

# After School & Beyond

## PEACE BUILDERS SPOTLIGHT

The beginning of the new school year can be a very stressful time for youth. There are new teachers, new classmates, new sets of rules and schedules to follow, and sometimes even a whole new school to adjust to. Stress is normal and unavoidable. Everyone, including (and probably especially) children react to stress differently. While some youth may find this time exciting, some may be fearful and have a hard time concentrating. If you recall your Peace Builders' training, we learned that youth who are in a calm state of mind are able to relax and think abstractly while youth who are in a state of agitation or even terror are focused on survival, can act unpredictably, and are less able to learn.

With this in mind, it is important for us to do everything we can to make our after school environments as peaceful and engaging as possible. Be aware of how you are communicating—both verbally and nonverbally. Take some time to just sit in the program space and imagine how your youth are experiencing it. We can't (and don't want to) completely eliminate stress from our youths' lives; however, we can choose to alleviate as much unpredictable stress as possible. The after school program space should be a place where kids can relax, have fun and count on a consistent and predictable schedule, and, most importantly, count on consistent and predictable staff.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

September 21st marks not only a day of global ceasefire, but a day of hope. First celebrated in 1982, Peace Day brings individuals, organizations and nations together to celebrate a shared vision of peace. Much like our Peace Builders program, Peace Day seeks to build peace—the creation of a long term culture of peace. Peace building is focused on increasing understanding and cooperation. Let us celebrate this day together and build peace everywhere we go! For ideas on how to celebrate, visit the Peace Corner on page 2.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Star Staff .....	2
Best Practices .....	2
Backpack Giveaway .....	3
Ready, Set, SACERS .....	4
SACERS Cheat Sheet .....	5
All Staff Training .....	6

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Check out our Peace Corner to gather ideas for International Day of Peace
- Find out how to get a 5 or better across all SACERS categories
- Get info about our upcoming trainings as well as how to earn a Rocker Coin or two

## MEET OUR STAR STAFF



Congratulations, Lissette Naranjo !  
(Paseo de Oro– San Marcos, CA)

Lissette is our September Star Staff. She has been with HOPE through Housing since last September and has been a rock at her site since she began. She has taken initiative to do things like make connections with parents, translate our parent handbook for us and take additional leadership responsibilities all without being asked! As her Site Coordinator, Tye Smith, says, “she is always smiling and ready to lend a helping hand to kids and staff alike. She is a great example of Peace

Builders principles in action!”

Well done, Lissette. We are so happy to have you on our team!

Get to know Lissette:

Favorite color: **Pink**

Dream Destination: Europe– Italy to be specific!

Double major (wow!) in Spanish and Sociology

Favorite food: Mexican

She is most proud that her family has supported her throughout her life

*Lissette Naranjo with one of the youth from Paseo de Oro*

*“A characteristic of the normal child is he doesn’t act that way very often.”  
Author Unknown*

### PEACE CORNER

Here are some resources & ideas to celebrate International Day of Peace:

- Watch videos or read books about peace, cooperation, respect, and understanding
- Make Pin Wheels for Peace ([www.pinwheelsforpeace.com](http://www.pinwheelsforpeace.com))
- Plant Rocks for Peace ([www.plantingrocksforpeace.org](http://www.plantingrocksforpeace.org))
- Have a Peace Day themed drawing contest
- Make a Handprint Peace Dove ([www.freekidscrafts.com](http://www.freekidscrafts.com))
- Find an international Pen Pal ([www.kidzhelpingkidz.org](http://www.kidzhelpingkidz.org))
- Make Origami Peace Doves
- Web Resources

[www.internationaldayofpeace.org](http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org)

[www.peaceday.org](http://www.peaceday.org)

[www.dayofpeaceca.org](http://www.dayofpeaceca.org)

### THAT’S A BRIGHT IDEA!

Here’s what’s going on at our sites:

- Utilize parents as volunteers– get them involved! - Northgate Village (Victorville, CA)
- As part of Fit 4 Life, kids learn about nutrition by helping create the snack menu. - Crossings (Rialto, CA)
- During homework time, all our kids are focused on their work or reading a book. Encourage them and use positive reinforcement like Peacebucks and giving them extra free play. - Cobblestone Village (Escondido, CA)
- Have Show- and- Tell each week and use a conflict corner for peer conflict resolution. The conflict corner helps decrease kids telling on each other and is a place for kids to talk issues out with each other and even staff. - Renaissance Village (Rialto, CA)



*Left– a drawing by a 5 year old at Renaissance Village. Middle– a project based learning activity at Bravo. Right– Praise Board at the corporate office.*



*Children and Youth from Cobblestone Village receive free backpacks during Project Learning Start*

## BACK TO SCHOOL WITH HOPE

On Friday August 12th, Hope through Housing, through generous donations by Staples, was able to participate in a “Project Learning Start” event. Project Learning Start is an event designed to get children off to a great start to the year as well as to encourage parents to register their kids for school and after school programs.

