

Inspirational projects From around the world



Your group probably has ideas for sharing resources and getting in touch with other young people. For example, you could make a recording, document your experiences, make a photo album or go on-line.

What would you like to find out about young people and their projects in other countries? What would you like to tell them about you? Brainstorm some of the ways you could communicate. Do you think they would be able to respond in the same way? This is important since communication should make both people feel good about themselves. Check out in what ways these young people can communicate. For example, do they have access to a computer or tape recorder?

Kids lead projects in Latin America

• Mini Olympics in Cali, Colombia

Children in Cali, Colombia, recently participated in a three-day mini Olympic games including competitions in basketball, volleyball, swimming and football. This special event, held in the spirit of the Olympics, enabled the children to meet children from different communities and enjoy themselves in a peaceful and fun environment. Awards such as medals, T-shirts and certificates were given out as souvenirs of the event and added to the overall sense of accomplishment that each child felt. The freedom to participate in recreational events is extremely important in the life of a child and helps children to develop cooperation skills, self-esteem and confidence.



Hold your own Olympic games

It's true that all kids love to play games. These games don't have to be competitive. They can also be a time for celebrating team spirit and accomplishments. Hold your own Olympic games, but only use cooperative

games, not games where individuals compete against one another. One example of a team sport is the "Water Race" in the Kids Who Care Teacher's Guide. How many cooperative games can you think of? If you need more ideas, hold a contest with students in the school. Invite them to enter their ideas about cooperative games for your Olympics.

Or, in your Olympics, choose only games that require no special sports equipment. Everything you use has to be homemade. For example, you can play baseball, but only with a stick and a ball made out of tin foil or rubber bands. Make trophies out of "found" (recyclable) materials. Young people in other countries show how talented they are by reusing materials that we in North America usually throw away. However, they would love to have some of the equipment that we use. Your club could consider collecting used sports equipment that is still in good condition and donating it to a charitable organization in your community, or an organization overseas.

Observe the Olympic truce



If you have researched the Olympic Games you know that they originated in Greece more than 2,000 years ago. But did you know that in ancient Greece the sports festival held every four years at Olympia was so important that people stopped fighting so that the games could go on? Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to completely stop the wars that were happening at the time. But people did stop fighting so that athletes and people who wanted to attend the games could get to Olympia safely. All citizens agreed not to fight for the period of time before, during and after the games. This is called a truce. There are often truces in wartime so that people can negotiate peace, or so that children can be taken to safety or be immunized against diseases.

In 1993, more than 120 countries thought it was good idea to start the Olympic Truce again.

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They were thinking about the Olympic games scheduled for the following year – 1994. Ten years before, in 1984, the city of Sarajevo hosted the Olympics. Sarajevo used to be the capital city of Yugoslavia. But by 1994, Yugoslavia had separated into several smaller countries, some of which were at war with one another. Many people were suffering. The truce wouldn't solve the problems of the war, but it could be a sign to people that peace was possible. So the Olympic Truce happened in 1994, and for the children of Sarajevo, it was the first peaceful time many of them could remember.

When you hold your school Olympics or sports activity days, why not practise the Olympic Truce? Research the Olympic Truce and make a proposal to the teachers and principal at your school. Get students to agree that all fighting should stop during the week of the games. You might consider getting a sports figure to talk to the students at your school about how cooperation is as much a part of sports as competition. Obviously, to make this work, everyone has to agree to the truce. If violence is a problem in your school, you may need to make this project part of other ongoing activities to reduce fighting in your school community.

• Young people's opinions matter - Children's Governments in Ecuador

Children in Guayaquil, Ecuador, are active members of youth groups known as "Children's Governments". These are community councils run by children. In their council meetings, children plan and develop special events that are important to them and their development. Some of these activities include drawing and painting workshops, sports events and day trips to museums and amusement parks. The children are also able to listen to presentations on children's rights,

such as the right to play safely, the right not to have to endure abuse or violence and the right to a clean and healthy environment.



