

Real World Examples

The Work of Peace-Building

Below are examples of proven, effective programs now existing in the United States, that substantially diminish levels of violence in their communities. Central to the work of the Department of Peace will be a U.S. Peace Academy, in which such techniques will be taught and extended to their maximal usefulness.

Ohio's State-wide School Conflict Management Initiative

The State of Ohio leads the United States in school-based conflict management through the work conducted and coordinated by the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management. In 2004 there are more than 1,700 schools with programs. During the 2002-2003 biennium the Commission served more than 95,000 students and over 7,000 staff through its grant training program. Schools participating in the program focusing on the whole school approach see an improvement in academic achievement, a reduction in truancy, fewer suspensions and expulsions, a decrease in time spent on dealing with discipline, financial cost savings to schools, and an improvement in overall school climate (OCDRCM, 1994; OCDRCM, 1997; Tschannen-Moran, 1999).

Community Conferencing - A Restorative Justice Practice

A Community Conference is a meeting of the entire community of people affected by a crime or conflict, that allows them to decide for themselves how to best repair the harm and prevent it from happening again. Everyone gets a chance to speak and be heard, and in doing so a greater sense of understanding and connection is created. A conference gives those who have caused harm a chance to understand the impact of their behavior on others, on themselves, and on the community. Those who have been harmed get a chance to tell how they have been affected and how the damage can be repaired. In addition, families can identify and gain access to needed community-based resources.

- Recidivism reduced by 60% in young offenders compared with comparable juvenile justice cases
- Cost effective (1/10 the cost of current criminal justice/disciplinary practices)
- Victims are included in deciding outcomes, and are satisfied that “justice was served”