

A World Day of Prayer and Action for Children



Introduction:

The World Day of Prayer and Action for Children brings people together to pray and take action for the well-being of children on Universal Children's Day (November 20th) every year. Universal Children's Day, established by the United Nations in 1954, also commemorates the 1989 adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The World Day of Prayer and Action for Children was first celebrated in 2008. In 2009, more than 9,000 people in 29 cities in 22 countries participated in the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children.

Nepal as a multi-religious and multilingual country consisting mainly **Hindu, Buddhist, Islam, Christian, Jain, Sikha and Bahai** has been celebrating WDPAC since 2008 with various program.

This year too **Shanti Sewa Ashram (Peace Service Centre)** took the leading role with an active involvement and support from **Global Network of Religions for Children (GNRC) Nepal, Youth Society for Peace (YSP), Hindu Vidyapeeth-Nepal (HVP) and Children's Peace Home (CPH)**.

With a series of pre meeting with youth DPAC organising committee WDPAC was organized in various forms in various places of Nepal. **Dr Chintamani Yogi**, the coordinator himself patronized the DPAC organising committee meeting who also led and helped to pass on the message '**Stop Violence against Children!**'

Early marriage is rampant in South Asia with 48 per cent of young women reporting being married before the age of 18. Early marriage usually occurs because of poverty and the lack of economic opportunities for girls in rural areas. Girls are either seen as an economic burden or valued as capital for their exchange value in terms of goods, money or livestock. Early marriage may also be seen as a way of protecting young girls and ensuring their security. Research has shown that child brides are often more likely to experience domestic violence and sexual abuse and least likely to take action against this abuse. They attain lower schooling, lower social status in their husbands' families, have less reproductive control, and suffer higher rates of maternal mortality. They are often forced out of school without an education and experience health problems as their bodies are too immature to give birth.

Child Protection	to the top
Child labour 2000-2009*, total	34
Child labour 2000-2009*, male	30
Child labour 2000-2009*, female	38
Child marriage 2000-2009*, total	51
Child marriage 2000-2009*, urban	41
Child marriage 2000-2009*, rural	54
Birth registration 2000-2009*, total	35
Birth registration 2000-2009*, urban	42
Birth registration 2000-2009*, rural	34
Female genital mutilation/cutting, womena 1997-2009*, total	-
Female genital mutilation/cutting, daughtersb 1997-2008*, total	-
Attitudes towards domestic violence, 2002-2009*, total	23
Child disciplineà, 2005-2008*, total	-

Source: http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/nepal_nepal_statistics.html

A. Interaction and Awareness

Interaction and Awareness program that took place in **Hindu Vidyapeeth-Nepal** with 173 children of different faith mainly from Buddhist, Hindu, Islam and Christian reached to its apex when all the kids for half an hour listened to Dr Chintamani Yogi about DPAC and CRC and divided into different groups for further discussion who were further facilitated by **Mr Vishnu Bhakta Dangi** (vice principal) and **Ghanshyam Yogi** (administrative officer).

Children in different groups from grades 7-10 made the discussion artful when each group decided to act violence against children in different way.

Children who participated visited different classes to aware their friends about DPAC and UN Millennium Development Goals.

These children also committed to spread the message on violence against children in their house and to neighbors.

Faiz Azam Saba, a **Muslim** student of grade 10 aged 16 says, "I like Hindu Vidyapeeth School as it gives opportunities to explore myself with my friends from other religions. It does not discriminate on the basis of religion and gives open space to learn and to learn without fear."

Manjaya Maharjan, a **Buddhist** student of grade 10 aged 16 says, "I don't feel any disparity between Hinduism or Buddhism, all are same. It does not matter which religion you follow but it does matter how cooperative you can be at the time of need to each other. We should all live in peace."

Swekchhya Karki, a **Hindu** girl from grade 9 aged 15 says, "I did not know about the Day of Prayer and Action for Children before. When I joined Hindu Vidyapeeth School I am learning so many things that I may have never learnt before in any School. Now, when I will return back to my village during summer vacation I am definitely going to talk about the CRC and our rights with the teachers of my village where I studied."

