



WHITAKER
PEACE & DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE



DOMESTIC HARMONIZER PROGRAM

(UNITED STATES)

ANNUAL REPORT



2021

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Introduction

The Domestic Harmonizer Program (DHP) is a one-of-a-kind program launched by the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative (WPDI) in 2016. This **peace education program for middle schools** works with all stakeholders – students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents – to promote restorative practices. Our innovative curriculum integrates conflict resolution principles with California Common Core standards for math, social studies, English, science, and physical education. **Five years after the program was first launched, WPDI has partnered closely with four schools to implement this program.** This year, we used our curriculum and accompanying animation videos to create the Domestic Harmonizer **Virtual Center, an online hub for teachers, students, and parents.**





The DHP's engaging activities and modules are tailored to developing a whole-school culture centered on practicing peace education. **Lessons focus on key topics such as empathy, communication, understanding needs, dialogue, peer mediation, and restorative justice.** Teachers and students infuse these concepts in their academic coursework and learn how to use them in their school projects and ways of interacting at school. Our project-based learning model has inspired a number of innovative creations this past year, from learning about the Black Lives Matter movement in social studies and the brain's activities when a person is involved in conflict in science to mediation and negotiation in advisory classes. Our educational lessons **encourage students to work collaboratively and create solutions to problems that they learn in their academic classes.**

The Domestic Harmonizer Program addresses youth violence, bullying, and conflict, and helps students transform conflicts from negative experiences to opportunities for positive change. We do this by delivering to schools:



› In-person and online classes for students and teachers that curate our curriculum to any academic class;



› Tools and resources in restorative practices and trauma-informed healing for students, teachers, and parents; and



› Peer mediation training for students at all partner schools.

2021 Facts and Figures

115

online
educational
sessions
delivered directly
to students

164

educators
trained in our
curriculum

3,400

students
impacted through
implementation
of the DHP

94

peer mediators
trained across
three school
campuses

80.6%

of educators
surveyed 'strongly
agree' or 'agree'
that they would be
likely to implement
DHP lessons

89%

of educators
surveyed
'strongly agree'
or 'agree' that the
DHP materials
distributed to them
were helpful

Our Unique Approach

Rooted in restorative practices, the DHP works with students and teachers to build a deep understanding of conflict and how to resolve it constructively in various contexts. **By helping create peaceful opportunities for exchange and learning, schools can reduce incidents of conflict on campus.** It also supports students in conflict to feel understood rather than punished. Punitive measures not only deprive students of the opportunity to learn from their mistakes; it also, as research has repeatedly shown, fails to make schools safer. WPDI's experience in implementing the DHP corroborates this research and emphasizes how restorative practices contribute to achieving the larger goals behind education by **emphasizing accountability, understanding, and trust within the school community.** This helps students feel safer and connected to school by promoting positive youth development.

Through our work, **the DHP's goal is to cultivate competence, confidence, character, and compassion in students.** Once a partner school is selected, **WPDI implements the DHP for a minimum of three years.** The program is centered on restorative practices including innovative activities and lessons centered on communication, understanding, empathy, and dialogue among students and teachers. The DHP helps promote peace education on school campuses by supporting educators in **delivering in-person and virtual classes** infusing the DHP curriculum in various subject matters, such as science, math, English, social studies, advisory, leadership, and physical education. The program also trains students in skills such as peer mediation.

This year marked the five-year anniversary of the DHP. The program was first launched in September 2016 at Andrew Carnegie Middle School in Carson, California. **Since the program's inception through December 2021, WPDI has reached 11,054 students, graduated 252 peer mediators, and instructed 247 teachers and 14 counselors in the program's curriculum.** The program has expanded its curriculum integrating conflict resolution in academics from its early days and extended its offerings to include a thriving peer mediation program, animation videos, a Virtual Center, an upcoming educational game, and trauma-informed trainings for students, parents, and teachers. Now as we reach 2022, the program is poised to reach tens of thousands of more students through our Virtual Center.



“The Domestic Harmonizer Program was the best program to come to Carnegie Middle School. It was amazing to see the students use the conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills in their daily lives. Our staff also used what they learned in handling difficult situations. As a result, we achieved a more positive and respectful learning environment. We were so fortunate to be part of this innovative initiative.

— Cheryl Nakata
Former Principal (Retired)
Carnegie Middle School

Expanding in Uncertain Times

As we began 2021, WPDI continued working with our California partner schools: Ball Jr. High School in Anaheim and Stephen White Middle School and STEAM Magnet in Carson. Both schools – like most public schools in the United States – resumed online instruction and learning for students due to the pandemic. Certainly online learning offered both benefits and drawbacks: protection from the virus and other common problems in schools like bullying, as well as disadvantages, like no face-to-face instruction and socialization, both of which are critical for young students. Nevertheless, WPDI steamed full-force with the DHP by offering our program virtually. We were able to collaborate with teachers to offer demonstration lessons in social studies, math, science, English, AVID, advisory, and leadership classes. During the first half of the year as we concluded the 2020-2021 academic year, the DHP team conducted 45 demo lessons and trainings.



