



The TRANSFORMER

Supporting and celebrating facilitators of AVP workshops

AVP and Our Youth

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Each issue is written by a different local group around the theme of their choosing. Articles for this issue were compiled by the AVP-USA Youth Committee.

AVP and Our Youth

A Vision for the Future

By Judy Meikle

It has been more than thirty years since those early workshops in Green Haven and Auburn. A fortuitous coming together of sharp minds in the prison movement, social activism among the Quakers and practical non-violent expertise from the civil rights arena gave birth to an extraordinary process that we have come to know as AVP.

In the United States, our grassroots structure of local volunteer organizations supports the work in prisons, and our national organization supports the local groups. Community workshops are used mainly as a vehicle to recruit and train new volunteers to go into prisons. As an organization, we do not have a cohesive strategy to take AVP into new fields. If we are to grow and thrive for the next thirty years, we need a vision to take us to the next level. I believe that vision has to include a focus on our youth.

In July I had the pleasure of attending the NAACP 100th Convention in New York City, and I heard their president and CEO, Benjamin Jealous, speak about how the virus known as racism has mutated in our country—this thing that has crushed black children’s dreams used to be slavery, Jim Crow and segregation, and now in the 21st century, it is the school to prison pipeline. For a comprehensive review of this phenomenon, I urge you to read the report by the Children’s Defense Fund: *America’s Cradle to Prison Pipeline* (available online at www.childrensdefense.org). In this report, they state that no single organization or few organizations can tackle this looming national catastrophe alone. The neglect, underachievement and abandonment of our children manifested in the *Cradle to Prison Pipeline* “must become the agenda not only for the Black and Latino communities but for the entire nation for the next decade.”



As Ben Jealous spoke to us in New York City, he held up bold dreams for the NAACP. He reminded us there was a reason why Martin Luther King didn’t say, “I have a plan!” It is important to first think big, and then take the first step. So, when I think about AVP and

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our role in dismantling that pipeline, I have big dreams. The first thing I think about is that after thirty years, we have an immense resource right at hand—strong men and women, trained AVP facilitators who have come through that pipeline and are forever changed by the experience. These peacemakers are already hard at work with youth in our prisons (see the articles by Generous Jose and Merciful Minister); and when they come home, we have the opportunity to connect them with young people in a meaningful way through AVP.

I envision local AVP groups securing funding to employ newly released AVP facilitators as community organizers. These organizers would identify community groups that are working with youth at points along the pipeline, make connections and partnerships and set up AVP workshops and support groups. We know the skills from AVP will empower the youth to become part of the solution rather than the problem. What is the first step in making this dream a reality? To create this model where I live here in Connecticut. With funding from my Quaker Meeting, I have worked with two formerly incarcerated facilitators, and we have presented workshops at an alternative high school, an after school program for court-adjudicated high school boys and a community college. I do not have the funding to create actual jobs—that is the next step.

For many years, AVP has been a provider of volunteer services to the Department of Corrections. The transforming power that is at the heart of our process is also a transforming power for social change. I hold the vision of AVP as a force for change with the potential to impact the correctional pipeline at either end. We can be part of the national agenda for both preventative measures for youth and reentry considerations, and the two can be linked in a powerful way.

Judy Meikle (Jubilant Judy) is Clerk of the AVP USA Youth Committee and facilitates in AVP Fairfield County.

Take Them by the Hand

By Generous Jose

Every day people complain about this place—the cells, the food, the bars, the phones. . . . I am asking that you take a moment and ask yourself: "Now what?"

How many of us are conscious of the people starving in this world? How many of us think of the children living on the streets, who have nothing to drink but tears? I am not saying we should like the tasteless lima beans. I am saying we have a choice either to begin our meal cloaked by discontent or in gratitude that God gave us nourishment. This choice is about developing a state of mind—an *alternative to complaining*.

Each of you—each of us—was born with the innate ability to rise up and transcend mediocrity. Sometimes it is hard to identify with those starving in so-called "third-world nations," so I will give you an example of another group that is starving—our youth.