Rinku Gupta, a **Hindu** girl from grade 8 aged 14 who joined school in 2009 says, "I am from Terai (bordering part of Nepal with India) and have seen my aged girls getting married. I have seen some of them being harshly beaten because of dowry. I am so lucky and thank my parents for letting me study. I am going to talk about DPAC with my friends and parents."

Prakat Neupane, a **Christian** boy from grade 10 aged 16 says, "No matter what my religion is we are children and future of the world."

B. Inter-Religious Prayer

The influential leaders and the representatives from various religions (mainly Hindu, Buddhist, Islam, Christian, Jain, Sikh and Bahai) gathered in **Shanti Sewa Ashram** on **November 18th 2011**. The religious representatives prayed for the welfare of the children. They also committed to work to stop violence against the children. The religious leaders also agreed to celebrate WDPAC in their own vicinity with Prayers and Actions for the children. There were more than 140 people who gathered at Shanti Sewa Ashram for the prayer of the children from around the world.

C. Art and Poem Competition

To encourage children to explore their creativity Art and Poetry competition was organized to mark DPAC. The theme was ‘Stop Violence against Children!’ but they were given free choice to make any sorts of art that reflects their rights and wants. Children who participated the competition joined together for prayer at their own institution on 20th November. They also became the ambassador of DPAC. They helped in disseminating the message of DPAC 2011. Children mainly from Seeds of Peace, Kathmandu, Children Peace Home, Dang, Sunrise Orphanage, Kathmandu, Asna Child Rehabilitation Home, Lalitpur, Hindu Vidyapeeth-Nepal, Lalitpur.

Dr Jamie Whigham and **Mrs. Susie Whigham** kindly distributed fruits and stationary to the participants in Art Competition in Children’s Peace Home, Dang. Each student was awarded with some books, copies and color-pens.

- a. Issue: ‘Stop Violence against Children!’**
- b. Date :** Friday, November 18, 2011
- c. Participants:**
 - 1. Seeds of Peace (Kathmandu)
 - 2. Children Peace Home (Dang)
 - 3. Sunrise Orphanage (Gokarna, Kathmandu)
 - 4. Asna Child Rehabilitation Home (Lamatar and Chitwan)
 - 5. Hindu Vidyapeeth – Nepal, Lalitpur

D. Children's Conference

This is special program where more than 125 kids from various schools of Kathmandu valley attended the whole day workshop where they had inter-religious prayer, meditation, peace songs, visual show, group activities like interaction, friendship games, paper work and lots of fun...

The presence of **Mr Kul Chandra Gautam** who is international chair of DPAC really encouraged participants. Mr Gautam happily shared facts and information on DPAC along with the status of Nepali children. He also prayed for the well being of each child. He was really happy to listen to the feelings of participants regarding the conference. Few students from schools also committed to aware their friends and school about the CRC.

Dr Chintamani Yogi with the help of volunteers of **YSP Nepal** hold interaction from Module 1 and Module 2 from a book named Learning To Live Together.

- a. Total present number of people: 173**
- b. Adult: 31**
- c. Youth and children: 142**
- d. Venue: Mahila Bikash Prasikchhan Pratisthan, Jawalakhel, Lalitpur**

Related Activities for DPAC in various institutions

- Dr Chintamani Yogi was specially invited to Thames International College Old Baneshwor, Battisputali, Kathmandu. 80 students of Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA) participated his influencing talk program on 10th November 2011. Dr Yogi talked about DPAC and encouraged the faculty member and the students to be the messenger of DPAC.
- In the meeting of National Value-based Education national level educators (25 in number) were informed about DPAC and LTLT by Dr Yogi who himself is helping to write a 'Moral Education' book for government on 12th November, 2011.

