



Human Rights Friendly Schools

NEWS August-September 2013



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the August – September edition of Human Rights Friendly Schools News!

Amnesty International's Human Rights Friendly Schools project aims to empower young people and promote the active participation of all members of the school community to integrate human rights values and principles into all areas of school life. Amnesty International works in partnership with secondary schools around the world, supporting their journey to becoming Human Rights Friendly. This newsletter aims to share information, ideas and experiences across the International Human Rights Friendly Schools Network.

For more information, please visit our website: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/projects-initiatives/rfsp>

or contact us at HumanRightsFriendlySchools@amnesty.org

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 in English, French and Spanish

2013

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/006/2013/en>

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/004/2013/en>

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/003/2013/en>

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/002/2013/en>

2012

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/015/2012/en>

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/014/2012/en>

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/013/2012/en>

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/012/2012/en>

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/POL32/011/2012/en>

INTERVIEW OF THE MONTH WITH...

Courtney Clay, former student at Warwick Academy,
Human Rights Friendly School in Bermuda

"My name is Courtney, I am 18 years old and I just finished my high school studies in the Human Rights Friendly School Warwick Academy in Bermuda. I have been involved with Amnesty International for about 2 years. I am a board member and the youth representative of Amnesty International Bermuda.

Françoise Wolffe, the human rights education coordinator at Amnesty International Bermuda, caught my interest on Amnesty International's work two years ago. When Françoise presented the Human Rights Friendly School project, I saw an opportunity to reach out to and expose young people in my school to human rights. The layout was very clear, and we were familiar with Amnesty International. Of course, it was a new project and getting everybody involved was a challenge, but it all came together when we created the Project Working Group. The principal of the school was very enthusiastic about the project and teachers volunteered to support it; which really helped ensure that human rights were incorporated into the curriculum.

Getting older students involved was the main challenge because they were in a different part of the school and were focused on studying for their exams. School assemblies became the place where we could talk about human rights concerns and reach the whole-school community and inform them about the project. We also wanted to modernise our institution (created in the 17th century). We wanted to change the old punishment system, ensuring that it was more fair, and to raise awareness about human rights with a particular focus on discrimination and bullying. I realised that people don't look at bullying as discrimination because they are used to it. Sometimes you are so accustomed to what you experience that you do not realise it is against your basic rights. We reminded school members to be mindful of others. **Now, we think twice about our actions, we are all more aware of what we are doing and there is more accountability of our actions and how it affects others.** We started to see the mentality of students changing as we also pay more attention to what is happening around us instead of focusing on what we already know. Overall, members of the school community have begun to think collectively and globally. We realised that we have rights and stand for them while respecting and being interested in others.

When I told my family I was going to support Amnesty International, they were excited that I was getting involved in something bigger than myself. I can confidently say that I am now more mindful of the little things. I gained the courage to stand up for my rights and the rights of others. I have become less judgemental, I understand that everyone has a different way of living and I respect that. I am more conscious about the world as well as what is happening in Bermuda. Because I now know, I am more interested, I understand and I can promote human rights better.

To people who are thinking of implementing this project, I would like to say that I think it is important to talk about human rights in the school because this is the only time you are around so many people who are your own age and this can raise many issues. When you are in school you can still learn and gain plenty of knowledge, skills and tools which will then help you understand how to support your community in the current world. Once you have the knowledge you are more confident, and then more comfortable to educate others.

I will continue promote and defend human rights, including when studying fashion design and moving to Italy!"



Courtney Clay (centre) and other students of Warwick Academy standing for human rights at a school event, 2012.
©Amnesty International Bermuda

"Because now I know, I am more interested, I understand and I can promote human rights better."

BE INSPIRED!

Margaux Monneraud, intern at

Amnesty International Chile, explains how Liceo Jorge Indo promotes non-discrimination and cultural sensitivity as part of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project.

“When I started my internship at Amnesty International Chile, Liceo Jorge Indo was already part of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project.

Liceo Jorge Indo places human rights at the heart of the educational experience. Since 2006, Liceo Jorge Indo has developed an intercultural educational project, promoting Native American cultures, inclusion, mutual enrichment and peaceful coexistence between human beings and between different cultures.

My first contact with the school was during the Mapuche New Year - the most important celebration of the Mapuche people, an ethnic group in Chile [for more information see Amnesty International 2012 Annual Report <http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/chile/report-2012#section-27-3>]. In an age where many are embarrassed to express or assert their indigenous origins, students at the Liceo Jorge Indo showed pride in indigenous cultures of Latin America by presenting traditional dances, Mapuche ancestral chants and rituals. The success of these activities was the result of important curricular and extra-curricular work done by the school community as a whole. Every week, students attended dance or singing classes promoting multiculturalism. For me, this ceremony highlighted the strong relationships between students, teachers and parents, where students play a key role and teachers place trust on students’ abilities and encourage them to take on responsibilities.