As we sit decaying in these cages, our youth are starving for our guidance. They do not have someone to take them by the hand and guide

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Schoolyard TP

By *Lighthearted Laura Roberts*

In AVP/HIPP, kids learn how to use surprise and humor to short circuit a fight. Here is a story a participant shared with us.

In the part of the city where I live, fights are always happening. We have a kid in our group, Jack. I guess you would call him a street-smart kid, always a few steps ahead of the group.

One day at school a scuffle broke out between Nakeem and

Hector—kids gathered ‘round, egging them on, taunting them with barbed comments and insults. Jack jumped into the middle of it all and in the blink of an eye stirred up quite a small crowd of people calling and motioning more bystanders toward the staging area. Next thing you know, Jack doffs his hat and starts passing it around the circle, soliciting donations for the show that is about to begin. A couple of dollars land in the hat, and then a few more. Jack keeps up like a carnival barker until a tidy sum materializes. Nakeem and

Hector, distracted by Jack’s antics, notice the prize accumulating for the impending fight.

Nakeem: “If you’re collecting money for spectator rights to our fight, you have to give us our share.”

Jack: “Now boys, I’m a businessman. I see opportunities for a profit, and I take them. I’m a salesman and a promoter. There are plenty of other opportunities for me to turn a pure profit. I see no reason to pay you for a fight that you were willing to stage for free just a minute ago.”

Hector: “Then we won’t fight.”

Jack: “Then I will take my business elsewhere.”

No fight that day.

AVP and HIPP delve into the complexities of educating young people in transforming themselves and their school environment. Kids have a chance to learn new skills, to try them out with role-plays and to inspire each other with stories and creativity.

I will never forget the sparkle in the eye of the storyteller. Something mysterious, mischievous and quite benevolent had happened in the schoolyard that day. The two would-be pugilists walked away unbloodied, and Jack walked away with \$25 in his back pocket.

Decreased Violence and Improved Conflict Resolution Skills

Project WIN Evaluation for Middle School Students

By *Laura Roberts, Peter Yeomans, Susan Ferro-Almeida*

Summary: An evaluation of a conflict resolution program for early adolescents entitled Project WIN (Working out Integrated Negotiations) in Pennsylvania.

Social interdependence theory posits that the ideal conditions for constructive conflict resolution exist when:

- there is a cooperative environment and
- the disputants are skilled in negotiation strategies.

Project WIN teaches skills to cultivate a more cooperative classroom environment and teaches specific negotiation strategies.

Transforming power was used to teach students about compassion, empathy and optimism with the goal of helping them cultivate a more cooperative classroom environment. For example, some of the negotiation strategies taught in Project WIN were: (a) listening skills, (b) anger management, (c) using “I” messages to assert one’s feelings during a conflict situation, (d) expressing one’s needs in a conflict situation and (e) generating solutions that meet one’s own needs and the needs of the opponent.

The evaluation, conducted in a low-income, urban middle school in southeast Pennsylvania, showed the program was correlated with fewer reports of violence. In addition, students who participated in the program had improved their ability to apply conflict resolution tools in hypothetical conflict situations. Moreover, students learned to transform competitive situations into cooperative ones.

Additional links to empirical work targeting Project WIN can be found on the following web page:

http://robertseducationalresearch.com/services_sat.html

Study available at:

www.nmsa.org/portals/0/pdf/publications/RMLE/rmle_vol30_no8.pdf

Quotes and Facts

All quotes and facts highlighted throughout this edition of the *Transformer* are taken from the Children’s Defense Fund: *America’s Cradle to Prison Pipeline Report 2007*. Find the full report at: www.childrensdefense.org/helping-americas-children/cradle-to-prison-pipeline-campaign.

