



LIVING VALUES
E D U C A T I O N

Overview

April 2009

Young people are increasingly affected by violence, social problems, and a lack of respect for each other and the world around them, while their teachers and parents are impacted by new challenges and pressures. The educators involved in Living Values Education invite you to join us in a global endeavor to help children and youth explore and develop positive values and move toward their potential. We are creating caring, respectful environments where students feel safe and want to learn. Living Values Education Program is effective in decreasing violence and bullying, and creating safe, caring school climates which are conducive to quality learning.

As educators, we are not only doing Living Values Education Program to improve student behavior and the school climate. We feel that the cognitive thinking skills and social and emotional skills that students are exposed to and asked to explore and develop will help them grow toward their potential, protect them from violence, and help them engage in the community with respect, confidence and purpose. What children and youth learn is later woven into the fabric of society. Education must have positive values at its heart and the resulting expression of them as its aim if we are to seek to create a better world for all.

The challenge of helping children and youth acquire values is no longer as simple as it used to be when being a good role model and relating moral stories was sufficient. Violent movies and video games that glorify violence are attractive, and desensitize youth to the effect of such actions. Youth often see “bad” adults awarded with wealth and fame. Tides of apathy and resentment wash away the idealism and hopes of youth with each wave of more news about corruption, greed, excesses and injustice. “Good” students may adopt values-based behaviors when exposed to “awareness-level” activities, but do they base decisions in their personal and professional lives on values as adults? “Good” students benefit when guided through an exploration of values and their implications for the self, others and the larger society, as do “resistant” students or marginalized youth who turn away angrily from a moralizing approach to character education. Each person is important in the creation of safer, more positive communities.

As Jacques Delors noted in *Learning: The Treasure Within*, we must not just educate our children and youth “to know” and “to do”, we must also educate them “to be” and “to live together” (1996). Quality education recognizes the whole person and promotes education that involves the affective domain as well as the cognitive. Values such as peace, love, respect, tolerance, cooperation and freedom, are cherished and aspired for the world over. Such values are the sustaining force of human society and progress.

Educators, and activities, that actively engage and allow students the opportunity to explore and experience their own qualities are of crucial importance. Students benefit by developing skills to cognitively explore and understand values. For students to be motivated to learn and utilize positive and cooperative social skills, the creation of a values-based atmosphere in which they are

encouraged, listened to and valued is also essential. It is in this context, and in response to the call for values to be at the heart of learning, that Living Values Education (LVE) was developed.

The Living Values Education Approach

The Vision

Living Values Education is a way of conceptualizing education that promotes the development of values-based learning communities and places the search for meaning and purpose at the heart of education. LVE emphasizes the worth and integrity of each person involved in the provision of education, in the home, school and community. In fostering quality education, LVE supports the overall development of the individual and a culture of positive values in each society and throughout the world, believing that education is a purposeful activity designed to help humanity flourish.

Core Principles

Living Values Education is based on the following core principles:

On the learning and teaching environment

1. When positive values and the search for meaning and purpose are placed at the heart of learning and teaching, education itself is valued.
2. Learning is especially enhanced when occurring within a values-based learning community, where values are imparted through quality teaching, and learners discern the consequences, for themselves, others and the world at large, of actions that are and are not based on values.
3. In making a values-based learning environment possible, educators not only require appropriate quality teacher education and ongoing professional development, they also need to be valued, nurtured and cared for within the learning community.
4. Within the values-based learning community, positive relationships develop out of the care that all involved have for each other.

On the teaching of values

5. The development of a values-based learning environment is an integral part of values education, not an optional extra.
6. Values education is not only a subject on the curriculum. Primarily it is pedagogy; an educational philosophy and practice that inspires and develops positive values in the classroom. Values-based teaching and guided reflection support the process of learning as a meaning-making process, contributing to the development of critical thinking, imagination, understanding, self-awareness, intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and consideration of others.
7. Effective values educators are aware of their own thoughts, feelings, attitudes and behavior and sensitive to the impact these have on others.
8. A first step in values education is for teachers to develop a clear and accurate perception of their own attitudes, behavior and emotional literacy as an aid to living their own values. They may

then help themselves and encourage others to draw on the best of their own personal, cultural and social qualities, heritage and traditions.