The ceremony was also the opportunity for the school principal to reaffirm his commitment and his admiration for the success of their students to make human rights an integral part of the daily life of their school. He also stressed the importance of respect for all human rights and highlighted the richness of the indigenous cultures. The purpose of this event was to motivate students to fight against discrimination and respect indigenous peoples’ rights. The school community also shared ideas about the right to quality education in Chile and were invited to reflect on how to foster mutual respect in society and building human rights awareness.

In this context, through the Human Rights Friendly Schools project, Amnesty International offered human rights training to young people from Quilicura community, where vulnerability and discrimination are often part of the daily life. Diversity has so far been the main theme around which Amnesty International Chile and the school have designed and implemented activities.

Personally, the Human Rights Friendly Schools project allowed me to reinforce my commitment to human rights education, understanding that it is an essential means to instil knowledge and values that promote a culture of respect for human rights.”



Students of Liceo Jorge Indo, Human Rights Friendly School in Chile, promoting Native American cultures during the Mapuche New Year, 2013. ©Amnesty International Chile



Drawing of students of the Human Rights Friendly School Liceo Jorge Indo in Chile promoting a peaceful world and youth taking action, 2013. ©Amnesty International Chile

NEWS OF THE MONTH

Four years of Human Rights Friendly Schools in Italy

Amnesty International Italy began implementing the Human Rights Friendly School Project in 2009 and is now partnering with four schools. Over the years, Human Rights Friendly Schools in Italy have built the capacity of their constituencies, through teacher trainings and workshops for students and teachers. Youth developed their activism skills and were encouraged to take action for human rights.

Human Rights Friendly Schools in Italy focused on improving school governance by revising the internal rules of the school and ensured that all school community members participated in defining the roles and responsibilities within the school. Working together has helped students and teachers to strengthen their relationships resulting as well in an increased participation in school's extra-curricular activities.

Students have taken the initiative to organise and participate in Human Rights Days. Orazio High School organised an International Day against Homophobia inviting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) associations to discuss the issue with the school community and Norberto Rosa High School focused on freedom of speech and women's rights as well as police officials and the use of violence. Actively participating in such activities, students gain a greater understanding of human rights and the school reported a marked decrease of bullying and discrimination episodes.



Examples of activities organised by Human Rights Friendly Schools in Italy 2009-2013 © Amnesty International Italy

THE EXAMPLE OF HIGH SCHOOL MATTEI

Context

The High School Mattei is located in Emilia Romagna (Central Italy), one of the Italian regions that invests a lot in education.

Start Up Phase

In 2012 the project was integrated in the Educational Proposal Plan for Teachers (POF) and a working group was created to verify the interest in the project and to start planning activities.

Activities to date

- Teachers training on human rights education
- Students workshops on non-discrimination
- In November 2012 students and Amnesty International organised a session on migration issue with Jab Nawaz, a young Afgan refugee.
- Students organised a performance on the topic of torture for 'Memory Day'.

For more information, contact Chiara Pacifici, Human Rights Friendly Schools Coordinator at Amnesty International Italy: c.pacifici@amnesty.it

Salil Shetty, Secretary General of Amnesty International visits a Human Rights Friendly School in Bangalore, India



Salil Shetty, Secretary General of Amnesty International, and Amnesty International India visit Cathedral High School in Bangalore, August 2013
© Amnesty International India



Salil Shetty, Secretary General of Amnesty International, and Amnesty International India visit Cathedral High School in Bangalore, August 2013
© Amnesty International India

For more information, contact Tara Rao, Head of the Human Rights Friendly Schools Project at Amnesty International India: Tara.Rao@amnesty.org.in

On 31 August 2013, Salil Shetty, Secretary General of Amnesty International, and Amnesty International India visited Cathedral High School, one of the 28 Human Rights Friendly Schools in India.

Teachers presented the steps they have undertaken to integrate human rights in all areas of school life, including activities implemented to celebrate Human Rights Day (December 10), International Women's Day (March 8) and to discuss human rights with students. The school community highlighted that they are currently starting the process of creating a student council and shared some ideas with Amnesty International representatives on ways to reward and discipline students within a human rights framework.

