



HEART *Matters*

Fall 2007
Newsletter

Humane Education...teaching kids to care

Message from HEART's Executive Director and Chair

Dear Friends, We are very pleased to update you about some of HEART's recent accomplishments and the steps we are taking to accelerate our growth to reach more students and educators interested in learning about humane education.

Our emphasis over the past year has been the completion of our assessment project to evaluate the impact of our Humane Living Program (HLP), featured on page two. We will soon have a comprehensive assessment report that provides measurable results of our efforts and the crucial need for humane education. Over 1,400 students in NYC public schools and summer camps have participated in our program and some of the teachers and students we reached share their thoughts on page two.

We have always envisioned HEART becoming a full-service provider of humane education and we are now reaching that level of programming with the expansion of our staff of instructors, who are featured on page three. This growth will allow us to reach over 4,000 students over the coming year. We are also increasing our teacher training services and collaborating with groups that have a network of members interested in humane education, such as the United Federation of Teachers and the American Bar Association.

HEART provides services without charge to schools and educators, thanks to a diversified group of generous donors, including individuals and foundations. We are also grateful for grants from government sources including the NYC Council's Manhattan Delegation, NYC Council Members Mendez, Palma and Arroyo, and NYS Senator Oppenheimer, who have endorsed our HLP.

Governmental support has also helped our advocacy efforts. A hearing in the NYC Council's Education Committee is scheduled to take place this December on the Humane Education Resolution sponsored by Council Member Avella to increase compliance with the NYS humane education mandate in city elementary schools. Furthermore, State Assembly Member Kavanagh has agreed to sponsor a bill that would strengthen the humane education mandate in Section 809 of the NYS Education Law.

We are driven to ensure that every child's life is touched by humane education. Please share your ideas with us on how we might continue to work collaboratively to expand our reach. Thank you for your contribution to our important mission and shared vision for our youth.

Warm regards,

Meena Alagappan, Esq.
Executive Director

Brad Goldberg
Chair

OUR MISSION

To foster compassion and respect for all living beings and the environment by educating youth and teachers in Humane Education. Our goal is the infusion of Humane Education into all educational settings.



Program expansion to reach THOUSANDS of students a year

In January 2006, HEART launched the Humane Living Program to educate students about animal welfare, environmental protection and social justice issues through a specially designed in-class instructional program on humane and character education. The program has since been implemented in seven elementary and middle schools in NYC and one elementary school in Westchester; over 1,400 students have participated in the program.

Our students not only acquired new knowledge about issues previously unknown to them, but also are now equipped with the skills and the motivation to act compassionately and respectfully toward all living beings. They are becoming advocates for positive societal change.

HEART is now focusing its efforts on reaching a larger segment of the student population.

We will serve students of all ages and grade levels

In addition to HEART's 10 lesson curriculum for grades 4-8, we have now added 25 individual lessons for middle and high school students and have created a series of lessons for pre-K through 3rd grade utilizing the engaging techniques of our drama education instructor.

We will offer a flexible menu of lessons

HEART will continue to offer its 10 lesson plan curriculum while also providing the option for teachers to choose abbreviated or specific lessons that best address the academic and personal needs and interests of their students.

We will bring our program to multiple educational venues

HEART will continue to implement the Humane Living Program in summer youth camps and will seek opportunities to partner with after school programs and other appropriate youth educational sites.

Completion of assessment study

HEART completed its 18-month assessment phase of the Humane Living Program in June 2007. The majority of findings from the first 6 months of the study have been extremely positive. In short, based on the evaluation instruments utilized, the majority of students showed: increased knowledge of the condition of child factory workers, the needs of wild animals, habitat destruction, air pollution, the greenhouse effect, and causes of bullying; increased concern for animals and the environment; and increased interest in joining a group to help animals or the environment. An executive summary of this preliminary data is available upon request. A complete report will be available for distribution in early 2008.