On the nature of persons within the world and the discourse of education

9. Central to the Living Values Education concept of education is a view of persons as thinking, feeling, valuing whole human beings, culturally diverse and yet belonging to one world family. Education must therefore concern itself with the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical well-being of the individual.
10. The discourse of education, of thinking, feeling and valuing, is both analytic and poetic. Establishing a dialogue about values within the context of a values-based learning community facilitates an interpersonal, cross-cultural exchange on the importance and means of imparting values in education.

Purpose and Aims

LVE's purpose is to provide guiding principles and tools for the development of the whole person, recognizing that the individual is comprised of physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions.

The aims are:

- ◆ To help individuals think about and reflect on different values and the practical implications of expressing them in relation to themselves, others, the community, and the world at large;
- ◆ To deepen understanding, motivation, and responsibility with regard to making positive personal and social choices;
- ◆ To inspire individuals to choose their own personal, social, moral, and spiritual values and be aware of practical methods for developing and deepening them; and
- ◆ To encourage educators and caregivers to look at education as providing students with a philosophy of living, thereby facilitating their overall growth, development, and choices so they may integrate themselves into the community with respect, confidence, and purpose.

About the Organization

The implementation of Living Values Education is facilitated by the **Association for Living Values Education International (ALIVE)**, a non-profit-making association of organizations around the world concerned with values education.

Drawing on a strong volunteer base, the advancement and implementation of Living Values Education is supported by UNESCO and a host of other organizations, agencies, governmental bodies, foundations, community groups and individuals. It is part of the global movement for a culture of peace in the framework of the **United Nations International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World**. ALIVE groups together national bodies promoting Living Values Education and is an independent organization that does not have any particular or exclusive religious, political or national affiliation or interest.

ALIVE is registered as an association in Switzerland. In some countries national Living Values Education associations have been formed, usually comprised of educators, education officials, and representatives of organizations and agencies involved with student or parent education.

Activities

In pursuing its mission and implementing its core principles, the Association for Living Values Education International and its Associates and Focal Points provide:

1. ***Professional development courses, seminars and workshops*** for teachers and others involved in the provision of education.
2. ***Classroom teaching material and other educational resources***, in particular an award-winning series of five resource books containing practical values activities and a range of methods for use by educators, facilitators, parents and caregivers to help children and young adults to explore and develop twelve widely-shared human values (*Living Values Activities for Children Ages 3-7, Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8-14, Living Values Activities for Young Adults, Living Values Parent Groups: A Facilitator Guide* and *LVEP Educator Training Guide*). There are also resource books for children in difficult circumstances, youth in need of drug rehabilitation and children affected by war. The approach and lesson content are experiential, participatory and flexible, allowing – and encouraging – the materials to be adapted and supplemented according to varying cultural, social and other circumstances. The approach and materials may also be used systematically in alignment with the above principles as the ***Living Values Education Program***.
3. ***Consultation to government bodies, organizations, schools, teachers and parents*** on the creation of values-based learning environments and the teaching of values.
4. ***An extensive multi-lingual website*** (www.livingvalues.net) with materials available for downloading free of charge.

International Usage

The Living Values Education approach and materials are currently being used and producing positive results in more than 80 countries at about 8,000 educational settings. While most such settings are schools, others are day-care centers, youth clubs, parent associations, centers for children in difficult circumstances, health centers and refugee camps. The number of students doing LVEP at each site varies considerably; some involve 10 students with one teacher while others involve 3,000 students. At least some LVE materials are available in about 30 languages. The approach is non-prescriptive and allows materials and strategies to be introduced according to the circumstances and interests of the users and the needs of students.

Materials — The Living Values Series

- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 3–7*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8–14*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Young Adults*

- ◆ *LVEP Educator Training Guide*
- ◆ *Living Values Parent Groups: A Facilitator Guide*

In *Living Values Activities for Children Ages 3–7*, *Ages 8–14*, and *Living Values Activities for Young Adults*, reflective and imagining activities encourage students to access their own creativity and inner gifts. Communication activities teach students to implement positive, constructive social skills. Artistic activities, songs, and movement inspire students to express themselves while experiencing the value of focus. Game-like activities are thought-provoking and fun; the discussion time that follows those activities helps students explore effects of different attitudes and behaviors. Other activities stimulate awareness of personal and social responsibility and, for older students, awareness of social justice. The development of self-esteem and tolerance continues throughout the exercises. Educators are encouraged to utilize their own rich heritage while integrating values into everyday activities and the curriculum.

LVEP Educator Training Guide — This guide contains the content of sessions within regular LVEP Educator Workshops. Sessions include values awareness, creating a values-based atmosphere, and skills for creating such an atmosphere. LVEP's theoretical model and sample training agendas are included.