AVP Youth Program in Sing Sing Correctional Facility

By Merciful Minister

Today, many young, incarcerated men come from broken homes and disadvantaged communities, lacking the education, discipline and social skills to prepare them to deal effectively with life's challenges. An influx of ever-younger inmates filling correctional facilities throughout New York State is coming from city and county jails prevalent with gang activity. They bring with them their gang affiliations and an increase in the incidence of inmate violence. With little to no experience interacting with older men and positive role models, these young men lack the ability to make life-enhancing decisions and struggle to re-adjust to society and become productive citizens upon their release.

With a strong belief in self-improvement, self-examination and self-correction, the Alternatives to Violence Project in Sing Sing Correctional Facility has established a youth track to encourage young men to identify constructive

activities and become involved in positive alternatives on an ongoing basis. The objectives of the youth program are to reduce the number of inmates joining gangs and the incidence of violence, to improve social skills for effective interactions with others, to increase young inmates' awareness of various issues affecting their lives and their chances of readjusting to society upon release and to create opportunities for AVP Big Brothers to share their life experiences and help the young men in making responsible decisions.

The Sing Sing youth program conducts AVP workshops specifically for the age range 16 through 25 and holds weekly support groups. Group discussions, guest speakers, educational videos and support from outside organizations enrich the experience of the participants. For ongoing membership, participants must complete a Basic AVP workshop, be active in constructive programming, recog-

nize the need for personal change, be willing to dedicate their time to the program, be willing to help themselves and others and strive to live a positive life.

The first youth workshop was held in August 2008, and young facilitators have been trained through T4F workshops and regularly show leadership skills in weekly support groups as they step up to facilitate gatherings and guide discussions. Sing Sing is a leading facility in New York state prisons with regard to educational programs that can be proud of the addition of AVP youth workshops.

Merciful Minister is an AVP Facilitator at Sing Sing Correctional Facility, Ossining, New York.

"It is easier to build strong children than to fix broken men."

*—Attributed to
Frederick Douglass*

Workshop Organizers Needed

Friends, if you live in Rhode Island, Vermont, D.C., West Virginia, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Alaska, or Hawaii—here's your chance to help AVP. These are approximately the states where we have no one regularly giving AVP workshops—so we are actively seeking someone to help organize them.

Sounds like a scary job? It will be a lot easier when we feed you the names of isolated AVPeople who are (hopefully) just waiting to be asked to help out. Other assistance may be available through the Traveling Facilitators program with some financial assistance available through Seed Grants.

If you are even mildly interested in exploring this opportunity, let me know! Thanks!

Marge (margeschlitt@mindspring.com), Chair, AVP-USA Committee of Local and Regional Groups (CLARG)

AVP Youth Newsletter

The Youth Committee would love to hear the news about your youth program! Keep us up to date with what is happening in your area; send us a quick e-mail, a couple of paragraphs or a full article—whatever you are moved to share. There is so much happening with teens and young adults, here and internationally. We would like to create another newsletter next year. Send your contributions to AVP-Youth@googlegroups.com.

Help Increase the Peace and AVP Youth

By Jubilant Judy Meikle

Help Increase the Peace, or HIP, is a project of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and was started in 1990 following the tragic murder of a 14-year-old in Syracuse. Modeled after AVP, the first HIP workshops were introduced as a pilot project in two Syracuse schools. The program was developed for middle and high school participants.

There are three levels of HIP workshops, and participants have the opportunity to become facilitators. There is an emphasis

on developing community and interpersonal skills while teaching non-violent approaches to conflict resolution. The concept of transforming power is de-emphasized in the context of a school setting and is presented as the rubric: "Think HIP." More emphasis is placed on envisioning taking personal action for social change and empowering participants to make those steps.

Though originally foreseen as a school program, HIP has been adapted for many settings, including colleges, juvenile detention centers and prisons, commu-

nity youth centers and activist and service organizations.

I am often asked, "What is the difference between HIP and AVP?" I have come to think the most significant difference is not in the programs because—in essence—the process, content and intent are very similar. Rather, the major difference between HIP and AVP is in the nature of the organizational models—AFSC being corporate and hierarchical, with paid staff responsible for programming, and AVP being folksy and grassroots, with a volunteer network delivering the program. There are pros and cons to both models, and both organizations have much wisdom to share with each other.