At 11 different communities, over 500 children and youth received free backpacks filled with school essentials such as binders, paper, pens, markers, folders and erasers. The events included a variety of activities, crafts, raffles and a registration drive. Staples volunteers were also on hand at several sites to help personally hand out the backpacks. {email /text the word honesty to Laura by 3pm on Monday for a Rocker Coin! I choose the word honesty because I know you will all be HONEST and not tip off your colleagues. These Rocker Coins are for those who are taking the time to read the newsletter!}

In addition to having the joy and privilege of being able to help out the youth and families in our communities, we also received some great press coverage in several locations. You can check out some articles at [www.sbsun.com](http://www.sbsun.com) by searching “Hope Through Housing Foundation.”

Congratulations to the communities that participated in this wonderful event!

Renaissance Village

Citrus Grove

Crossings

Eisenhower High School

Hawthorne Terrace

Cobblestone Village

Vista Dunes Courtyard

San Antonio Vista

Sunset Heights

Northgate Village

Ridgeview

## FAMILY INVOLVMENT IDEAS

- Establish a friendly contact with parents early in the year. The first message they hear from you should ALWAYS be positive
- Create & distribute a staff and kid- created newsletter
- Find ways to provide positive reinforcement to parents. Everyone responds well to recognition
- Involve parents in goal-setting for their children
- Create some “Good News Postcards” for staff to write a short positive note and put them in the mailbox
- Have children write personal notes to their parents or create personal invitations to program events
- Have a parent suggestion box
- Start a parent committee or hold parent discussion groups
- Hold a “Family Appreciation Night”
- Always be sure to call parents by name and smile
- Be aware of challenges in the community and find some resources that provide assistance
- Send parents a survey asking about their interests and hobbies. Ask them to demonstrate an activity
- Create a calendar of community events for your parent board or newsletter

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Attention Getting Techniques— alternatives to gaining attention and cooperation during transitions

- Staff Shouts: “And a HUSH fell over the crowd.” Youth answer: “HUSH”
- Staff holds up hand and says: “Give me a five”. Youth hold up hand and says: “five.” Continue to count down until you get to one
- Use a rain stick, bell or chime
- If your site has a mascot— staff yell the site name & youth respond with mascot
- Staff says: “All set?” Youth respond: “You bet!”
- Sing Boom Chicka Boom:  
Staff: “Boom Chicka Boom”  
Youth Repeat  
Staff: “ I said a boom chicka boom”  
Youth Repeat  
Staff: “ I said a boom chicka rocka chicka rocka chicka boom”  
Youth Repeat  
Staff: “I said a boom chicka boom”  
Youth Repeat  
Staff: “Oh yeah”  
Youth Repeat  
Staff: “Uh huh”  
Youth Repeat  
Staff: “Next time”  
Youth Repeat  
Staff: “ A little bit softer\*”  
Youth Repeat

\*louder, softer, faster, slower, etc.

Keep things interesting— change your quiet signal monthly!

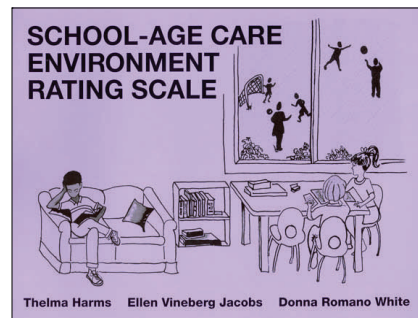
## READY, SET, SACERS- LET’S GO BIG 5!

Ready or not, SACERS season is just around the corner! SACERS (School Age Care Environment Rating Scale) is an industry standard tool that is used to evaluate quality in both licensed and unlicensed school-age programs. This tool helps us identify strengths and weaknesses, and create improvement plans for each individual program site as well as the After School & Beyond program as a whole. In addition, it helps us in our goal of becoming a recognizable, relevant and leading program in the industry of After School programming. Most importantly, it helps us make sure that we are providing the best possible programming for youth.

This year we have made it our goal that each site receive an average of 5 or higher for their overall SACERS score. We are confident that with some training, preparation and focus, we will be able to meet and exceed this goal! A score of 5 means that we are providing great programming for youth and are at least as competent and competitive as any licensed school age program, if not more so. This is an important step in our growth as a program and our growth in the industry.

To get everyone on the road to the “Big 5” you will be receiving SACERS “Cheat Sheets” in next few weeks leading up to your observation to guide you through each of the SACERS categories. The scale is arranged into the following seven categories:

- Space & Furnishings
- Health & Safety
- Activities
- Interactions
- Program Structure
- Staff Development



The first SACERS cheat sheet, which can be found on the next page, will be on the topics of Program Structure and Staff Development. Additional SACERS cheat sheets will be emailed out each week during the month of September. SACERS observations will begin in October. The observation schedule will be given out in September to allow plenty of time for preparing your site and ensuring that there are no scheduling challenges. Program sites may not change the date of their observation. The Youth Development department will provide an observation calendar to the Philanthropy department to ensure that site visits are not scheduled on site observation days.