Living Values Parent Groups: A Facilitator Guide — This book offers both process and content for facilitators interested in conducting Living Values Parent Groups with parents and caregivers to further understanding and skills important in encouraging and positively developing values in children. The first section describes content for an introductory session, and a six-step process for the exploration of each value. In this process, parents and caregivers reflect on their own values and how they "live" and teach those values. The second section offers suggestions regarding values activities the parents can do in the group, and ideas for parents to explore at home. In the third section, common parenting concerns are addressed, as are particular skills to deal with those concerns. There is a small section on the needs of children from ages 0 to 2.

Materials — For Children and Youth At Risk

These LVE materials are restricted, only made available to educators who undergo training for these particular modules as the children are at risk. As special healing activities are included, it is essential to facilitate the activities in a values-based atmosphere. LVE materials for children at risk consists of the following.

- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Refugees and Children Affected by War Ages 3–7*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Refugees and Children Affected by War Ages 8–14*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Street Children Ages 3–6*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Street Children Ages 7–10*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Street Children Ages 11–14*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Drug Rehabilitation*
- ◆ *Living Values Activities for Young Offenders*

Living Values Activities for Refugees and Children Affected by War — This supplement contains activities that give children an opportunity to begin the healing process while learning about peace, respect and love. Designed to be implemented by refugee teachers of the same culture as the children, there are forty-nine lessons for children three- to seven-years old and sixty lessons for students eight- to fourteen-years old. The lessons provide tools to begin to deal with grief while developing positive adaptive social and emotional skills. A section on camp-wide strategies offers suggestions for creating a culture of peace, conducting values education groups for parents/caregivers, cooperative games, and supporting conflict resolution monitors. Teachers continue with the regular living values activities after these lessons are completed.

Living Values Activities for Street Children (LVASC) — These materials contain adapted living values activities on peace, respect, love and cooperation and a series of stories about a street children family. The stories serve as a medium to educate about and to discuss issues related to domestic violence, death, AIDS, drug sellers, drugs, sexual abuse, physical abuse, hygiene and healthy eating. LVASC 11–14 also includes the issues of emerging sexuality, sex and labor trafficking, and a further exploration of human rights. The stories are combined with discussions, activities, and the development of positive adaptive social and emotional skills and protective social skills.

Living Values Activities for Drug Rehabilitation — The 102 lessons in this curriculum weave in values activities on peace, respect, love, cooperation, honesty, humility and happiness from *Living Values Activities for Young Adults*, with lessons related to drug use, emotional issues that arise with addiction and its concomitant behaviors, and the building of social and relapse-prevention skills. This approach is based on Living Values Education Program’s methodology. Lessons on peace and respect build self-confidence and a supportive values-based atmosphere in the group, prior to beginning drug-related lessons in which participants are asked to explore and share their journey into drugs and the consequences in their lives. The lessons include experiences to help them deal with their pain and shame, and learn the valuable life-lessons that pain can teach. Positive intrapersonal and interpersonal social skills are taught, encouraged and practiced. Participants explore many aspects of their experiences and build relapse-prevention skills through discussion, art, role-playing and dramas.

Living Values Activities for Young Offenders — The book combines values activities on peace, respect, love, cooperation, honesty, humility and happiness, with lessons related to crime, violence, drug use, gang involvement, negative influences and concomitant emotional issues, along with the building of social and relapse-prevention skills. This approach is based on Living Values Education Program’s methodology. Participants are encouraged to explore and develop values in a group-facilitated process by first exploring their own dreams for a better world. Lessons on peace and respect build self-confidence and a supportive values-based atmosphere in the group, prior to beginning choice-related lessons in which participants are asked to explore and share their journey into crime and the consequences in their lives. The 103 activities include experiences to help them deal with their pain, and learn life-lessons. Positive intrapersonal and interpersonal social skills are taught, encouraged and practiced. Participants explore many aspects of their experiences and build relapse-prevention skills through discussion, art, role-playing and dramas.

The Beginning

LVE was initially developed by educators for educators in consultation with the Education Cluster of UNICEF, New York, and the Brahma Kumaris. Twenty educators from five continents met at UNICEF Headquarters in New York in August of 1996 to discuss the needs of

children around the world, their experiences of working with values, and how educators can integrate values to better prepare students for lifelong learning. Using *Living Values: A Guidebook* and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* as a framework, the global educators identified and agreed upon the purpose and aims of values-based education worldwide — in both developed and developing countries.