To that end, it has been part of the work of the AVP Youth Committee to dialog with AFSC. We have an open and positive relationship with Bonney Mattingly, Director of Youth Empowerment through Conflict Resolution. She presented at the 2009 AVP-USA Conference on Long Island. We share the goal of reaching as many youth as possible with the transformative energy of our work.

HIP-AVP-Youth Networking Group

We have a Yahoo group set up to provide a forum for networking among HIP and AVP facilitators who are engaged with young people in community building, conflict resolution, and peace making.

This is a discussion forum to share such topics as: success stories, announcements pertaining to HIP or AVP gatherings and activities, methods and techniques specific to working with youth, problems encountered and solutions discov-

ered, how to generate interest in HIP/AVP workshops among youth, how to work with school and youth group administration, how to develop expertise among new facilitators, how to assure the quality of your youth program and other topics pertaining to using HIP or AVP in work with youth.

If you would like to join this group, contact Alan Taplow at ataplow@vtlink.net. Request Join hip-avp-youth@yahoo.com.

Take them by the hand

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them to school, to football practice, to college or to adulthood. Instead, they have someone taking them by the hand and guiding them to a liquor store, to a gun, to a gang, to the grave or to a cage, where they, too, will be dissatisfied with lima beans.

So, be dissatisfied with prison, and do not be satisfied until you have developed the tools that will keep you out! Be dissatisfied with ignorance and find satisfaction in learning to identify and conquer your own shortcomings and flaws. Be dissatisfied with stagnation and begin the journey towards realizing your potential. And as you begin this journey, take a youth by the hand and guide him or her. The question is "Where will you lead her or him?"

Generous Jose is an AVP Facilitator at Iowa State Penitentiary, Ft. Madison, Iowa.

New HIP Manual

The long-awaited 2009 fourth edition of the HIP Manual is available with updated information and new graphics. The cost is \$30, including shipping and handling. Contact:

Bonney Mattingly, Director
Youth Empowerment Through
Conflict Resolution Project Amer-
ican Friends Service Committee
Middle Atlantic Region
(410) 323-7348
(410) 323-7292 fax
bmattingly@afsc.org

Experiences as a HIP Trainer

By Kathryn Liss

My first HIP workshop was with a former staff member of AFSC (American Friends Service Committee) who used a five-day model to train teachers in the Baltimore County school system who would use the methodology in their classrooms without calling it HIP. I learned it was possible to prepare facilitators by spending two days on the Basic, followed immediately by a day looking at facilitation principles and two days of the participants delivering the Advanced workshop to each other in teams of three. I continued to use this model throughout my career at AFSC, presenting this method on the East Coast, in California, Tokyo, Japan and Hong Kong.

One of the trips I took to California offered me an opportunity to work with the local AVP group there. With Dottie Joos and others as co-facilitators, we presented a Training for Facilitators that qualified the participants to lead either AVP or HIP as they wished. We found that our methods were very similar and it was easy for us to work together. After that, several AVP facilitators came to five-day HIP workshops in either California or Washington and found that what they learned most was the difference in pacing when working with young people. The younger the participants, the faster things go.

Facilitating in Japan and Hong Kong called on my experience in cross-cultural communication. With a master's degree in this field and a year of living in Kenya, I am very aware that much of what we share in HIP has a cultural bias. Probably the most challenging is "I" messages. In Japan, they wanted to

determine how to alter them themselves. As our language differences are so great, they asked that I just teach it the way we do it and they would figure it out for themselves. In Hong Kong, using "I" messages fit the culture more. I worked with interpreters to make the principles clear without being too attached to the form.

In Hong Kong I spent three weeks—each with a very different group of people. The first workshop was with middle school students, the second with incarcerated drug addicts and the third with college students. I was able to use the same Basic agenda, working with a team of local people who had been trained initially in AVP. However, the way the workshops unfolded varied based on age and experience. Again, I found the older and better-educated participants were able to spend a great deal more time processing the activities and the younger ones wanted more Lifts (Light and Livelies) and did not want to go so in depth. The incarcerated young men were so much like the inner city youth here that it was surprising—doing role plays where they wanted to bring violence into the action and having a hard time coming up with non-violent solutions.