HEART welcomed at Fresh Air Fund and YMCA camps

Jennifer Irizarry, HEART instructor, conducted an abbreviated version of the Humane Living Program at three summer camps during July and August. Over 350 children, ranging in ages 11-15 years, were served at the Fresh Air Fund's Camp Mariah and Camp Anita Bliss Coler in Fishkill, NY, and at the West Side YMCA in Manhattan. She also offered humane education instruction training classes to ten counselors at the Fresh Air Fund camps.

Jennifer said of her experience: **"It was wonderful to work with students outside of the classroom. I found that the students were highly compelled by the issues we covered which included child labor and sweatshops, dog and cat overpopulation and reducing our carbon footprint. Lessons focused on group discussions and teamwork, such as creating public service announcements to post around camp."**



Teachers and students are saying...

"You taught the kids that it is 'cool to care' and that they can make a change in the community...Please come back next year!" Elementary school teacher

"I have watched students look at package and product labels to see if they were tested on animals, Also, they make efforts to save energy (i.e. turn lights off...)." Middle school teacher

"I wish that everybody could treat animals like they treat themselves so that all animals are safe and...not even one animal gets injured. I wish that you could keep on teaching us with the fun things you do." Elementary school student

"During the program, I learned about some of the problems in the world. Some of them are global warming, pollution, and habitat destruction. One thing that I plan to do is that I want to recycle a lot more. I also plan to tell a lot of people not to pollute, throw garbage on the ground, destroy forests and woods, and many other things. I plan to do that because every person can make a difference." Elementary school student

Meet our Instructors

With support from an expanded staff, HEART is prepared to bring its programs and services to a higher level. We are pleased to introduce our talented teachers.



“I love that HEART looks at developing humane character traits in students that can apply to all areas of their lives,” says Bob Schwalb, who has been HEART’s full-time instructor for two years. Prior to HEART, Bob founded the Chicago Humane Education Group, a project of social and environmental entrepreneurs dedicated to teaching students to be critical and creative thinkers, as well as inspiring them to make a positive difference in the world.

Bob received his Masters degree in Education, with a focus on Humane Education, from Cambridge College.

“Children whose sense of compassion and concern is expanded outward from the self to become inclusive of all that makes up our biosphere-people, animals and earth-are poised to become models of change and leaders who will stimulate and inspire others to follow suit,” says Jennifer Irizarry of the impact of humane education on children.



Jennifer joined HEART in March 2007. She is a NYC Teaching Fellow and taught bilingual elementary and special education in the South Bronx for two years. Her accomplishments include developing an interdisciplinary curriculum at the School for Human Rights in Brooklyn and at The Performing Arts Academy in Newburgh, NY. She also facilitated teacher training workshops in the design and implementation of human rights studies for schools in Santiago, Chile.



“As a teacher, I always tried to lay a foundation of humane education beneath all the content and the test prep. I wanted my students to know they were people with needs first, and students second. With HEART, I hope to spread that sense of compassion to many more classrooms,” says Meredith Jacks, who joined the HEART team in August 2007 after working for three years as a middle school teacher in Oakland, CA and

Sarasota, FL. Meredith became passionate about education largely through her experiences in Havana, Cuba and Hyderabad, India where she helped meet children’s educational needs.

“I have been incorporating humane education into my teaching for a long time as an arts educator, using the arts as a means to help kids learn more about themselves, others and the world around them. I am really excited to work for HEART-its mission and pedagogy really match mine,” says Karina Naumer, who joined HEART in August



2007. Karina was previously a drama education specialist and holds an M.F.A degree in Child Drama from Arizona State University. She is the founder and previous director for 13 years of Creative Arts Team’s Early Learning Through the Arts/NYC Wolf Trap Program, a drama education program in residence within City University of New York. For 10 years, Karina was also an instructor within New York University’s Paul A. Kaplan Center for Educational Drama.

Humane Education News

Collaboration to expand geographic reach of humane education

HEART is working with the American Bar Association’s Animal Law Committee and Law in Public Service Committee on a public interest project to provide humane education instruction to students at local elementary schools. American Bar Association attorneys will be trained to teach humane education using HEART’s curriculum on animal welfare issues designed for 4th and 5th grade students. The project will first be implemented in DC and NY, where HEART will help conduct the first two teacher training sessions, and will later expand to other geographical regions.