Results

Educator evaluations have been collected from teachers implementing the program in countries around the world. The most frequent themes noted in the reports are positive changes in teacher-student relationships and in student-student relationships both inside and outside the classroom. Educators note an increase in respect, caring, cooperation, motivation, and the ability to solve peer conflicts on the part of the students. Aggressive behaviors decline as positive social skills and respect increase. LVEP helps educators create safe, caring, values-based atmospheres for quality learning.

A few results from educators implementing LVE:

- A Montessori teacher reported: “I have used the Living Values Education Program from start to finish this past school year with my preschool students. I absolutely loved it, the children loved it, and the outcome was really spectacular. I was dealing with a very angry and aggressive boy at the beginning of the year. After the unit on respect with a few added lessons of my own, the child found respect for himself, for others, and for the environment. He was truly my 'Star' this year. Through the teacher education center that I teach at, I have encouraged many other teachers from many other Montessori schools to use the program in their schools. Several have and have found some very similar results.”
- In Iceland, a veteran first-grade teacher reported seeing surprising and dramatic improvements in caring, respect, cooperation, concentration, and learning to read.
- In Lebanon, second-graders in a classroom at ACS have learned conflict resolution so well that they solve all peer conflicts themselves; the teacher reports she is free to teach.
- In Bermuda, three primary schools implementing LVEP as whole schools achieved an 80% drop in school disciplinary referrals within their first year of implementing LVEP.
- In the USA, a K-8 school implementing LVEP as a whole school is now rated as the top seventh school in Florida. The principal stated, “There simply is no bullying.”
- In Kenya, teens self-reported complete changes in their behavior, from violence to cooperation, and from being at the bottom of their class to doing well academically.
- In South Africa, formerly violent secondary students became leaders of peace and values and led LVEP workshops for their peers.
- In Australia, a year-nine student reported, “It’s not just that I like values classes, I really enjoy them. At the start I was dead against values, I didn’t feel like I got anything out of the class. I distracted people and didn’t put in any effort. Then I thought for one lesson I would really contribute. That lesson changed the way I felt about values. I can relate to everything that we talk about. I find myself discovering things about myself that I never knew. Values class is really worthwhile.”
- For two years in Thailand, the schools winning the country’s award for the best school in the country, the Royal Reward, were schools implementing LVEP. The school administrators of Saint Joseph Bang-na School, with 3,310 students, reported that in 22 months of implementing LVEP as a whole school, there was a 20% increase in student attendance, a 10% decrease in student tardiness, a 10% increase in teacher attendance, a 20% improvement in reading scores, a

15% improvement in language scores and a 15% improvement in math scores. There was also considerable improvement on all measures of school climate.

- In Paraguay, educators rated 3243 students from 4- to 22-years of age who were engaged in LVE. Despite being from many different schools with a variance in adherence to the LVEP Model, the educators found that 86% of the students improved in the conflict resolution skills and the ability to concentrate, 87% improved in responsibility, 89% improved in respect shown to peers and honesty, 92% improved in their ability to relate socially in a positive way, 94% showed an improvement in motivation and more interest in school, 95% showed more respect for adults, and 100% had more self-confidence and cooperated more with others.

There are also wonderful stories from educators in special circumstances. In Thailand, one year after implementing LVEP, nine out of 24 refugee-camp teachers working with children and youth reported 100-percent improvement in violent behavior; the others cited an 80-percent reduction in aggressiveness. Within two years, smiles, kindness and cooperative and creative play had increased dramatically, and the camp leader reported that the section leaders who had spent considerable time dealing with problems of gangs of youth fighting from different sections prior to the implementation of LVE no longer needed to spend even one second on this issue as there was no fighting.

The new program for street children is bringing in very positive reports. In Brazil and Vietnam, educators reported considerable decreases in aggression and at-risk behaviors, and new behaviors of caring and values. One teacher noted, “Now they are confident and friendly with adults and their peers. There is almost no conflict in the classes and they now do not get into trouble after school either. The students have also developed many skits on how to keep safe from dangerous adults and really enjoy performing them. Now when they are on the streets and see children that are new to the streets they give support and advice to the new children and invite them to meet their teacher and join their classes.”

The Ministry of Labor in Vietnam reported in March of 2008 that LVE’s program for Drug Rehabilitation was the most successful program in government drug rehabilitation clinics. They have been using it for three years.