This past fall, after a year and a half of school closures to in-person learning in the United States, schools reopened their doors to students for face-to-face instruction. WPDI remained adaptive and delivered teacher training at the beginning of the school year to all our partner schools and also peer mediation training. In the fall, we delivered **70 sessions**, including demo lessons and peer mediation training using a **hybrid model of DHP participating via Zoom supported by in-person co-teaching with our partner teachers**, including a **new partner school**, Walker Jr. High School. All in all, we reached **164 educators** throughout the early summer professional development trainings, covering conflict resolution education topics such as understanding needs, restorative practices, and for the first time, trauma-informed practices.

The **inclusion of trauma-informed work** is intentional by WPDI in light of the pandemic and the hardship it inflicted on students and teachers. For much of this past year, students around the country

faced learning disruptions, lack of socialization, stressed out parents, and mounting uncertainties about the future. Many youths in our partner schools also faced deaths in their families due to the pandemic, and as a result of the financial hardships they faced, they could not even host proper memorial services for those who passed. Teachers and counselors at our partner schools expressed to the DHP team that **the trauma, grief, sadness, and anxiety that many students face these days has been daunting.** They have also expressed a heightened level of conflict and behavior issues at school among students as they readjust to the social norms and rules that they are expected to follow at school. Some students went from being elementary schools students when they left in-person instruction in March 2020 to suddenly being well into their middle school tenure in August 2021. **Students did not experience the social growth and maturity that they would have normally experienced,** leading to these conflicts and challenges. These are the many reasons why WPDI emphasized concepts and tools such as understanding human emotion, trauma, grief, and peer mediation this past year.

As we, unfortunately, continue living under the conditions imposed by the pandemic, our work at WPDI remains critical. Through our Virtual Center, the DHP team remains ready to curate lessons for teachers in any subject to address conflict and tensions experienced by students, teachers, and parents. Learning about our emotions, the collective trauma that we are all enduring, and some coping and healing tools are paramount for not only surviving but also thriving during this tumultuous time. The work of WPDI remains more vital now than ever before, and we remain more ambitious than ever to support youth. We aim to offer students and schools at our partner schools and through our Virtual Center important life skills.

Trauma

Conflict and trauma are a part of life and they can be connected. When we understand conflict, we understand that sometimes conflict comes out of difficult, traumatic or painful experiences of unmet needs.

So what is trauma?

It can be a difficult, troubling, or upsetting experience that you have had or seen happen to someone else. Sometimes you can be reminded about traumatic experiences when you don't expect it - these are called triggering experiences. These kinds of moments can be overwhelming, but you can empower yourself to move through these triggers with control and skill.

Understanding and becoming aware of traumatic experiences is the first step. The next step is knowing how to navigate the emotions and physical responses you might have. There are many strategies that are helpful in guiding people to a more peaceful place, beyond difficult memories and emotions.



Source: From the DHP Curriculum

Walker Jr. High School – WPDI's Latest School Partner

This past fall, WPDI also partnered for the first time with Walker Jr. High School in La Palma, California. This school is within the Anaheim Unified High School District, the same school district as Ball Jr. High School. Walker Jr. High School offers 7th and 8th grades, and for the 2021-2022 school year, **1,071 students** are enrolled. At the heart of Walker's mission is "to provide rigorous programs and curricula in which our students are challenged to meet high levels of academic achievement. Students will become compassionate, life-long learners as they develop a greater sense of their role in the global community." WPDI chose to partner with Walker given the school's strong focus on social-emotional learning and peacebuilding. While La Palma is an affluent area, students at Walker, like at countless schools in Southern California and around the nation, also **face issues such as trauma, poverty, and conflict**. The partnership with Walker Jr. High School is also significant because of the principal's strong leadership, which has led to teachers being invested in the well-being and growth of their students.