All in all, the work I did at AFSC was a blessing, giving me an opportunity to get to know many interesting people, hopefully touching their lives in the deep way they touched mine.

Kathryn Liss (Karismatic Kathryn) was the National Coordinator of Help Increase the Peace from 2002 until 2007 as an employee of the American Friends Service Committee, Middle Atlantic Region.

Friends for a Non-violent World Youth Program Ends

By Shining Shannon Carlson

Although Friends for a Non-violent World (FNVW), of which AVP-MN is one of three programs, approached the youth program with open minds and hearts, it was unable to continue development of its youth program, primarily due to the economy. Minnesota grantors were re-evaluating and shifting their priorities according to the biggest basic needs facing the State of Minnesota. The grantors' primary focuses were: food, emergency services, shelter, youth and the performing arts. While positive youth development programs remained a primary focus, new programs in organizations with no funding history were not in the running.

Quality and evidence-based program evaluation are major focuses for both Minnesota foundations and the federal government. FNVW would have been starting from scratch in establishing a history of providing effective service delivery, having not done data collection and program evaluation up to this point.

A final block for FNVW was that it had very little history of outreach to the diverse neighborhood in which it is housed and few organization-wide skills in cross-cultural outreach to youth or adults. For all these reasons, FNVW did not feel equipped with the proper resources to move ahead.



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58 Min.— DVD-R VHS	16.00	_____	_____
VP Picture Sharing CD (190 Pictures for use in Picture Sharing Exercise)	10.00	_____	_____
VL 25 to Life DVD — Stories of 6 former NY inmates for use in youth programs	10.00	_____	_____
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Youth Efforts in Seattle

By Roger Kluck

I have to say “efforts” because as of yet, despite a year and a half of effort, we have managed to get very little in the way of results in implementing youth programs in Seattle. I sometimes feel like Thomas Edison when he said, after failing more than 1,000 times when trying to create the light bulb, “I have not failed 1,000 times. I have successfully discovered 1,000 ways to NOT make a light bulb.”

Over a year ago, some of us resolved to bring AVP Youth and/or the Help Increase the Peace Project into area schools and elsewhere. I worked with Lisa Roy and Eileen Hartwings to seek to bring this about. We discovered a lot of ways not to start a program. We can attest that it is long, hard work to get youth programs into institutions. Lately we were joined by Reggie Nisby, who received his AVP training as an inmate in Soledad and Folsom. (Thank you, California AVP!) Reggie knows how to get the kids’ attention, and they listen when he leads.

Seattle has seen increasing youth-on-youth violence recently, with about 14 young men being killed in the last 16 months and about four shootings for every killing. The city mayor formulated a Youth Violence Prevention Initiative and delivered it in September of last year. Unfortunately, it was drafted entirely within his office with glaring holes in it and with little to no opportunity to amend or improve it in the near future. It is a classic case of what Einstein meant when he said, “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created

them.” By not seeking public input, the plan is just a rearrangement of items tried before. It contains lots of mentoring, tutoring and jobs elements, police officers in middle schools, etc. It has no restorative justice element. It has no meaningful conflict transformation element. But what it has done is created a dialog and forums for raising the issues.

I have spent about 25 to 40 hours a week for over a year now, speaking with teachers, administrators, drug court staff, probation officers, parents, mothers of slain youth, police, kids, pastors, youth leaders, public service nonprofits—virtually anyone who will listen. AVP’s track record appeals to nearly everyone. But the amount of work needed to bring programs to fruition seems largely to preclude volunteer efforts. Also, finding funding is exceedingly difficult in today’s economy.

