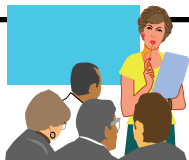


kids
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NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2000 VOLUME 5 NUMBER 2



Finding Solutions to Hunger Workshops In Kentucky

by April Stone

As nutrition director for Kentucky River Foothills Development Council, Inc., a non-profit, community-action agency, I helped organize and conduct regional hunger awareness workshops for youth and service providers. The workshops were made possible through Foothills' Community Food and Nutrition grant. Each year the grant has a specific focus, with the 1999-2000 grant's work plan focusing on hunger awareness.

I worked with the staff at Kids Can Make A Difference (KIDS) in finding the best ways to use their Teacher Guide, *Finding Solutions to Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference* as the backbone of the workshops.

Over the course of six months, Foothills developed pilot workshops to test the effectiveness of the KIDS Teacher Guide and other supplemental information in an effort to increase the awareness of the hunger problem among youth. Our main goal was to motivate youth to take a proactive stand against hunger in their schools and community. *Finding Solutions to Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference* provided easy to understand information about the root causes of hunger and poverty and useful advice on how to effectively assist students' understanding of the subject. We coordinated with schools, 4-H extension service, and church youth groups. Students who participated in the workshops were provided with a series of 8-10 hunger awareness lessons where they learned about world and local hunger, root causes of hunger, and ways they can help solve the hunger problem. Foothills increased the reach of the Teacher Guide by expanding beyond the workshops into school's health and life skills classes by providing hunger lessons to a large number of students. Some of the lessons used in this setting were "How Big is the Hunger Problem", "Two Kinds of Hunger: Famine and Chronic Hunger", and "If There Is Enough Food, Why Are People Hungry?."

About this issue...

Please take a minute to read page 8 and find out how easy it is for you to help support this newsletter. For your convenience, a self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

On page 9, you will learn about a group of students that everyday demonstrate to the rest of us that "it is better to take small steps forward than take no steps at all." April Stone (pg. 1) reports on an ambitious program she developed. We feature two opinion articles this issue; Jim Metrock reports on Channel One, and Professor Warren Belasco shares his experiences at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Washington DC. Karen Evans tells us about the students at five colleges and the Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week they staged (pg. 4). Julianne Rana met with 100 participants at the Church of the Brethren's annual Christian Citizenship Seminar and discussed domestic hunger with them (pg. 5). The KIDS Teacher Guide is part of an "online" program at Montana State University (pg. 6). Read about the Farm to School Initiative and learn how you can become involved (pg. 11).

Finally, read about KIDS participation in World Food Day on October 16, 2000 (pg. 5) and the Newsweek Educational program that will introduce us to the program's 700,00 participants.

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Prior to the start of the workshop, participants took a “pre-test” to determine their knowledge of hunger. The purpose of the workshops was to educate students about different hunger issues and explore ways they could help find solutions. Students planned different hunger awareness activities for use in their schools and communities. Some of these activities included: school food drive, hunger facts flyer, hunger survey, letters to the local newspaper editor, letters to state representative, school hunger essay contest, door-decorating contest, drawing contest, announcing hunger facts over school's intercom system, coordinating with local community food drives, and community gardening projects. All activities were very successful.

At the end of the workshops, participants were given a “post-test” to see if their knowledge of hunger had increased. The workshops and hunger awareness activities were a success. The only complaint heard was that the workshops had to end. The workshops fostered an awareness of hunger among the youth, and also gave them a good feeling that they had contributed to a great cause.

Flush with the success provided in the test phase of our program, we took it to the state level and provided regional hunger awareness workshops for service providers. Foothills' objective was to demonstrate to the participants how they could replicate the program in their communities. We conducted workshops in Bowling Green, Hazard, and Richmond with a total of 44 attendees. Participants were comprised of family resource center directors, food pantry operators, county coordinators, cooperative extension service agents, and youth directors. At one session, we had a group of local students participate. Participants were provided with *Finding Solutions to Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference*, KIDS Newsletter, and a packet of supplemental information. The two-hour workshops discussed using the KIDS Teacher Guide and how to center their hunger awareness activities around the curriculum. Attendees participated in one of the lessons from the guide, *Two Kinds of Hunger: Famine and Chronic Hunger*. Participants were grateful for the information given. Some of the comments were “Great information!” “The length and quality of the program was wonderful,” and “God bless you for what you are doing.” There was a strong recommendation on the part of many that in the future there should be, “...more involvement of younger children, it's not just adults that can help. I feel they need to hear it firsthand.”