To kick off this partnership, WPDI delivered to all educators at Walker a three-hour intensive workshop covering a myriad of topics such as the basics of conflict, understanding needs, conflict styles, communication styles, and restorative justice in schools. Furthermore, we included trauma-informed topics, including how trauma affects youths and basic tools on how to cope with trauma as well as meditation and breathing exercises. All in all, WPDI trained **57 educators** from Walker during the intensive training in August. The chart below notes the results from the **42 educators** that took a voluntary and anonymous survey at the end of the training:

- ▶ **100% believe instructors were knowledgeable**
- ▶ **79% believe it increased their understanding of conflict resolution**
- ▶ **71% believe it increased their understanding of trauma**
- ▶ **80% believe it will improve their interactions with students**
- ▶ **83% they are leaving with specific tools to employ in practice**
- ▶ **82% found it personally helpful**



“Being in the harmonizer program (DHP) has been very beneficial for my students and myself. It has been very helpful to have tips on how to phrase something so that someone feels heard. It has been great to have time to practice and get honest feedback. I have been teaching for over 20 years and consider myself a good communicator and I, alongside my students, have learned new skills in this training session. I am so grateful for this opportunity.

— Julie Eusebio
Choir/Theatre Director
Walker Jr. High | Anaheim Union High School District

Assessed Impact of the DHP

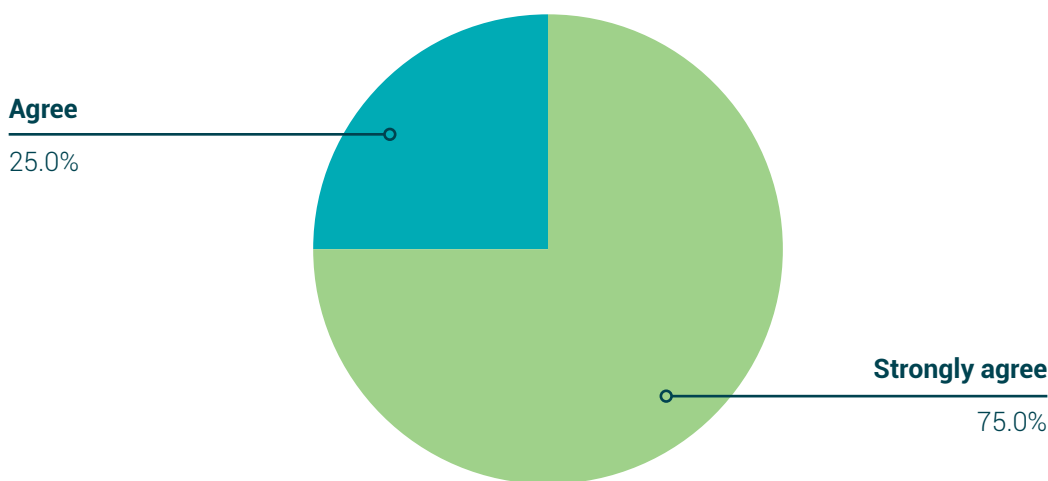
Dr. Briana Hinga, Associate Professor of Clinical Education at the University of Southern California, conducted an **objective assessment of the DHP for the 2020-2021 academic year**. Her research and report captured qualitative and quantitative data from students and teachers at WPDI's partner schools, Stephen M. White Middle School and S.T.E.A.M Magnet in Carson and Ball Junior High School in Anaheim. Her independent assessments covered two out of three years of planned program implementation by WPDI at these schools. The methodology for this report reflects the context of the pandemic, which resulted in the shutdown of schools to in-person learning and a continuation of virtual learning.

After each online class delivered by the DHP team to students and teachers, participants were invited to provide anonymous feedback to Dr. Hinga via an online survey. Educators and teachers were interviewed online as well. In total, **12 in-depth educators interviews** were conducted (six at Stephen White and six at Ball), **23 teacher surveys** were collected at Ball after professional development training sessions, **six student interviews** were conducted at Stephen White, **2,497 student surveys** were collected (1,325 at Stephen White and 1,172 at Ball), and **six observations** of the drama program processes were conducted. Some DHP classes happened once, while others had a routine time built-in to some classrooms, depending on teachers' willingness and availability. Many of these online DHP sessions had a project-based learning component, but this also depended on the teacher and the educational levels of students in each class. The DHP team customized each class to each groups' needs.



