Palm Beach County Schools initiative include:

- A considerable reduction in student referrals and suspensions. For example, the number of referrals at Spady Elementary dropped to five between September and December of 1994 from 124 during the same period in 1992.
- Parents who attended a Fighting Fair for Families workshop reported favorable results. According to two-month follow-up surveys from 163 participants:
 - 79% reported improvement with the way conflicts are handled at home.
 - 76% reported improvement with the way feelings are treated at home.
 - 70% reported improvement with the way people listen to each other at home.

—80% reported that their Rules for Fighting Fair poster is still displayed in their homes.

- A year-long study (results still being compiled) measuring the extent to which Conflict Resolution enhances school climate, reduces student referrals and suspensions and increases teacher time on task.

Overall, the PEF's success can be attributed to:

- Pioneering involvement in the development of peace education
- Grade-level specific, teacher-friendly curricula
- Customized, systematic training provided internationally
- Flexible, proven implementation models
- Innovative community involvement programs

VI. ENDORSEMENTS

"The students, teachers and staff who have experienced the [PEF] program have rated it 'excellent' and 'very much needed.'"

—Janet R. McAliley, Former Chairperson, School Board, Dade County (FL) Public Schools

"Our partnership with the Peace Education Foundation has reduced the number of referrals and improved the classroom climate in our schools."

—Alison Adler, Ed.D., Director, Safe Schools Program, Palm Beach County (FL) Schools