When I look back over the past year, I feel the hunger awareness workshops touched a lot of people—young and old. Hopefully, attendees from the regional workshops will follow through and work in their communities to raise awareness about the hunger problem and to advocate for change. I know that some schools will be implementing hunger programs using *Finding Solutions to Hunger: Kids Can Make a Difference*.

If you plan to develop a program similar to the one we did, I think the following hints might be of value: plan ahead, stay focused and organized, and coordinate your activities with other community clubs and organizations. When project is completed, don't forget to evaluate the success of your program. Finally, publicity, publicity, publicity! Publicize your activities in the newspaper and radio to help in your recruitment efforts and gain support from the community.

April Stone is nutrition director for Kentucky River Foothills Development Council, Inc. and may be contacted by e-mail at cfn1@mis.net

“Dignity is having enough food to eat.”... Anon.

KIDS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE[®] NEWSLETTER
A PROGRAM OF WORLD HUNGER YEAR (WHY)

Published by:

Jane Finn Levine, Ed.D. and Larry Levine

P.O. Box 54, Kittery Point, ME 03905

(207) 439-9588, FAX (207) 439-4917, email: kids@kidscanmakeadifference.org, <http://www.kidscanmakeadifference.org>



Channel One

by Jim Metrock

Channel One is the most controversial show on TV. You will never see it at home, however, it is only shown during school time.

Channel One's deal is this: A school will be loaned a satellite dish, two VCRs, and a 19" TV set in each classroom. They will wire it into a network and the school can use the equipment any way it wants. They will provide a daily 12-minute TV show that has some news stories and contains two minutes of commercials. They also offer the Classroom Channel that provides documentary programming that is commercial-free.

All the school board has to do is to contractually agree to show the *Channel One* News show with the all-important commercials to the children at least 90% of all school days and in at least 80% of all classrooms. In other words, *Channel One* claims one hour a week of school time as rent payment.

"RESOLVED, that the National Council of Teachers of English oppose intrusions of commercial television advertising, such as Channel One, in the classroom."

NCTE resolution passed 1992.

When a school agrees to show *Channel One*, they make it part of the curriculum. The commercials have the implicit endorsement of the school. Some schools make the children close their books and turn their heads to the *Channel One* TV. This is a true captive audience.

Principals don't have a clue as to what his or her school will be pitching to students. *Channel One*, alone, decides what they will advertise. Here a few examples of *Channel One* ads:

- sexually charged and violent movies (Bats, The Mummy, Never Been Kissed), a Clearasil commercial that shows a topless girl covering her breasts with her hands after losing her bikini top in the pool. The last provocative scene: the bikini top floating away. (*Channel One* routinely uses sex to sell to children.)
- Children are daily urged to eat more Snickers, Hostess cupcakes, Twix bars, and M&Ms and then to wash them down with a Mountain Dew, Mug Root Beer or Pepsi. It is important to advertise candy during school because teenagers drop by convenience stores right after school.
- Reebok commercials for shoes many children cannot afford.

The ads have power in a classroom. Children see the same ads over and over. The implied endorsement of teachers and the school give the ads more impact.

"Channel One is the best mechanism to reach groups of teens talking about hot new products. Channel One helps to jumpstart our sales."

George Harrison, VP of Marketing, Nintendo in a *Channel One* ad in Advertising Age, June 28, 1999

Adolescents face an obesity crisis and our schools, through *Channel One*, encourage our children to eat more candy and drink more soft drinks. This insanity can be ended by teachers.

Teachers never brought *Channel One* into a classroom – school boards did. Yet teachers have remained silent as local ragtag parent groups take on the issue of the commercialization of public schools. Some teachers have even supported *Channel One* and their commercials. I have heard "acceptable trade-off" far too many times. When did it ever become acceptable to be selling children's school time to the highest bidder?

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When *Channel One's* Madison Avenue executives hear “kids can make a difference” they are thinking, “They can sure make a difference ... to our revenue stream.” They view our children as a “target market” to be plundered. In this struggle to get classrooms back to being a market place of ideas and not a market place for products, the one group that has remained silent must begin to stand up to the marketers.