Wish lists

One activity used by the children who participate in Children's Governments is to make collective "wish lists" of "What I like in my community", "What I don't like in my community" and "What I would like to change". You can do the same thing. In some communities in Ecuador, children present their ideas and make suggestions for how various people in the community can work together to make changes. They talk about what is possible and how it can be done. While it is true that adults should listen to young people, this doesn't always happen. You can encourage people to listen to you by presenting your ideas in a positive, organized way. Even if people don't agree with you, you'll feel good about having your opinions heard. Get allies to support your cause – maybe a teacher, parent or principal – people who understand your concerns and agree with you, to help you present your arguments.

To bring children together, you can help organize a fun, recreational event in your school. This could be a sports day, a game or an arts activity. It would be fun to invite kids from another school, or to hold an event at a local community centre for the kids in your school.



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Kids lead projects in Asia

• Children's Congress - Calapan, Philippines

Youth between the ages of 10 and 18 helped to plan and implement two Children's Congresses in the Philippines. The five-day national congress and three-day provincial gathering provided a way for the young people to learn about their rights, share their experiences with other youth, discuss child-related issues and possible solutions. The children spoke out freely and made presentations to concerned agencies. They made statements on important issues like the Rights of the Child and environmental protection. The participants felt good about themselves, and proud that others were listening to their opinions. The Children's Congress showed how valuable rights, such as freedom of expression and assembly, are for all children.

Virtual children's congress

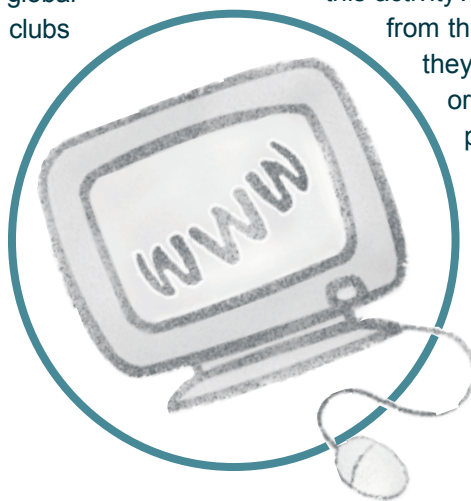
While it would be great if everyone in your club could plan and attend a Children's Congress like the one in Calapan, that may not be possible. However, there are many Internet sites where you can sign on and have conversations with children around the world. Check this out. Maybe you could leave a message as a club, and ask other young people who have their own global education or environmental clubs about their activities. You can also hold a children's congress in your school. With the support of your teachers, you could hold a one- or two-day event with speakers and activities on issues of importance to the children in your school.



• Tree planting in Bangladesh

In rural Bangladesh, children are helping to preserve their natural environment by planting trees to prevent erosion and improve their habitat. The theme of this project is children and trees growing together in a friendly environment. So far, nearly 1,000 saplings have been planted along roadsides and on school property. The children care for the trees and have become more aware of how important the environment is to their health and their future.

In Canada, we cut down many trees to make paper products. Look at the "Make your own paper" activity on the next page. Why not encourage your whole school to participate in this activity? Students could make crafts from this paper and other scraps they've collected over a month or two. Include the paper products in a craft fair and use the proceeds to buy saplings or seeds. Plant these in your school yard as a symbol of your school's concern for preserving our forests.



Inspirational projects From around the world



Make your own paper

Make great looking new paper from materials you normally throw away!