Teachers' Perceptions of Personal Development Facilitators' Knowledge

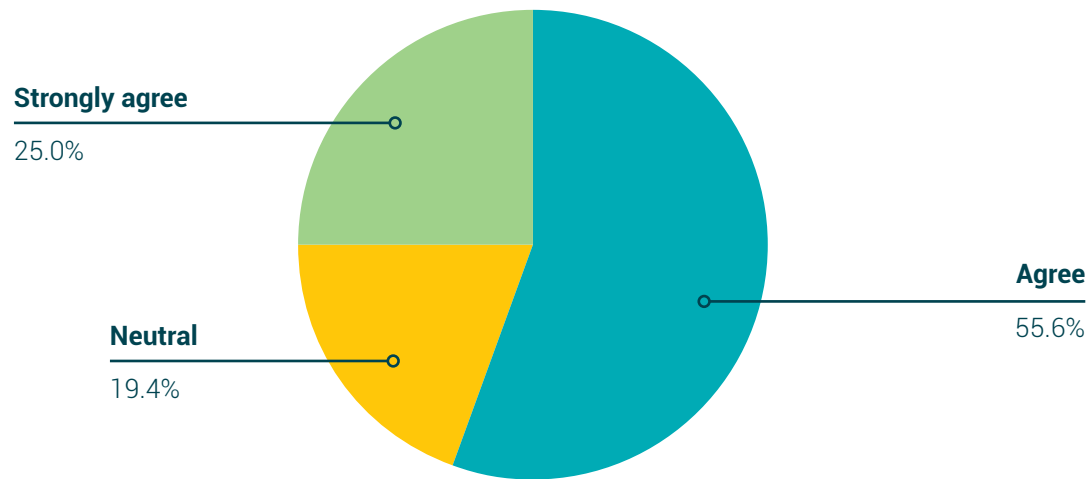
"The trainers were knowledgeable about the training topics."





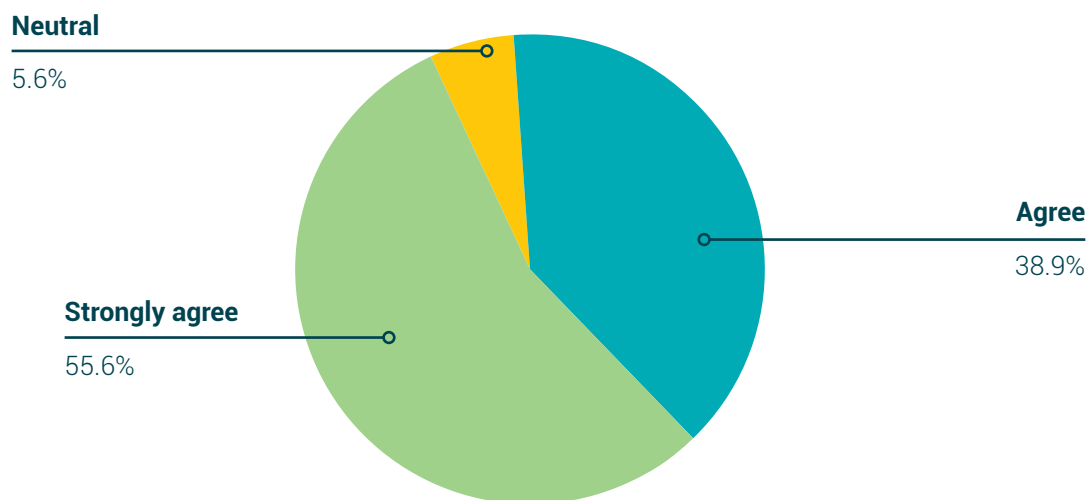
Teachers' Plans to Implement DHP

"I will implement lessons from this training in my practice."



Relevance of Topics Covered

"The topics covered were relevant to me."



Dr. Hinga's research found that **the DHP provided helpful tools for educators to support their students' critical needs during an unprecedented time.** Educators highlighted that the DHP content impacted their teaching style in general and that they implemented the following DHP tools this year to support their students: opening check-ins on student wellbeing, discussions about each students' underlying needs, meditation and mindfulness practices, and dialogue about uprisings for racial justice and the unmet need that led to them. Teachers also shared examples of how they infused the DHP curriculum into the standards-based curriculum across content areas (e.g., Literature, Science, Health). The DHP curriculum helped teachers connect content to students' lives in meaningful ways. At Stephen White, the DHP content was also integrated into monthly content within classes called "Advisory", taught each month over the course of a week. Advisory classes particularly focused on student socio-emotional development and well-being during this year of online instruction.

“ The DHP is a great stress relief ... Although I think we have a great student body we have our issues as anybody else across the country would have ... the addition of the DHP has really alleviated some of those stressors that I would have ... they are fully invested in the DHP curriculum. Our staff is fully invested and I certainly am fully invested. I am very grateful for what has been the product even throughout the whole pandemic year that we've had. The program has still been very beneficial to us as a staff and as a student body.

— Stephen White Educator

Students especially valued content meaningful to their lives, including the Movement for Black Lives, bullying, the 2020 Presidential Election, and current events. Students expressed to Dr. Hinga during focus groups gratitude for opportunities to share their strengths and learn more about their classmates' strengths. They learned communication tools and restorative practices. They expressed increased understanding for how to show empathy toward others. They learned how to analyze underlying needs leading to social unrest, protest, and current social conditions. They enjoyed opportunities to share their stories and feelings. **Educators noticed a reduction in student conflict and witnessed students using DHP lessons in their lives** outside of school to navigate tensions. Several students felt empowered to impact equitable change in their communities. Educators also learned and grew through participation in the DHP. Through interviews and surveys, educators explained how they learned more about themselves through the DHP content. They learned how to navigate their own relationships in more healthy ways. This speaks to the need for all of us, including adults, to continually grow our toolkits to create more healthy relationships.