Pre- SACERS site visits by Laura Fitzpatrick will occur between the 2nd week of September and mid October. Peer site visits will also occur during this time. Additional questions or support can be obtained by calling or emailing Laura Fitzpatrick, Melissa Thompson-Walker or any of our program Site Coordinators.



*Youth from Bravo Mobile Home Park are proud of their work of art!*

## SACERS CHEAT SHEET

Program Structure & Staff Development (items # 37-43)

Ensuring that you can show and/or talk about the following items will help you achieve a 5+ average in these SACERS categories! Keep in mind that not all of these items are easily observed by the evaluator. All leaders and staff must be able to articulate how they address each of these items.

- Daily schedule is followed most days and is flexible
- Daily schedule is posted
- At least 1 indoor & 1 outdoor activity is scheduled each day
- At least 1 gross motor activity is planned each day



*“A child seldom needs a good talking to as a good listening to.”  
Robert Brault, [www.robertbrault.com](http://www.robertbrault.com)*

- There are activities available for different age groups
- There are a variety of activities at the same time
- Most of the time, youth can choose an activity or from a variety of materials
- Youth can choose not to participate in an activity and be alone or rest
- Youth have opportunities to choose their companions
- There are opportunities for individual, small and large group activities
- SCs are involved in program decisions
- SCs are responsible for administration of program (ex: budget, curriculum, hiring)
- Staff and PM have regular meetings to discuss program
- Community resources are used (ex: tot lot & green space)
- Permission slips are used when program goes off site
- Rules are explained before field trips
- Regular use of recreational & cultural community resources
- There is a sufficient number of adults for supervision on trips & special events
- Trips are carefully planned to ensure success
- Trips are planned, or outside programs are brought in
- New staff orientation includes training in emergency, health & safety information, interactions with youth, discipline and appropriate activities
- Staff attend regular in-service (training)
- Professional resource materials are available
- Staff hold monthly site team meetings
- Staff have annual supervisory observations
- Staff receive annual performance feedback



## IMPORTANT DATES

- 9/5– Labor Day
- 9/13– Peace Builders Training  
Villaggio on Route 66  
8am-12pm
- 9/13 SC Meeting  
9045 Conference Room  
1:30am-2:30am
- 9/15– KidzLit & Virtual Vacations  
Villaggio on Route 66  
8am-12pm
- 9/16– CPR & First Aid  
Rancho Verde Village  
8am-12pm
- 9/16– All Staff Training  
Rancho Verde Village  
1pm-5pm
- 9/23– SC Retreat, Details TBD
- 9/27– SC Meeting
- 9/28– KidzLit & Virtual Vacations  
Paseo de Oro  
8am-12pm
- 9/30– Peace Builders  
Paseo de Oro  
8am-12pm

## UPCOMING ALL STAFF

Our first All Staff training for the 2011-2012 school year is coming up! We are so excited to have everyone back. We will be discussing a variety of topics at this training including:

- Child Abuse & Reporting
- Trauma Response
- Conflict Management
- Fall SACERS Info

As you have noticed, our all staff trainings this year are now 1/2 days instead of full days. It is more important than ever to be on time so that we can start & end the trainings promptly. Please plan on arriving 10-15 minutes early to ensure enough time to find parking, sign in and find a seat.

As a treat to those of you who are thoroughly reading this newsletter AND come on time to the training AND bring your staff binder, you will receive a Rocker Coin!



*From left to right: Valerie Vega, Olivia Torrez, Dinh Ho, Erica Vega, Dominique Johnson, Ensley Howell*

## A WORD ABOUT CHILD CPR & FIRST AID

A special CPR & First Aid class will be available to our staff on Friday September 16th from 8am-12pm. This is not a mandatory training, however if you choose not to attend and do not have current cards, you will be required to find, pay for and attend a training elsewhere within 90 days.

9065 Haven Avenue  
Suite 100  
Rancho Cucamonga, California  
91730

Phone: (909) 483-2444  
Fax: (909) 476-5912  
Email: [lfitzpatrick@hthf.org](mailto:lfitzpatrick@hthf.org)



HOPE through HOUSING  
FOUNDATION

## TRAINING LOCATIONS

### Rancho Verde Village

8837 Grove Avenue  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
Parking: Any uncovered spot

### Villaggio on Route 66

10220 Foothill Boulevard  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
Parking: Any uncovered spot

### Paseo de Oro

432 West Mission Road  
San Marcos, CA 92069  
Parking: In staff lot (east side of leasing office). The west side lot is 90 minute parking only. Additional parking on the street