In 2003, there were the first external, formal evaluations of LVEP. Two schools that implement the program in Australia were included as part of a Values Education Study by the Government’s Department of Education, Science and Training. In regard to Glendale East Primary in Glendale, New South Wales, the Report stated: “A formal evaluation of the Living Values Programme in place at Glendale East Primary found that ‘most students, even those in kindergarten, could use language like respect and peace and were able to talk about school rules.... Many students commented that they should treat others as they would like to be treated... (and) Most felt the teachers were helpful and friendly and tried to help students learn their work.’ What is more, the school reported its excitement at seeing ‘how many children, including children who had some problems in their schooling, were interested and involved in values education.’ Teachers too found that ‘having the language of values when dealing with everyday situations in the classroom and playground (was) very useful;’ and the school believes that enrolments from out of the zone have ‘increased because of the values programme that has been spoken about in the community’.” The Report continues later: “Students, the school believes, need to have ‘a language of values in order to learn how to deal with conflict and manage social interaction and so the language of the Living Values programme was utilised and specifically taught in school programmes’. In an argument for actually teaching values in a more explicit way, the school suggests that ‘formally teaching values in the school curriculum

seems to somehow validate it along with Maths and Spelling. It is too important to simply lie in the “hidden curriculum”.”

The Report stated that the second school, Alia College in Hawthorn East, Victoria, chose LVEP “because, among other things: it has a unique focus on intra-personal intelligence; it is international; it has a support network for teachers; it is easy to implement, ‘very teacher friendly with plenty of support materials;’ it offers flexibility in implementation and is cross-curricular; and its network facilitates on-going professional development free of charge.” Later, it reports that while Alia College points “to the importance of ensuring that values education is implicit in ‘all communication, structures and interactions at the College’ ... they have also introduced Living Values Education as a compulsory one hour slot within the school curriculum. This arose from ‘a growing awareness ... that the students needed exposure to a more introspective and self-reflective way of being ... whilst maintaining an academic approach within the processes adopted’. And, since the inclusion of Values as a discrete subject area, the school believes ‘there has been a paradigm shift’ reflected in ‘a growing understanding and acceptance that there is indeed a need for explicit values education work in schools, which is self-reflective and holistic’.”

In Lebanon, Rula Kahil, examined the effect of LVEP on behavior and attitudes related to intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence in elementary school students in a private school in Lebanon. A sample of 76 second- and third-grade students at Beirut’s American Community School were randomly selected and assigned to groups. A pre-post experimental design was used. For a whole school year, students in the treatment group received Living Values Activities lessons on peace, respect and love in addition to the normal school curriculum. The control group continued with the curriculum without the additional value lessons. Both groups were pre- and post-tested using Harter’s Perceived Competence Scales, Teachers’ Rating Scale and the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory. An analysis of the data showed significant treatment effects. The treatment group’s post-test results found significant positive effects on students’ self perceptions in scholastic, cognitive and social domains when compared to the control group. The treatment group also showed significant improvements in the Teachers’ Rating Scale. Mrs. Kahil concluded that it is crucial for schools to implement values and social skills programmes in order to enhance students’ social, emotional and intellectual development.

In Venezuela, four high school students from Monsenor Chacon School, in La Azulita, Merida, collaborated on a study of the effectiveness of Living Values Education in high school in the State of Merida, *Living Values: a Tool for Adolescent Development* (Arias M, Julio; Gomez F, Daniela; Lobo M, Silvina; and Maggiolo R, Ana, under the technical direction of Lic. Maria Carolina D’Enjoy and Lic. Eduardo Gaviria, 2007). This study was a quasi-experimental design study of adolescent character development in two schools in Venezuela. Using a stratified random sample of 30 students (ages 15-18) from two schools in Venezuela enrolling 500 students in total, the investigators administered a pre/post role-playing situation which asked the students to act out a mini-drama. Scenes in the drama involved aggression, violence, frustration and other anti-social behavior. The treatment group was exposed to ten weeks of weekly, one-hour LVEP lessons. The control group did not have LVEP instruction. At the conclusion, students participated in a post-test role play, and in all cases with the LVE group, new behavior was demonstrated. A final survey was also administered to the LVE group, which asked them about their favorite values, what they learned from the course and responses to a series of statements such as "I feel I can contribute to a better world". The authors concluded that LVE had a positive effect on the development of conflict resolution skills and increased students' personal identification with values, as well as their ability to use those values in daily life."

Should you wish to learn more about LVEP, or read the stories and comments of teachers and students using the program, please visit the Living Values Education Web site.

www.livingvalues.net