Once teachers find their voice, this exploitation of school children will end.

“Corporate involvement should not require students to observe, listen to, or read commercial advertising. Selling or providing access to a captive audience in the classroom for commercial purposes is exploitation and a violation of the public trust.”

Policy position of the National Association of State Boards of Education, April 1999

Jim Metrock is president of Obligation, Inc. a Birmingham, AL-based child advocacy and media watchdog organization. Named Child Advocate of 1999 by the Alabama Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week...

What was the essence of the week? It wasn't the dynamic voice of Terry Williams, author of *Reversible Destiny: Life Under the Streets*, or the moving words of Ruth Bartholomew, Major of the Reading Salvation Army, or even the vivid presentation by Stephanie Seidel, the Campus Coordinator from Bread for the World. It was the soggy, snow topped boxes of the Albright students, freezing from the evening out in the “Homeless Village,” raising awareness and money for the homeless shelter. It was the faces of the Penn State students, as they finally understood the wicked inequity of the way the world eats during their staged “Hunger Banquet.” It was the determined look on the faces of the student volunteers when they were told they could leave the Habitat for Humanity worksite, and they chose to stay an extra hour to make sure they finished the sanding they had started that morning.

As I watched the events of the week unfold, and took the time to see the service and the learning that was happening, I realized that people are very wrong when they say that our youth are apathetic and uncaring. The students that participated in the events during the week are proof that this is a myth. Students created a mission statement for the week: *To make college students aware of the realities of Hunger and Homelessness and empower them to be agents for change through service and activism.* If you measure the effectiveness of an event through the completion or attainment of a goal or mission, then the week of Hunger & Homelessness Awareness here in Berks County was an overwhelming success. Not only did over 300 students actively participate in the events, but also 13,000 students passively participated by reading all the “Facts” that were posted throughout the campuses of each institution. This was also a week where local community agency representatives were able to teach the college communities about the services they provide, and the volunteer opportunities that are available.

An event that demonstrated the collaboration of all community constituencies was the “Souper Bowl.” College and area high school students made beautiful pottery bowls that were sold along with donated soups, salads and desserts from area restaurants—all to raise money for the local Salvation Army Family Shelter. The students that helped to organize the events of this week bring Margaret Mead's words to life: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has.”

Karen Evans is the Community Service Coordinator for the Higher Education Council of Berks County, serving the five area colleges, Alvernia, Albright, Kutztown University, Penn State (Berks Campus), and Reading Area Community College). If you have any questions, please contact Karen at (610) 796-8389.

Church of the Brethren's Seminar...

by Julianne Rana

On Sunday, April 9th I was pleased to represent the Kids Can Make A Difference program at a gathering of over 100 participants at the Church of the Brethren's annual Christian Citizenship Seminar. Socially aware high school students from across the country gathered in New York City to learn about domestic and world hunger and pay a visit to the United Nations, before heading to Washington, DC to meet with their congressional representatives to make their voices heard.

I am always happy to address students because of their strong sense of justice, as well as their creative ideas and enthusiasm. The students participating in the Christian Citizenship Seminar had an obvious commitment and concern for social issues. I spoke with the students about domestic hunger and poverty and some of the community responses and solutions that we at World Hunger Year have witnessed across the country.

Following a session on hunger and poverty in the United States, which included the sharing of statistics and “fast-facts,” we moved into role-plays. The students were split into five teams. Each team was given a case study which posed a “real life” case scenario, taken from program profiles and field reports housed in the Reinvesting in America database of innovative grassroots organizations. The teams were asked, as experts, to either design a community program to address the issue, or act the issue out. The teams were given time to brainstorm and rehearse their presentations before having fifteen minutes to present their role-plays to the whole group. The students combined the statistics they had learned in the earlier part of the session with facts from the case studies to teach each other about emergency food, afterschool programs, community gardens, and job training programs.

In addition to providing the students with an opportunity to teach each other what they had learned, the role-plays enabled us to cover a number of issues in a short period of time and share stories that often go unheard. At World Hunger Year, we have the opportunity to speak with, visit, and research some of the most innovative organizations in the country. We are constantly amazed by the powerful and creative work that is being done by community groups, congregations, schools, and groups of individual citizens who are concerned about their neighbors and want to do something to positively impact peoples lives. Sharing these stories is a powerful lesson, it teaches us how individuals can and do make a difference every day.