Supplies you'll need:

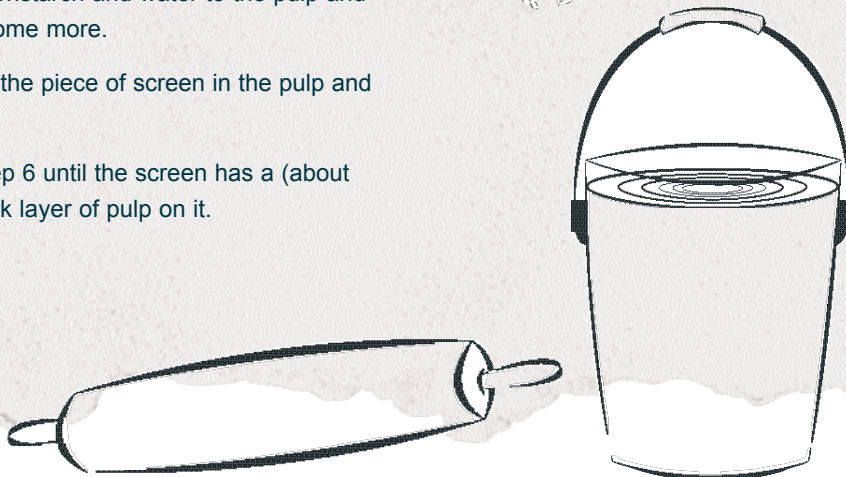
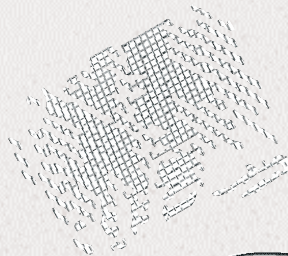
newspapers
bucket of water
wire whisk
3 tablespoons cornstarch
1 cup water
measuring spoons
a piece of screen measuring the same size as the piece of paper you want to make (15 cm x 15 cm is a good size. The piece of screen cannot be wider than the bucket, since you have to lay it flat inside the bucket.)
rolling pin
a sheet of waxed paper large enough to cover the screen

How to do it:

1. Tear the newspapers into small pieces, filling the bucket about half full.
2. Add water. Make sure that all the paper is quite wet. Leave this for two hours.
3. Beat mixture with a wire whisk until it looks a bit like pancake batter.
4. Dissolve cornstarch in a cup of water.
5. Add the cornstarch and water to the pulp and mix it up some more.
6. Submerge the piece of screen in the pulp and pull it out.
7. Repeat Step 6 until the screen has a (about 1/3cm) thick layer of pulp on it.

8. Spread out some sheets of newspaper.
9. Lay out pulp-covered screen on newspaper.
10. Cover screen with waxed paper.
11. Press out excess water with rolling pin.
12. Leave screen out in a well-ventilated room.
13. When dry, gently peel recycled paper from the screen.

Use the paper to: cut out shapes to hang in a window, decorate a plain frame, write a letter, make name tags (pin carefully with straight pins or safety pins) or invitations for your next global education event.



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Kids lead projects in Africa

• Tanzanian playground

The children of Igogo, Tanzania wanted a safe and friendly place to play, so they became directly involved in achieving this goal. Young people had to play in dangerous areas such as the streets or drain tunnels. They wanted to change this, so they formed a group and requested help from adults. The children presented their ideas in a drawing contest. More than 1,500 children submitted drawings of a “dream” playground – the perfect place to play and spend time with friends. A plan was chosen from these ideas, and the playground was built with the help of the children, who planted flowers, cut the grass and provided drinks to the workers. Now, the children are also concerned about the care, security and upkeep of the playground, and plan to sell snacks in the playground to help pay for these costs.

people have habitats. These are places where they have the things they need to live: shelter, a healthy environment, clean water, clean air, and space for doing the things they like to do. Look at the way people live and the space that is used in your community. Map your ideal neighbourhood. What will it take to get from the situation that exists now to how you would like it to be? This is a way to start talking about whether kids have enough healthy, safe places to play. Think about how you could improve existing spaces. Does your club have a plan for making an existing space more kid-friendly? For example, get permission to help clean up a local recreation centre or make a proposal for why you would like to have a peer counselling service or an ice rink. Make sure to write down who the project will benefit, why it's important and the role that kids will have in maintaining the service/ice rink.



In your own neighbourhood

What's a habitat? Just like animals,