“The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the interconnection between home life, community health, and schooling. This interconnection has always existed, yet it has not always been centered in schools. Systems of education increasingly now look for tools to support students’ wellbeing as a foundation for learning. I am grateful to witness how tools provided by the Domestic Harmonizer Program continually supports educators to understand and address students’ needs. I appreciate learning the creative ways educators take up the Domestic Harmonizer Program to weave conflict mediation and restorative practices into their daily practices.

*— Dr. Briana Hinga
Associate Professor of Clinical Education, University of Southern
California Independent Evaluator of the DHP*

“We got to understand the different emotions we go through when being in a conflict, when we show empathy, etc. I got to learn that how we act can have a big impact on the situation we are in and can have an effect on the solution.

— Stephen White Student

2021 Activities and Impact

Given the ongoing pandemic, **WPDJ conducted training with partner schools virtually.** Now, after a more than a full year of online schooling, the process of conducting online classes became more fluid and familiar for both the DHP team and also schools. WPDJ delivered to students and educators a total of **115 online educational sessions**, covering a wide array of topics in our conflict resolution and trauma-informed curriculum such as: conflict resolution basics, empathy, bullying, restorative justice, the impact of trauma on the brain, social movements, coding the pandemic, conflict styles, life skills, and more.

The screenshot displays a virtual training session interface. At the top, a navigation bar includes icons for Unmute, Stop Video, Security, Participants (30), Chat (3), New Share, Pause Share, Annotate, Remote Control, Apps, and More. A green banner across the top of the slide area reads "You are screen sharing" with a "Stop Share" button. The main slide content is titled "PEER MEDIATION GUIDED SCRIPT" and is divided into two sections:

- STEP 1: INTRODUCTION**
 - ▶ Share your names and ask disputants to introduce themselves
 - Describe the Peer Mediation Process
 - We're peer mediators and we're here to guide you to solve to your conflict. We will not take sides or tell you what your solution should be. Everything we say here, stay's here unless it is about bullying or something dangerous like use of weapons or drugs. If those things come up, we have to tell an adult. The first thing we need is agreement to some groundrules.*
 - ▶ Ask each Disputant for a clear agreement to follow each rule:
 1. Speak one at a time with no interruptions
 2. Respect all parties at all times
 3. No eye rolling
 4. No profanity or rude statements
 5. Agree to keep things shared in mediation confidential
- STEP 2: GATHER INFORMATION**
 - ▶ Ask each Disputant... Be encouraging. Ask... sharing points of view. summarize.

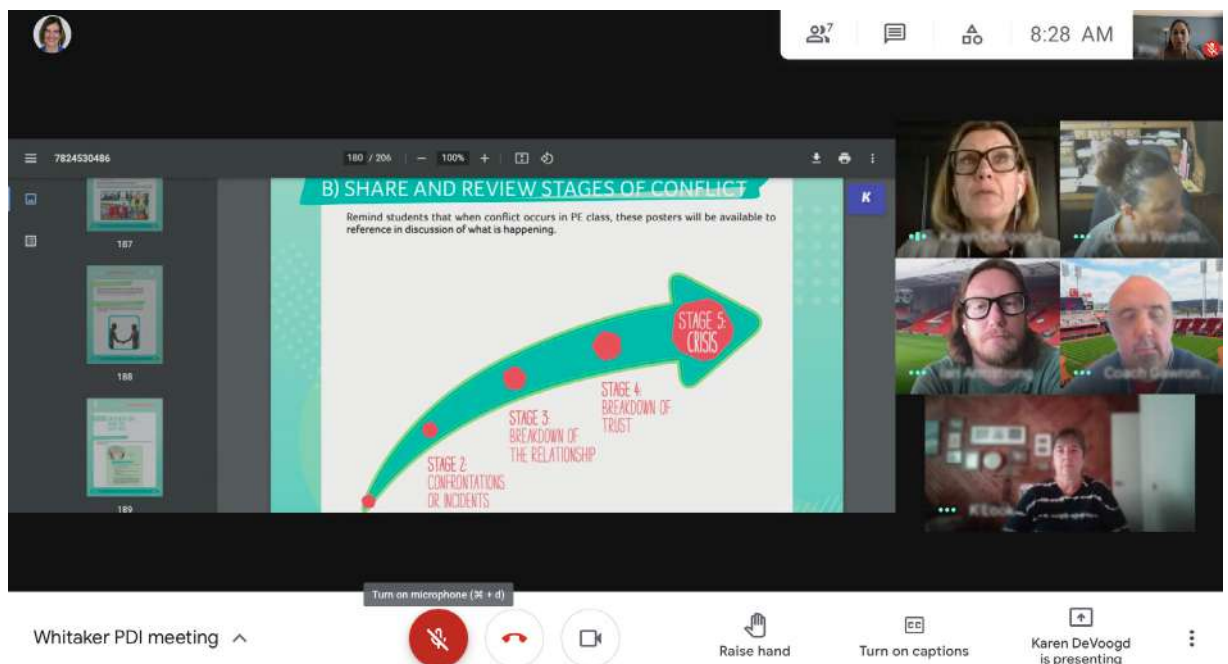
On the right side of the interface, there is a vertical stack of four video feeds showing participants. The top feed shows a person with dark hair and a black face mask. The second feed shows a person with dark hair and a blue face mask. The third feed shows a person with long dark hair and a blue face mask. The bottom feed shows a person with long dark hair and a striped face mask.