I left the session with much appreciation for the commitment of both the students and the advisors that I had met. The Kids Can Make A Difference program is a powerful tool and resource for educators, as well as advisors and counselors who are looking for ways to channel their students’ concerns for social justice issues into constructive activities and learning experiences that will help them to make a difference.

Julianne Rana is Reinvesting in America Program Coordinator for World Hunger Year. If you would like to find out more about innovative grassroots organizations in your community, please phone Julianne at: 1-(800) 5-HUNGRY ext. 123 or email: WHYRIA@aol.com.

Breaking News...

KIDS is working with the Newsweek Education Program to develop a teacher newsletter for the Newsweek Program. This *Newsweek Extra* publication will introduce teachers to the KIDS program and describe some of the successes of the program. Newsweek estimates readership from the education program at about 700,000.

Reaching Teachers with Hunger Information and Resources - Online

by Mary Stein

The challenge of addressing hunger in the school setting is complex. Most immediate to be addressed are the issues surrounding the students who are hungry. What services/programs provided within the school environment help to ameliorate this chronic hunger and the associated maladies? How also can the child's privacy be preserved so that situations of humiliation and labeling do not arise? The second major issue to be addressed in the school setting is one of engaging all of the students in the task of reducing hunger both within our nation and around the globe. At Montana State University we have attempted to reach out to teachers to explore the answers to these questions and raise awareness of the importance of the school environment in enhancing the impact and awareness of activities aimed at reducing hunger.

During the fall of 1999, a team of educators at Montana State University, with the help of funding from the USDA Team Nutrition Program, began the development of an online course for teachers. The course, Teaching Adolescent Nutrition, is a two-graduate credit course offering geared toward practicing teachers. From the beginning, the intention of developing and offering this course has been to enhance nutrition content knowledge and increase exposure to quality classroom resources for teachers. During the development phase of the project, the nutrition topics to be addressed within the course were determined. Food security was considered to be among the most important.

So far the course has been offered three times and has reached approximately 65 teachers around the nation (and one in Mexico). The course is delivered completely online. All participants, via a personal computer and Internet provider, connect to the course from the comfort of their own home or office. For timebound and/or placebound education professionals in need of continuing education, this type of delivery is proving to eliminate isolation, allow for sharing of unique teaching strategies and increase exposure to timely and quality resources to use in the classroom. Discussion replaces lecture as the primary learning avenue with this online, computer-mediated conferencing medium. The instructor's role becomes that of discussion guide rather than lecturer.

For a complex topic such as hunger, the online discussion platform provides a rich ground for dialogue and problem solving. The teachers who have participated in the course thus far have used the online forum to discuss hunger issues such as:

- Implementing school feeding programs in schools where none exist
- The Universal School Breakfast Program
- Strategies for maintaining confidentiality and preserving self-respect for students receiving free or reduced meals
- The impacts of hunger on cognition and behavior
- Collaboration in the school setting (i.e., how to profile an effective team to solve hunger problems in the school)
- Global hunger - what are the causes, how can we assist the students in feeling empowered and having the desire to help

One of the advantages of the online, asynchronous learning environment is that allows the participant to reflect on the material they have read and on other participants' input prior to adding their own thoughts to the discussion. The end result is a well-thought-out contribution to the online discussion. This level of quality discussion is often lost when we are in the more immediate, in-person learning environment.

The course has served to connect the teachers with individuals/groups/and resources in their communities that address

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food security. For example, one teacher developed a hunger awareness project through which she partnered with a sociology professor from her local university, the community soup kitchen, the community food bank and the local community garden project. When combining these partnerships with meaningful classroom resources addressing hunger (including the *Finding Solutions to Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference* teacher guide), this teacher developed a nine-day unit in which the students were:

- Introduced to local and global hunger issues and situations
- Gained insight into how their own community addresses hunger, including areas of further need and effort.
- Actively participate in activities to help alleviate hunger in their community.