But after more than a year, finally we are gaining traction. We have the support of the school district’s Office of Intervention and Prevention. We have a school committed to a series of workshops in the coming year. This month we hope to offer a Basic workshop to two youth services nonprofits, with the aim of enticing their young staff to become facilitators eventually. Most importantly, after constant meetings, presentations and events, people are beginning to seek us out and now often know what we are about before we introduce ourselves. I can only hope that in six months we will be telling



you a very different story—one of workshops and new young facilitators. Other schools and districts are expressing interest. Our community workshops (six in the last two years) have brought in several interested younger people and others interested in youth work. However, we still are not ready for a Training for Trainers for them.

We have partnered with Camp Brotherhood, just north of Seattle—a wonderful interfaith camp founded by a priest and a rabbi that now has Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist support as well. The camp has pledged serious support to our commitment to youth programs and has given us a wonderful place to do workshop retreats. Most excitingly, they have been partnering with the Seattle World Affairs Council to bring State Department visitors through our region. I have been able to do several PowerPoint presentations on AVP for foreign visitors, followed by a few brief exercises, such as concentric circles with a

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Iraq-Jordan AVP program

Building Momentum with Refugee Youth and Adults

By Alex Perrotti

Drumming, dancing, cheers and laughter marked the successful completion of the first Training for Facilitators workshop in Amman. The 19 newly trained facilitators (nine of whom are less than 18 years old and did most of the dancing and drumming!) expressed deep joy and gratitude for their experience in the series of work-

shops and their feelings of being part of the AVP “family.” They are eager to begin facilitating and be involved in helping AVP grow in the Middle East.

Three local Arabic-speaking apprentice facilitators, who had been trained in 2008, also had their chance to facilitate in the youth and adult workshop series that ran

concurrently throughout July. Their participation and leadership mark an important step in the process of AVP’s adaptation and integration into the local culture.

The eight volunteer international facilitators involved in the project soon will disperse to the far corners of the globe—exhausted, satisfied and grateful for having had the opportunity to support AVP’s development in Jordan for Iraqi and Palestinian refugees and local Jordanians.

Although the language barrier may have been the biggest facilitation challenge, it forced us to rely on the universal languages of laughing, smiling and singing—together which are, after all, some of the most pleasurable parts of community building, particularly across cultures.

Despite generous support for the July workshops from Relief International, a nongovernmental organization that serves refugees in Jordan, AVP-Iraq-Jordan requires financial, facilitator and resource support to complete the cultural adaptation of the Arabic AVP manuals and begin holding community meetings and workshops for Iraqi and Palestinian refugees. In addition, as our participants and facilitators receive immigration status in the United States, we are looking to link them to existing AVP groups. Please contact Ann J. Ward at ajw109@psu.edu or 962.796.984.621 if your local AVP group is interested in supporting AVP-Iraq-Jordan in any way.

Alex Perrotti facilitates in California prisons, recently became an Outside Prison Coordinator.



Graduates from the AVP Advanced Workshop in Amman Jordan with Facilitators Carolann and Ray Boucher, Cecile Birch and Ann Ward.

Youth Efforts in Seattle

Continued from page 8

cross-cultural focus. Their enthusiastic responses have led the World Affairs Council to keep increasing the amount of time we have. This month, Beth Lenholt and I facilitated a six-hour mini-workshop to build community among 10 Iraqi youth and five American teens—an amazing sight! We hold out hope for some day presenting two-day workshops.

So, perhaps it is not 1,000 ways not to grow a youth program but

rather the first 1,000 steps of a long journey. We are starting to get great reviews and wonderful traveling companions. I hope next year we will be back introducing our great collection of youth facilitators. Wish us luck! We are expecting the best and trusting the process!

Roger Kluck (Responsible Roger) has facilitated in prisons since 2004, trained with Friends Peace Teams in Guatemala and El Salvador and launched the community program, Peace between People, the Seattle AVP sponsor.

Roots of Reconciliation in Rwanda

Healing Scars of Genocide Among Rwandan Children

By Kirsten Mandala

As Reed College's recipient of the Davis Project for Peace, I will be traveling to Rwanda in cooperation with the African Great Lakes Initiative. We will be working in Kigali to teach peaceful conflict resolution and reconciliation to children and teens in an effort to promote positive healing in the wake of civil war by helping to dissolve prejudice and producing understanding and tolerance.