During this year, the DHP team conducted virtual training with students and teachers integrating the DHP content in science and health, math, English, social studies, physical education, leadership, advisory, AVID (college preparedness), and peer mediation. The topics covered included concepts such as coding the underlying needs of people during the pandemic in science classes, discussing the Black Lives Matter Movement in social studies classes, graphing conflict styles in math classes, personal leadership in AVID and leadership classes, analyzing conflict in stories in English classes, and more.

Professional Development

This past year, WPDJ conducted a variety of different **trainings for educators** at our partner schools, delivering a total of **14 professional development sessions** at our three local partner schools. This included departmental meetings, entire staff meetings, and one-on-one sessions with teachers for which we curated content for each specific classroom. **WPDJ trained a total of 164 educators in 2021.** The topics of the trainings we delivered ranged from basic conflict resolution, DHP curriculum integration, and trauma-informed healing. These professional development training sessions were an opportunity to provide more in-depth training to educators at Ball Jr. High School and Stephen White Middle School and STEAM Magnet, both of which are now in Year 3 of program implementation, and therefore familiar with the DHP. Nevertheless, each training session with educators is critical for advancing their practice of the concepts covered in the DHP and experts from WPDJ always ensure that all content is customized to the needs and goals of each school. In a recent anonymous and voluntary survey conducted after a professional development training in August 2021 at Stephen White Middle School and STEAM Magnet, our independent evaluator gathered the following results given by 52 educators in the training:

- ▶ **90% believe instructors were knowledgeable**
- ▶ **75% believe it increased their understanding of conflict resolution**
- ▶ **95% believe it increased their understanding of trauma**
- ▶ **88% believe it will improve their interactions with students**
- ▶ **86% they are leaving with specific tools to employ in practice**
- ▶ **85% found it personally helpful**



After the group professional development sessions, WPDI also conducted departmental trainings for educators at Ball Jr. High School in the Spring and Walker Jr. High School educators in the Fall for which **the sessions focused on specific subject areas taught by the teachers.** For example, in sessions designed for the English department, WPDI showcased how our curriculum could be adapted to any piece of literature under study. After a session with a group of English teachers at Walker Jr. High, to provide another example, two educators used our restorative justice modules and had students create projects that adapted our conflict analysis and trauma-informed tools to read and study the book, *The Giver*. In social studies professional development sessions, we looked at current events and showed teachers how they could apply concepts such as the sources of conflict, power, violence, and more to any historical event too. With science teachers, we looked at issues such as the COVID pandemic to map out needs and do computerized coding and even looked at the brain to see how it is impacted by conflict. Finally with math departments, we pulled from our curriculum focused on using decision trees to analyze any conflict situation. This year in all our professional development sessions, we had teachers take our Conflict Styles Assessment, a tool we created to indicate each person's individual conflict approach. This piece is highly insightful for teachers to learn about how they address conflict, how others deal with conflict, and how to adapt our approaches to conflict based on the demands of the situation.



“ Working with the Domestic Harmonizer team has been nothing short of a pleasure! Karen and Monya are extremely knowledgeable and care about the program's success in our classrooms. I especially enjoy when these ladies plan and implement the lessons for our students! The students really understand Domestic Harmonizer concepts and put them into practice in the school. The professional development times are wonderful opportunities to add more activities and strategies for our students. Thank you for the time you have spent with our students and staff.

*— Joni Marie Badar,
English Teacher | Stephen White Middle School
and STEAM Magnet*

“ The Domestic Harmonizer program has provided exceptional and relevant materials that translate to meaningful learning in the classroom. My co-teacher and I have been continually impressed with the resources and tools that we have been given access to. Students have already shown great understanding and the aftermath of the work, using these tools continues to surface in reflections, journals, and classroom discussions well after the assignments are completed. Thank you to the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative team.

