

# SOUTH KOREA

## Fixing hurts at school

*“Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.”*  
—James 5:16

The Korea Peacebuilding Institute (KOPI) works hard to spread the message that listening and talking to each other are the best way to fix hurts in schools.

There is a school right next door to KOPI called Connexus Language Institute. At Connexus, students know that if they fight, they must sit in a circle and talk about what happened.

They know the four ground rules, because they are posted in every classroom. KOPI gave them this green poster that says:

- Only the person with the talking stick may talk.
- Listen carefully.
- Stay in the circle until the end.
- Don't tell others what you hear in the circle.



This yellow poster from KOPI lists questions to talk about:

- What happened? Tell it in your own words.
- Who was hurt most by what happened, and how was the person hurt?
- What can be done to fix that hurt? What can you do to help?
- How can your classmates and teacher help?
- What did you learn from talking to others today?



By talking together, students come up with ways to fix the hurt. Some of them make promises not to hurt others in the same way again. Since every person is part of the talking circle, they help each other to keep their promises.

There will always be hurts at school. But at Connexus, students know they will need to face the problems and come up with ways to fix them.

### Questions for discussion

1. Have you ever sat in a circle and used a talking stick? What was it like?
2. How can talking one at a time and listening help to fix problems?
3. Do you think this would be a good way to fix hurts in other places besides school? Why?

### Prayer

*Dear God, thank you for the good work that Korea Peacebuilding Institute does to make peace between children. Help us to remember to listen carefully to others. Amen.*

### Activity: Learn to speak Korean!

Words can build up people, but they can also hurt people badly. These simple Korean phrases can help you make friends and mend relationships.

- Hi ..... annyeong?
- Hello .....an-nyoung ha-sae-yo? (*literally, Are you at peace?*)
- How are you? ..... Ottoshimnikka?
- Thank you ..... gam-sa-ham-nee-da
- I'm sorry ..... jwae-song-ham-nee-da



Photo provide by KOPI staff

**The power of words**—In South Korea, children at Connexus learn how to mend relationships by talking about their feelings.

### Our gifts can help support mission in South Korea.

**\$100** provides a scholarship for one student from a country in Northeast Asia (Mongolia, Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong) to attend a one-week training on topics like peace education, sustainable development, restorative justice, or conflict transformation.

**\$50** supports one child from Japan, China, or South Korea at Peace Camp for one day.

**\$10** purchases paper, crayons, scissors, etc., for peace education activities at the Northeast Asia Youth Peace Camp.

**Gift designation.** All gifts to support ministries in South Korea should be sent to Mennonite Mission Network, PO Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370. Please indicate that the funds are for **“Mission Bank: South Korea”** or **“Project #1604.”**

▶ For more activities and stories, visit [www.MennoniteMission.net/SouthKoreaMissionBank](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/SouthKoreaMissionBank).

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## A camp for peace

“... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.”  
—Matthew 5:16

Every year the Korea Peacebuilding Institute helps plan a peace camp. The camp is for young people from China, Japan and Korea. These three countries are neighbors, but because of wars, many Chinese and Korean youth are taught to hate Japan.

At the Youth Peace Camp, the campers become friends. “On the first day of Peace Camp, I had no idea what it would be like, said Heo Hyo-eun, a 15-year-old Korean girl. When I saw one young girl from Japan, Yuki, I wanted to be her friend. We were placed on the same team, and I was happy! Through playing, dancing, and games, we became close.

“I will remember the relationships we built with friends from other countries. Since we’re students, we have all studied about our history of pain and hurt. Even just sharing space together and eating food together was a powerful experience for us.

“The last night of Peace Camp, my Chinese friend and roommate, Linda, shared a lot. She said, crying, ‘We hated Japan, because we cannot forget what Japan did to us ... but through this camp, my hatred toward Japan has disappeared.’

“When it was the Japanese students’ turn, they went to the front. They were crying, and said, ‘We are very sorry to Korea and China ... really sorry ... sorry.’ Their tears extinguished the fire of my hatred. Yuki, from Japan, had become my best friend.

“After this, we had a candle-lighting ceremony. Each person placed a candle on the world map on the floor, in an area where they wanted to see peace grow. The area between China, Korea and Japan became the shining-est part of the map. I thought to myself, ‘Let’s love warmly and accept each other, just like these candles. And may we never again repeat our painful history.’”

### Questions for discussion

1. Sometimes when we hear bad things about someone, we dislike them without even knowing them. How can that change when we get to know that person?
2. How can games and activities help us really get to know someone?
3. Why do you think the Japanese students were so sorry?

### Prayer

*Dear God, help us not to dislike others because of how they look or what we’ve heard about them. Help us to get to know them and make friends. Amen.*

### Activity: Pray for peace.

In the Bible, Jesus tells us to let our light shine. This means to show God’s love to everyone we meet, especially in places where it can be hard to see God at work. In a darkened room, lay out a map (of the world, the state, or the city where you live). Gather students around in a circle, and while you sing “This little light of mine,” place a battery operated candle on a city or street where you would like to see peace grow. Then as a group pray for peace in those places.



Photo by Karen Spacher

**Building bridges of peace**—Peace Campers Aki (Japan), Hyo-eun (Korea), and Moe (Japan) at the annual culture night.

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## Peace movies

*“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”*

—John 15:12

In 2014, 55 teams of students from elementary to high school took restorative justice classes at the Korea Peacebuilding Institute. “Restorative justice” means bringing together people who have hurt or been hurt by each other to try to make things right again.

As part of their learning, the children and youth visited places that told about the hurts of different groups of people. Then trained filmmakers helped the teams of students create short movies to show what they had learned about peace and justice. They used ideas from their own experiences at school and with friends outside of school.

The students made more than 55 films. In January 2015, the first Youth Peace Film Festival was held. At the festival, 34 of the students’ films were shown. Fifteen of the movies were created by elementary students, 13 by middle-school students, and six by high-school students.

About 400 parents, students and teachers attended the film festival’s opening ceremony, and 200 students attended each movie viewing. Jae Young Lee, director of Korea Peacebuilding Institute, called the students’ experience “a journey for peace and hope.”

### Questions for discussion

1. Did you ever make a video? How would making a movie about peace help you think about peace more?
2. What movie have you seen that shows people making peace?
3. What experience have you had at school or with friends that could make a good movie about peace?

### Prayer

*Dear God, we know living peacefully with others is important, but it’s not always easy. Help us to remember how you would want us to act. Amen.*

### Activity: Make your own video!

In groups of two or three, act out a story about making peace. The story can be found in the Bible or something you have experienced at home, school, or church. Then have your teacher videotape your story and share it with others.



Photo provided

**Showing and sowing peace**—An opening ceremony kicked off the 2015 Bucheon Youth Peace Film Festival in South Korea. Each movie about peacemaking was produced by elementary, middle-school, and high-school students.

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