Teachers seized the opportunity of Salil Shetty's visit to ask some questions on Amnesty International, in particular why the organisation had started this grass roots initiative of human rights education and its possible outcomes. A good discussion emerged on the role of young people and human rights education for the development of a rights respecting society. This was also the opportunity to highlight the important role teachers play in developing the skills of younger generations to become effective and responsible citizens of the nation.

Cathedral High School members now feel even more motivated and eager to showcase themselves as one of the pioneer schools of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project in India.

"It was very inspiring to spend a morning in Cathedral School in Bangalore with 25 teachers as they proudly presented their locally adapted version of Amnesty's global initiative on Human Rights Friendly Schools - a tribute to our colleagues working on human rights education."

Salil Shetty, Amnesty International Secretary General.

Welcome to the Students' Corner!



Students of Human Rights Friendly Schools around the world © Amnesty International

What is the 'Students' Corner'?

The Students' Corner is available for students of Human Rights Friendly Schools around the world to share and exchange with others how their school is human rights friendly.

Students are the heart and soul of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project and we wish to hear their voices!

What can I write about?

Tell us what has changed in your life and in your school's since you started the journey to become human rights friendly.

Questions to guide you

- What actions have you taken in your school to promote and integrate human rights?
- What activities have you enjoyed the most?
- What changes have you noticed in your school?
- How have you changed since you started to learn more about human rights?
- The length of the article should be no more than 400 words.

Can I take my own photos?

Of course! Take photos of your activity and your friends. Just don't forget to ask their permission!

How can I participate?

- Inform your Amnesty International contact that you would like to share your story
- Work with your student group and friends
- Ask for support from your teachers
- Once you have written the article, submit it to your Amnesty International contact
- Watch out for the next issue of the Human Rights Friendly Schools Newsletter for your contribution



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Take Action!

End Segregation of Roma students in Slovakia



Background

Roma are often denied access to jobs and quality health care. Across Europe they are victims of racially motivated violence and are often left unprotected by the police and without access to justice.

Thousands of Roma children are placed in segregated schools offering inferior education. A UN survey published in 2012 stated that 43% of Roma children in mainstream schools in Slovakia are enrolled in ethnically segregated classrooms.

On 4 April 2013, Amnesty International launched a global campaign, calling on the European Union to take decisive action to fight discrimination and racism against the Roma.

More information about the campaign is available here:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/roma>

<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR72/001/2013>

<https://intranet.amnesty.org/wiki/x/o4cYB>



Human Rights Friendly Schools can ...

... **Talk about discrimination against Roma in classrooms.** The debate is crucial and can be integrated in different subjects, for example:

- **History:** explaining the history of Roma people
- **Geography:** how Roma people are everywhere in Europe
- **Citizenship:** what are the State's obligations towards its citizens? What are the rights of the child? Why is the right to education so important?

... **Organise an event** to raise awareness in your school and involve the whole school community.

- The school can organise screenings and discussions of relevant films.
- Schools can organize petition stands and invite the local community to participate.

'Our School' is a useful video that can be used in classrooms to introduce the theme: <https://adam.amnesty.org/asset-bank/action/viewAsset?id=170966&index=0&total=39&view=viewSearchItem>

Remember the Letter Writing Marathon on 10th December!

Write for Rights
Make a difference

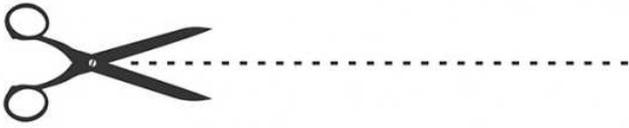
Join hundreds of thousands of people around the world and take action for people facing human rights violations



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If you would like to **share your experiences** of the Human Rights Friendly Schools project or **news from your school** related to the project, please contact Amnesty International International Secretariat Human Rights Education team at HumanRightsFriendlySchools@amnesty.org no later than **20 November 2013**, if you wish your entry to be published in the next edition of the Human Rights Friendly Schools News.



Take Action Calendar 2013

September

28 **Global Day of Action for
Access to Safe and Legal
Abortion**

October

5 **World Teachers' Day**
7 **World Habitat Day**
10 **World Day against the Death Penalty**
16 **World Food Day**
17 **International Day for the Eradication
of Poverty**

November

16 **International Day for Tolerance**
20 **Universal Children's Day**
25 **International Day for the
Elimination of Violence
Against Women**

25 → 10Dec
 **16 days of Activism against
Gender Violence**

December

03 **International Day of People with
Disability**
04 **International Volunteer Day**
6 → 16
 **Amnesty International
Letter Writing Marathon**
10 **Human Rights Day**
18 **International Migrants Day**
19 **Anniversary of the UN Declaration
on Human Rights Education and
Training**