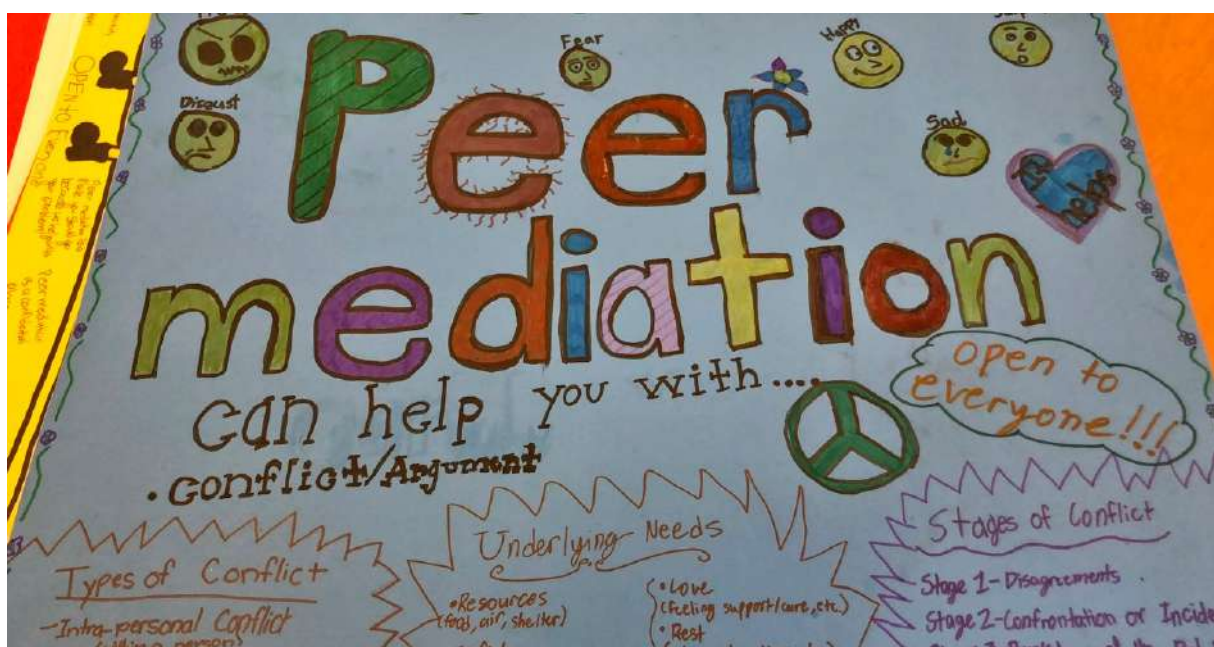
*— Dr. Mary Ward and Mr. Andrew Burnett,
English Language Arts Educators | Walker Jr. High School*