- A local organization named Sakriya Sewa Samaj organized 2 days National Seminar on ‘Response against HIV AIDS’ in World Trade Centre, Tripureshwor KTM on 21st and 22nd November where youth and religious leaders from different faith participated. In a special talk program by Dr Yogi he requested the religious leaders to be more conscious about the welfare of children. He also urged them to talk about positive childhood in their speeches.
- In an interactive talk program on 24th November organized in VidyaPunja School, Lamatar, Lalitpur among 80+ parents, children and community members Dr Yogi talked on ‘Positive Parenting and National Building.’ The community members were benefitted by the talk program where parents and community members also had a special interaction on positive parenting.
- 32 officers of Ministry for Education were given training on ‘Self Management and Personality Development’ by Dr Yogi on 25th November where he talked about DPAC and importance of ethics in education. The program was organized in Sano Thimi, Bhaktapur (east to KTM).
- Dr Yogi along with Suzane Dascombe and Ani (British volunteer for HVP) went to Asna Child Rehabilitation Home to share about DPAC. They enjoyed with children for whole day on 1st December 2011.
- Reliance Public School invited Dr Yogi on 3rd December 2011 to enlighten approximately 75 students on ‘Discipline and Duties in Student Life.’ Dr Yogi also shared about DPAC on the same program.

Media that helped in spreading the message of DPAC

1. Annapurna Post (National Daily Newspaper)
2. Swargadwari FM, Dang
3. Sagarmatha FM, Kathmandu
4. Gorkha FM, Kathmandu
5. Radio Audio FM, Kathmandu

Institutions involved during DPAC celebration (Children Conference)

1. Rotary Club of Pashupati, Nepal
2. Badri Bikram Sewa Guthi
3. Universal Peace Federation
4. National Interfaith Response-Violence against Women
5. Business Professional Women
6. Bal Uthan Manch
7. Matribhoomi Sewak Sangh
8. Gorakhchhya Nath Sewa Sangh

DPAC Organizing Youth Committee members

1. **Samrat Nath Yogi** – coordinator, Youth Society for Peace
2. **Sujan BK** - core member, Youth Society for Peace
3. **Minakshi Yogi** - core member, Youth Society for Peace
4. **Abhishek KC** - core member, Youth Society for Peace
5. **Satyata Shrestha** - core member, Youth Society for Peace
6. **Bishwonath Kandel** - core member, Youth Society for Peace
7. **Jagannath Kandel** – founding member, Youth Society for Peace

DPAC volunteers

1. **Yubraj Thapa** – Tutor, Children Study Club
2. **Shiba Pokhrel** – member, Youth Society for Peace
3. **Deepa Yogi** - core member, Youth Society for Peace
4. **Anita Thapa** - core member, Youth Society for Peace
5. **Hari Prasad Sodari** – Tutor, Children Study Club
6. **Sagar Yogi Tutor** – Tutor, Asna Child Rehabilitation Center
7. **Sangita BK** – member, Youth Society for Peace
8. **Shreeya Pandey** – student, Hindu Vidyapeeth-Nepal
9. **Sajan K.C.** – student, Hindu Vidyapeeth-Nepal
10. **Sudarshan Basyal** – student, Hindu Vidyapeeth-Nepal
11. **Swekchhya Karki** – student, Hindu Vidyapeeth-Nepal

Glimpse of Programs

Summary of interaction from module 1 and 2, Learning To Live Together.

Module 1 Understanding Self and Others

Key words: Mutual Respect

Can we just get along - We are born with two hands and legs. But on the path of success we just use our one hand and leg. The other hand and leg are not when we learn and get affected from others. We are not always right. We can't clap with one hand. To get born, to grow, to develop and to die we always need others help.

Responding the needs of mutual understanding - We may not be always right. Sometimes we may get wrong. We should let others to comment in our mistakes so that we can realize it. A pencil alone is not perfect. So, it always carry a eraser with it.

A common humanity - We have got everything common i.e. blood, body parts, but we have got our thoughts different. Some of us might have same thought but expressing those thought might be different.

Putting myself in another's shoe - We all have the habit of wearing our own shoes. So we can easily recognize our shoes. But if we put our feet on others shoe we feel a bit uncomfortable. We always think that we are right in this world but see everywhere, they are also right in their own way.