Meaningful dialogue on both domestic and global hunger issues have resulted from the offerings of this online course. The focus has remained on “the student” - how to help the hungry student and how to assist the non-hungry student in seeking out situations in which he can be his brother's keeper.

Mary Stein, MS is the Online Instructor, Department of Health and Human Development Montana State University, Bozeman. Teaching Adolescent Nutrition is scheduled to be offered every spring semester. For further information regarding this course, please contact Mary Stein email: mstein@montana.edu or phone: 406-994-5640.



World Food Day—October 16, 2000...

Hunger and food insecurity affect everyone: the poor and hungry suffer the consequences in their bodies and minds; the well to do can fall victim to a world filled with unrest and mistrust. While there is presently enough food for everyone, nearly a billion people are undernourished. If ways are not found to insure a safe, accessible and sustainable global food supply, the long-term security of the human family could be jeopardized.

Are there ways that a generation of young people can be nurtured in the ways of responsible global citizenship? If children all over the world are introduced, simultaneously and annually, on World Food Day each October 16th, to common teaching materials about hunger and food security issues and what needs to be done, would this help them grow up understanding the interdependence of our world?

Global Curriculum Project Coalition—the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations, the World Bank, UNESCO, the International Food Policy Research Institute, I*Earn, the American Federation of Teachers, the Newsweek Education Program and the National Peace Corps Association—believes that such an idea should be tried.

This global classroom exercise means that children and youth everywhere, on the *same* day, will be studying the *same* text, about the *same* issues, with the knowledge that their counterparts in classrooms around the world are engaged in the *same* endeavor. By engaging in this shared study and action experience they can gain a new sense that all people are united by a common plight – living in a world threatened by perils that can only be overcome if we work together. Our hope is that this World Food Day curriculum will be used as one way to help equip future decision makers to make the hard choices that must be made in a shrinking, hurting world. We invite you to become involved with us. **KIDS has supplied the lesson plans for the intermediate level of this ambitious program. KIDS is proud to be a sponsor of World Food Day.**

Satellite Teleconference: This year's World Food Day satellite teleconference will be a "Conversation with Prof. Sen." Professor Amartya Sen, winner of the 1998 Nobel Prize in Economics, will be presented in a wide-ranging discussion on the relationship of hunger and poverty -- the subject of many of his books. The program will be broadcast live from the studios of George Washington University in Washington DC, Monday, October 16th, from noon to 3:00 p.m., Eastern Time.

For additional information on the World Food Day teleconference or other World Food Day resources, please contact Patricia Young, National Coordinator U.S. National Committee for World Food Day at (202)-653-3404.



This Newsletter Is Not Free...

As you know, KIDS is a non-profit innovative educational program for middle school and high school students. Our goal is to help young people understand the root causes of hunger and poverty and inspire them to end hunger and poverty in their communities, country, and world.

For this reason, KIDS provides subscriptions to the KIDS Newsletter to all without charge. We do not want anyone to miss out on important information contained in the KIDS Newsletter because they are unable to financially support our work.

But the newsletter is not free. The newsletter and other program expenses are paid for by contributions from readers like you. We thank all the people whose generous contributions have contributed to the success of the program.

If the annual cost of producing and distributing the newsletter were equally divided among all subscribers, each person's share would be \$4.74 per year. If you are able, please consider sending the cost of your annual subscription using the attached envelope. If you are able to contribute beyond this amount, please consider covering a fellow-subscriber, or a few fellow subscribers.

Cost of:

Your subscription	\$4.74
Your subscription + one other person	\$9.48

The Bleshman School—a story in three parts...

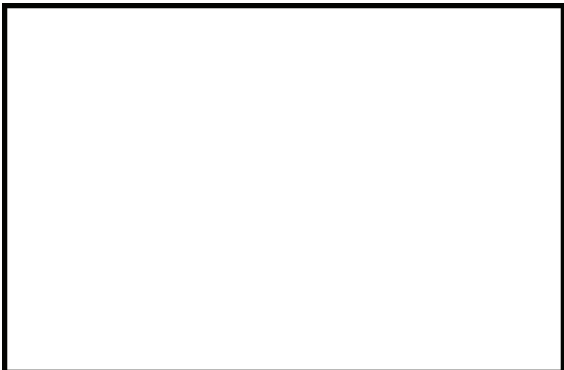
Part one...KIDS

KIDS heard about a school in Paramus, New Jersey with a caring student body performing community service for various populations in the area. The students had expressed an interest in learning about hunger and poverty and wanted to find out what they could do to help.