The goal of our Project for Peace is to promote understanding and acceptance in youth who are already steeped in a culture of intolerance and burdened with the loss of a parent. It is estimated that over one million orphans now live in Rwanda due to the combined effects of HIV/AIDS and the genocide. Millions more children have lost a single parent or have a parent in jail. We are dedicated to aiding Rwanda's healing process, and we believe helping to reconcile the youth is the answer. Our hope is to bridge the gap between the two ethnic groups when

AVP in Western Australian Schools

By Optimistic Olwyn Maddock

At Warnbro Community High School in Western Australia, I have been a volunteer facilitator for AVP and also their school psychologist for 10 years. We have trained students in all three levels of AVP. In late November 2008, student facilitators (the first in Western Australia) were on the team for a Basic workshop for Year 10 Peer Support Leaders. The AVP-WA program has replaced the peer support-training program and is now the training platform for the Year 11 Peer Support Leaders. Each workshop has included staff members so as to build the school capacity—there are now two staff members who are trained facilitators and the potential to have at least another two to four by the end of the year

In 2008, the three levels of AVP were endorsed by the Western Australian Curriculum Council. As a result, students who participate in AVP are able to claim credit towards their WACE (leaving certificate). Check out the website for more information—the program is called Peaceful Pathways: <http://www.curriculum.wa.edu.au/Apps/EP/display.aspx?type=4>.

the children are at a young age—especially when, in the absence of a parent, they already may be experiencing tribal prejudices and animosity.

We will work with two groups of 20 children per week, ages 5-12. We will be using both the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) and the Compass Manual on Human Rights Education with Young People, published by the Council of Europe. The skills that AVP teaches, such as conflict resolution and effective communication, are valuable for building a society based on peace and tolerance. We hope to combine the two programs to create a new curriculum, using games and simulations that will foster trust between races, promote equality and education, address issues of poverty and encourage peaceful behavior and conflict resolution as an alternative to violence. It is our hope that through positive interaction with children from both tribes, our students will be more likely to see each other's humanity rather than judge based on tribal affiliation. We believe the key to rebuilding Rwanda is to bring up a generation without preconceived prejudices and hatred.

Kirsten Mandala (Kinetic Kirsten) has recently returned from her travels. Read her blog at www.root-sofreconciliationinrwanda.blogspot.com

We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made and his senses are being developed. To him, we cannot answer "Tomorrow." His name is "Today."

*Gabriela Mistral, Chilean poet, educator,
Nobel Laureate*

Innovative AVP/HIP in Sydney, Australia

By Katherine Smith, Malcolm Smith, John Michaelis & Ian Miles

AVP youth workshops began in Australia in 1993. These workshops were called HIP (Help Increase Peace) to differentiate the youth focus from community and prisons. The HIP program throughout Australia is an integral part of AVP. HIP facilitators are fully trained in both AVP and HIP and operate under the auspices of AVP in Australia.

A Behavior Team of 12 special education teachers who support students at risk with dysfunctional behavior and emotional problems in 40 inner city schools were trained as AVP/HIP facilitators. Led by Assistant Principal Julie Korner, they have averaged 75 HIP workshops per year for students aged 4 to 18.

They have adapted AVP/HIP processes and workshops to address the needs of various target groups:

- Individual students at risk: participating with a group of age peers
- Dysfunctional groups: HIP basics to build functional communities
- Marginalized minorities (e.g. Muslim, indigenous): workshops are often in partnership with their communities
- Class-year programs: All students in a class year participate in an HIP Basic with some progressing to Advanced, T4F and co-facilitation. School culture and behavior have changed dramatically.
- Entire school: All teachers are trained in AVP/HIP and Restorative Practice. HIP learning styles and content are embedded in the learning process. Rozelle Public School has become a model of excellence.
- Ages 4-8: TIP (Together In Peace) adapts HIP process for younger children.
- Teacher training in circle learning: teaching, using the HIP learning style
- Outdoor settings: wilderness workshops and indigenous youth camps
- Rainbow Circle workshops: addressing grief and loss, using art and music (manual available)
- Transitioning to work: for students at risk, combining morning HIP with afternoon work experience
- Training teachers in HIP: other districts, states, AVP groups and Papua New Guinea
- Transforming Conflict course: This is a derivative

of AVP/HIP for single teacher classes. It has reached over 50,000 Australian TAFE college students.