We always should appreciate each others thought which are different.

(17) Non-violent alternatives.

(a) People should do yoga.
 (b) We should direct our mind in hard work instead of getting more angry.
 (c) We should forget these things.
 (d) If anybody stops you, restrain your smile instead of so sharp.

(18) Reconciliation walk.

(a) Feel sorry if you did mistake.
 (b) heartily sorry

(19) Building bridge of trust.

(a) Be trustable to be trusted.
 (b) Trust should be like 1 year baby.
 (c) If we go trustable are trustable every single hands will be on our arms.

Module - 2
Transforming the world Together

① Failing to Respect One Another

- If you want respect from others, first you must learn to give respect to others.
- If there is respect between each other, there will be lovely environment.
- Respect create lovely society, helpful environment and full of harmony.
- there will be violence if we didn't respect each others.

② Conflicts, Violence and injustices around me

- Stop quarreling and join hands to hands.
- Make your first step against violence and injustice.

③ Peace begins with me -

- I will make myself peaceful.
- We must interact with each others.
- It will create successful results on whatever we do.
- Peace mind will make us mentally fit.
- there will be unity, if there is peace.

LEARNING TO

Road To Understanding Self and others

- Sharing feeling with friends
- help of our parents
- self realization / self understanding
- From the society
- Knowing behaviours
- Interaction / sharing
- self judgement
- By the help of movies and drama

Appreciating diversity

- Appreciating others cultural
- Involving different cultural in one group
- Should not be selfish
- We have different cultural, dress, language but we appreciating each other in every way
- Positive Narayan shah "तेरा नर ४ मत से बरको सा एक जकलाने समात गते"

Putting myself in another's shoes

- we should help others in difficult way.
- Respecting others. - Always show Empathy not

A common humanity

- Humanity is the only one religion that should be by everyone.
- We should think that 'we are human and we should love every humanity.'

Responding to the needs of mutual understanding

- Conversation plays vital role in mutual understand
- Approaching and helping each other is known as mutual understanding.

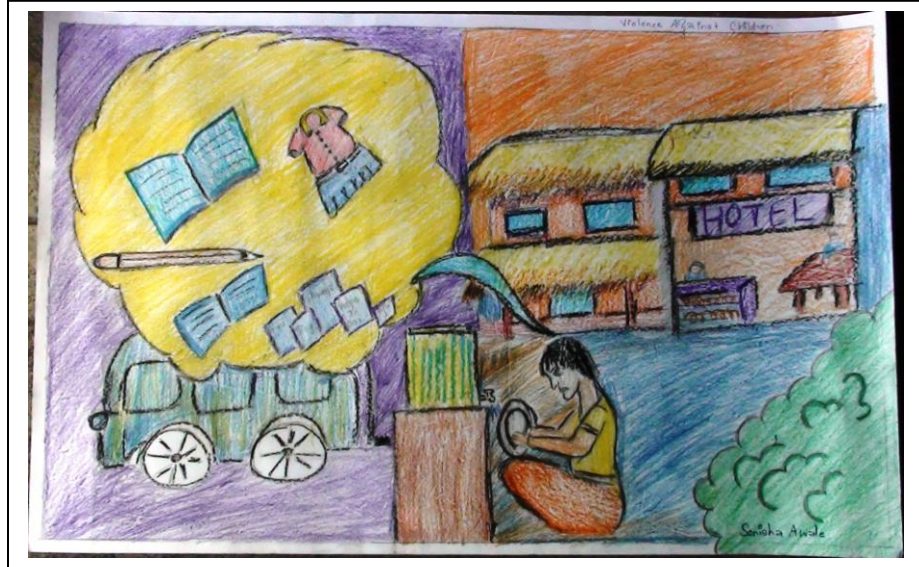
Can we just get along?

- Making new friends in life and carrying our

Acknowledge myself in relation to others

Arts made by children





Snap shots of DPAC Celebrations