At first glance, this didn't sound different than the many letters and e-mails we receive, but a little investigation showed how wrong we could be! We learned that the school involved serves children with multiple challenges of a physical, communicative and health nature. We decided to contact the school principal, Carole Terrezzi, to learn more about their plans and how we could help. Based on this conversation, we sent a complimentary copy of *Finding Solutions to Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference*, along with other information. Calls and phone calls took place as the students got busy—learning and doing.

Part two...Carole Terrezzi

The Bleshman school is part of the Bergen County (NJ) Special School Services School District—a highly specialized district that is committed to serving the needs of persons with disabilities. The Bleshman Program is designed for students ages 3-21 with multiple disabilities and consists of an intensive therapy program including speech, occupational and physical therapy. The goal is to promote independence and allow each student to reach his/her highest potential. However, my staff and I see this mandate in a different light. We believe that our students possess a myriad of abilities. It is our function to identify and capitalize on them.



Cindy O'Neill, student, and Carole Terrezzi,
Principal

Similar to their non-disabled peers, our students possess individual personalities, concerns, talents and interests. Four years ago a Student Council was formed and (along with their teacher advisors) have been involved in many projects. Several of these projects have focussed on helping those who are less fortunate than they are. The notion of disabled students recognizing that others need them may seem foreign, but this is an outcome of our program. Students learn that they have many gifts to offer to others and that they can make a difference. As you will read in Cindy O'Neill's (a student) letter, they are making a difference!

The Bleshman students have made a difference in my life. They have taught me that it is easier to face the world with a smile, no matter what our circumstances are. They have taught me that simple pleasures can bring great joy and satisfaction. Most of all, I have learned that taking small steps forward is better than taking no steps at all. I am honored and privileged to be their principal.

Part three...Letter from Cindy O'Neill

I attend the Bleshman School in Paramus, New Jersey. Our school is for physically challenged and mentally deficient students. Our class and one other class make up the Bleshman Student Council. Last month we held a canned food drive. Students and teachers were asked to bring one can of food to school. We collected over 200 cans of food, which were donated to The Center for Food Action in Mahwah, NJ. Next month we will collect stamps to send to terminally ill patients, so that they can answer their mail. We are happy that we can make a difference in the world.

For further information about The Bleshman School, please contact Carole Terrezzi at (201) 262-7444



Back to The Barricades...

by Warren Belasco

Having witnessed/survived some of the recent IMF/World Bank demonstrations, I thought I'd share a few impressions. Most striking is the way that globalization and sustainability have become rallying points for this new wave of left activism. Although there were dozens of disparate groups involved in the protests, concerns about food security and the future of food production were high on most protesters' lists. Clearly we who have been pushing our students to see the food system as a way to think globally have made some impact. And the impact on Washington this week was huge, as the city was virtually paralyzed for several days. I've seen many demonstrations in DC—many of them much larger and much scarier—but I've never seen the city so spooked. The IMF/Bank meetings went on, but the federal government closed down—and usually it takes a fairly large snowstorm (in DC that's 6+ inches) to do that.

As an observer of the hegemonic process by which dissent is tamed and redirected, I must also say that mainstream news coverage of this event followed the classic dynamic of marginalizing the politics while romanticizing the look. Thus the Washington Post's reports focused either on the relatively rare acts of confrontation and conflict or on the co-optable style elements, especially hair and dress. From a boho-fashion standpoint the protests were inevitably disappointing, as there is just no "look" that can upset anyone in late capitalist culture; it is virtually inevitable that this year's Seattle threads will be next year's mall-wear. Ditto for food. Stories about what youthful protesters ate and drank used two familiar frames: the ironic ("rebels against corporate capitalism sip \$2 Cokes and \$3 lattes...") or the radical/gourmet ("cute blue-eyed anarchist breakfasts on spicy beans at trendy Ethiopian cafe...") Given consumer culture's unrelenting appropriation of unconventional tastes and gestures, perhaps the most subversive stance in the next wave might be for everyone to march in business suits (as in the 1963 March on Washington). As for non-cooptable food, I can't think of any. And as for those wonderful giant puppets (some of which were seized by DC police as fire hazards), I expect to see them sometime soon in an edgy commercial for a new dot com— or maybe in some feel-good ads for the World Bank.