Hearing in City Council to enforce humane education mandate

NYC Council Member Tony Avella introduced a resolution that calls on the NYC Department of Education to help increase compliance with the NYS humane education statute by issuing a memorandum to all elementary school principals to direct their teachers to act in accordance with this requirement. HEART was instrumental in drafting this legislation and securing the support of 30 Council Members. A hearing in the Education Committee is scheduled for December 12, 2007. We are very grateful to Council Member Avella for his commitment to humane education.

Strengthening state humane education law

New York State Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh (Manhattan-74) has agreed to sponsor legislation that would strengthen compliance with the humane education mandate in Section 809 of the NYS Education Law. We are very appreciative that Assembly Member Kavanagh values humane education and is responding to our request to strengthen the mandate.

Learn, Know, Act– You Can Make a Difference

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Did you know? Human slavery is illegal throughout most of the world, but there are 27 million human slaves today, more than ever before. Although the 13th amendment outlawed slavery in the United States in 1865, human trafficking, the modern-day slave trade, has occurred in practically every state in the nation, most often in industries like agriculture, prostitution and domestic service.

What can you do about it?

- Learn more by visiting web sites like www.freetheslaves.net or read about the many forms slavery now takes in Kevin Bales's book, *Disposable People*.
- Educate others by writing letters to politicians and by speaking to friends and family members.
- Buy products that are Fair Trade certified.

Did you know? Billions of farmed animals are raised on U.S. factory farms each year where they are subjected to intensive confinement, painful mutilations without anesthesia, and are highly susceptible to illness.

What can you do about it?

- Reduce your consumption of animal products.
- If you eat animal products, look for animal products raised locally on family farms where conditions are typically more humane than on factory farms.
- Encourage restaurants and grocery stores in your area to carry more vegetarian options and animal products from sustainable family farms.

Did you know? More than 40 million gallons of oil are used to make the plastic water bottles Americans purchase each year. Only 12% of those water bottles are actually recycled.

What can you do about it?

- Save money and resources by drinking tap water, or filtered tap water, instead of buying bottled water.
- If you do buy bottled water, reuse the container if possible or, at the very least, recycle it.
- If you see a plastic water bottle on the ground, pick it up and put it in a recycling bin.



Upcoming Events

“Have a HEART” Online Auction November 14th-29th

Together with Charity Buzz, HEART will be holding a live online auction to benefit our programs. Visit www.charitybuzz.com anytime between the auction dates to bid on exciting items such as VIP tickets to see Avril Lavigne, signed scrubs by the original cast of Grey's Anatomy, Wolves of Yellowstone Park Eco Tour for two people, weekend getaways to Loews South Beach, Acqualina Spa and Resort in Sunny Isles, FL. and Trump Int'l Hotel in NY as well as many more items.

Humane Education Teacher Training Workshop November 3rd

HEART will conduct a half-day teacher training workshop at the United Federation of Teachers' conference in NYC. Teachers will learn about HEART's programs and ways to implement humane education into daily lessons. Call Meena Alagappan at 212.744.2504 for more information.

Coming soon...

HEART is redesigning its website!

Visit www.teachhumane.org for:

HEART organizational, program and service details

Supplemental teaching materials for educators

Fun activities and interesting information for students of all ages

Links to other humane education websites and resources

Information about humane education laws around the country

HEART's services rely on the generosity of individuals like you who are dedicated to humane living.

Your contribution can be mailed to: HEART P.O. Box 738 Mamaroneck, NY 10543

Or your donation can be made through our website- www.teachhumane.org. All gifts are enormously appreciated!

For more information, please contact: Meena Alagappan, Executive Director, at 212.744.2504 and via email at meena@teachhumane.org; or Kristy Jelenik, Director of Development, at 914.381.0309 and via email at kristy@teachhumane.org.