The AVP/HIP program draws together resources and processes from AVP, USA HIPP, Restorative Practice, Cooperative Learning, Circle Learning and Transformational Learning. It is the quality of facilitator training that is the key to the sustainability and effectiveness of the program.

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice methodology is fundamental to AVP/HIP in Sydney.

This includes the use of restorative questions to debrief activities, restorative listening, holding the space, the invisible facilitator, shining the light, acknowledgment rather than praise and recognizing integrative shame. For more information, see the AVP wiki website below.

The HIP Keys

AVP/HIP uses a set of keys that correspond with the elements of the AVP mandala. Young people pick the laminated colored keys that are important to them and often carry them throughout the workshop. They share how a key can unlock their situation. Young people associate "transformation" with the transformer toy. They use the expression "HIP happens" to encapsulate Transforming Power.



Summary

Because of the large number of workshops and the "low BS tolerance" of young people, Sydney HIP has become a melting pot for innovation. Sydney AVP community and prison workshops have benefitted greatly from the innovation and the inclusion of Restorative Practice stemming from the HIP program.

This article is a brief summary of this development. A detailed description is available at <http://avpwiki.wikispaces.com/HIP-Sydney>.

Katherine Smith (Calm Katherine), Malcolm Smith (Marvelling Malcolm), John Michaelis (Germi-nating John) & Ian Miles (Inspiring Ian) are facilitators with AVP Sydney, Australia, and can be reached at avpsydney@avp.org.au.

From AVP-USA Conference 2009

Determined Demetria

I was thinking of a way to describe my experience at my first AVP Conference (May 2009), and I came up with “it made me speechless!” However, those of you that I have had the opportunity to meet, work, and share time with already know that speechless and me rarely spend time together! So my challenge now is to inform, inspire, and captivate you. . . . Hold on!

When I was released in Dec. 2008, I had my AVP TP cards in one hand and my Bible in the other. When I was told that the National Conference was coming up in May 2009, I knew I that I HAD to go! And go I did! (Thanks everyone!)

It was exhilarating, inspirational, healing, loving, motivating, and filled with HOPE! Without HOPE there is nothing. I felt that HOPE, that Divine Power in me, through me, in everyone around me. It wrapped around us and wonderful bonding happened that will last a lifetime.

When I left I had two thoughts: this is something that I want ALL AVPers to experience, and I am so glad that the 2010 Conference is in Minnesota!

I began buzzing and talking about it as soon as we returned home. Knowing how I can go on, try to show Tenacious Terry some sympathy!

We have enthusiasm, motivation, committees, facilitators (from inside and out, new and long timers), community, and tons of HOPE, determination, and positivity to host the best conference ever! No excuses! See you here! Believe me, you don't want to miss this!

Minnesota will host the 2010 National Gathering over the Memorial Day weekend, May 28 to 31. The site we've selected is the Dunrovin Retreat Center in Marine on the St. Croix, www.dunrovin.org. We welcome ideas for speakers, theme, and workshops. Ideas can be forwarded to the AVP-L discussion list on the Internet. More details will be forthcoming in future *Transformer* issues, and look for your registration form by early in 2010.

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Put on your calendar:
May 29-31, 2010, for Annual Conference in Minnesota

AVP USA Youth Committee is dedicated to supporting the development of an intentional and sustainable youth program within AVP and empowering youth to practice non-violence as a way of life. If you are interested in joining the Committee by participating in our monthly conference calls or would like to know more about our work, please contact Judy Meikle at jubilantudy@mac.com.