"...given the energy and upbeat mood of the people in Washington's streets this past weekend, I think there's much more to come."

But there were many other elements that were less vulnerable to ridicule or appropriation. Except for the speechy, Old Left-style rally on Sunday (emceed by Michael Moore) this was an affair that used highly innovative methods of communication, organization, and conflict resolution that impressed our quasi-sympathetic police chief and totally mystified the Washington Post, which was largely unable to identify and isolate celebrity leaders mainly because there weren't any. Many protesters came in small affinity groups that maintained order without clear hierarchy. And most important, this was an event that offered up a pretty complex critique of global capitalism. To be sure the focus on the Bank and Fund may have exaggerated the culpability of these institutions (while obscuring the role of the larger economic interests they serve), but when was the last time anyone grabbed the headlines with a discussion of structural adjustment or debt relief? It's been a long time since the obscure workings of international capital have received such attention and exposure, and given the energy and upbeat mood of the people in Washington's streets this past weekend, I think there's much more to come.

Warren Belasco is Professor of American Studies at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. He teaches several courses on the culture, politics, and history of the food system.

Coming next issue...

The RESULTS Educators Network (REN).

Learn all about the program and how you can participate.

Connecting Small Farms to Schools: The Farm to School Initiative...

by Noreen Springstead

I can distinctly remember the food from my school cafeteria being extremely unappealing. From soggy pizza with processed cheese to sodium enhanced french fries, the choices were limited and unappetizing. Healthy eating was clearly not a priority of the school. Studies show there is a direct connection between good nutrition and cognitive development. A balanced diet with fresh fruits and vegetables also improves our overall health, and decreases our chances of diabetes, hypertension, obesity and other diet-related diseases including cancer. Providing healthy food choices in school is the starting point for life-long nutritious eating habits that can prevent disease, increase our well being and reconnect us to the land.

I'm not sure if much has changed since I was on the school lunch line, but I would imagine that the food is still not that great. The Farm to School Initiative is an exciting project that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service has launched to bring together small farms and local schools. This initiative serves the dual purpose of creating new markets for small family farmers and improving the health of children in school. Besides serving these two primary functions, the greater impact of this initiative can be seen in many other areas.

**KIDS welcomes the
400 members of the
American Dietetic
Association (ADA)
Hunger and
Malnutrition
Dietetic Practice
Group as readers of
the KIDS Newsletter.**

Local food is grown and harvested by farmers and then sold to the school meals program. This creates a stabilizing situation for family farmers who at present are going out of business daily. Since food is grown and distributed locally, the distance that the food travels from the field to your plate has been drastically reduced, thus cutting down on transportation costs and negative environmental impact. Farmers also teach kids in the classroom about how food is grown and the importance of incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables into their diet.

The farmers visit to the school plays a vital role in making the connection of where food comes from and how it is grown and harvested. Many schools are reconnecting kids to the land by teaching them about farming and healthy eating. They are also utilizing fresh food in cooking programs. As kids become more familiarized with different types of fresh foods, their attitudes about healthy eating are improved. By incorporating the benefits of healthy eating into classroom curriculum, the chances of a student making healthy food choices in the school cafeteria is increased. Schools that are experimenting with the Farm to School Initiative have seen a dramatic increase in salad bar participation and healthy food choices. Other meals that are prepared at the school incorporate the fresh foods brought in from the farmers.

As attitudes and eating habits change in the school, the long-term health of children improves. These dietary changes and attitudes are then transferred to the home where children educate their families about how to prepare healthy foods and the benefits of healthy food choices on their lives.

Noreen Springstead is Program Director of World Hunger Year.

For more information contact: USDA's Food and Nutrition Services Communications and Governmental Affairs 3101 Park Center Drive Alexandria, VA 22302 703-305-2000 Website: www.fns.usda.gov/fns. E-mail: webmaster@fns.usda.gov

Look for REN in the next issue!

KIDS TEACHER GUIDE AVAILABLE

***Finding Solutions To Hunger: Kids Can Make A Difference
by Stephanie Kempf.***

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