Peer Mediation

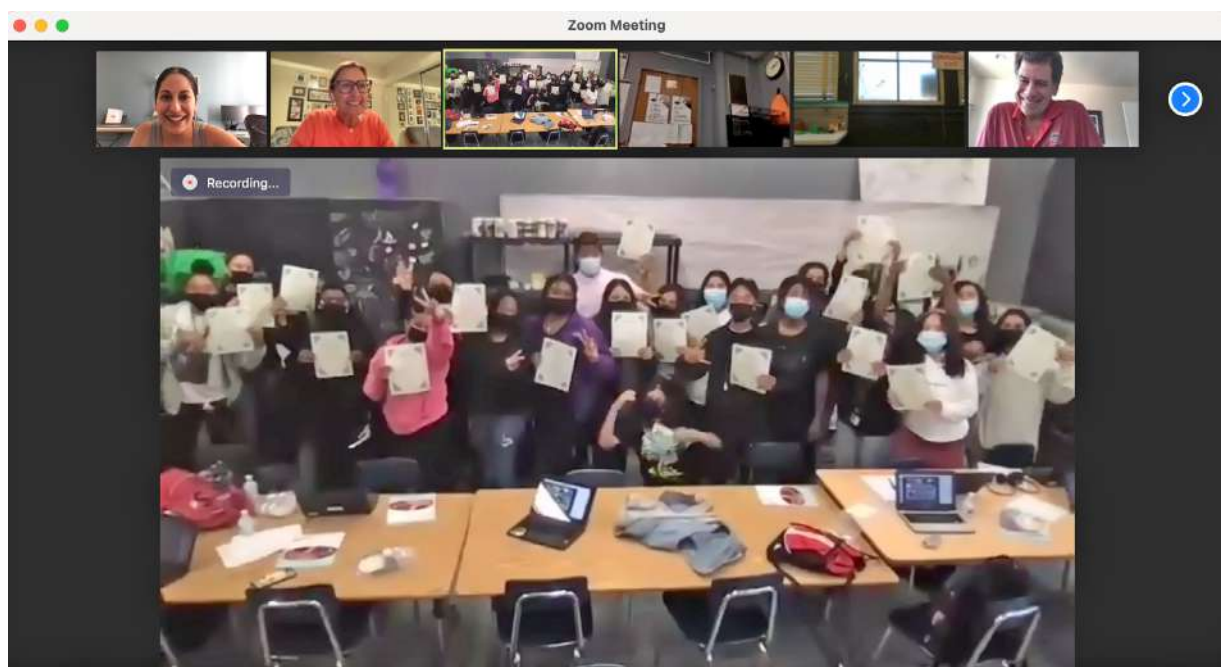
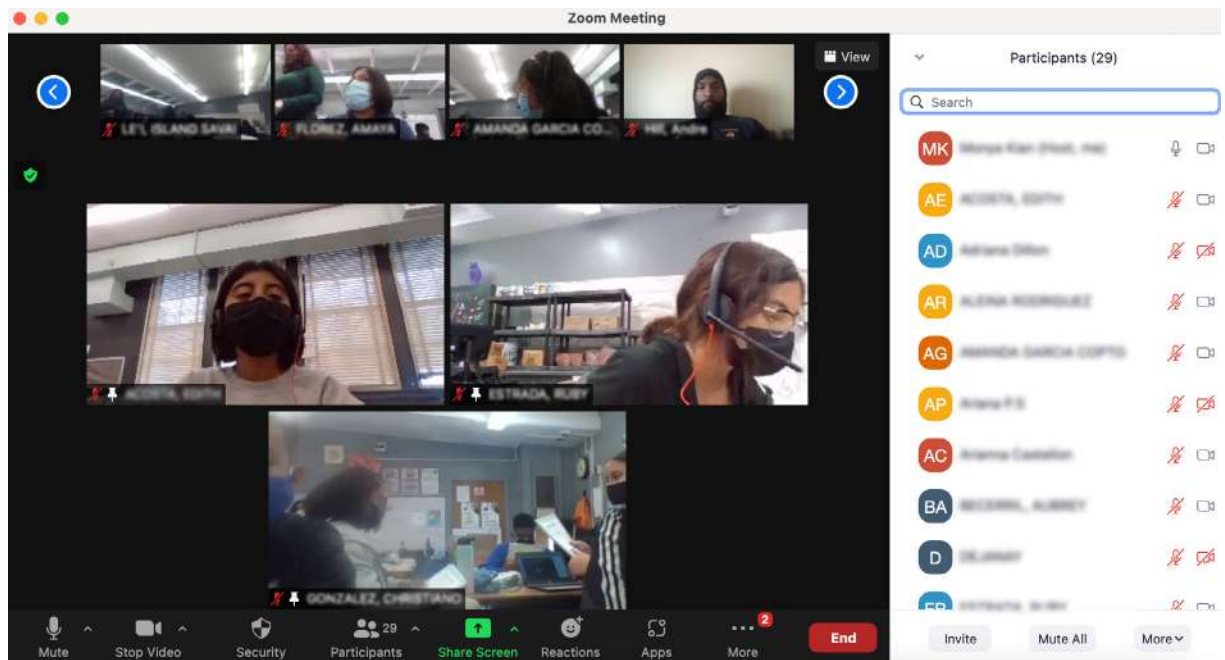
One of the most powerful and impactful components of the DHP is the peer mediation program in which WPDJ works with school counselors and leaders to **recruit and train a cohort of student leaders**. This past year, WPDJ worked with our three local school partners, Ball Jr. High School, Walker Jr. High School, and Stephen White Middle School and STEAM Magnet to recruit and train a total of **94 peer mediators**. Starting in October, WPDJ began working with counselors and educators to recruit students who were interested and eager to serve their school community as peer mediators. At each partner school, WPDJ delivered our 12-hour peer mediation training, which covers the following topics:

- ▶ The foundations of conflict;
- ▶ Understanding needs;
- ▶ Sources of conflict;
- ▶ Active listening;
- ▶ Communication skills;
- ▶ The covenants of peer mediation; and
- ▶ The six-step peer mediation process.

During the training process, students engage with WPDJ trainers and each other to think through these concepts in interactive ways. Experts from WPDJ integrate interactive activities throughout the entire training, from a myriad of videos to eye-catching images and interesting stories. Students also role play a number of conflict scenarios as they would happen in the school environment, and then in groups, practice using peer mediation skills to resolve those mock situations. In this way, students become fluid in the peer mediation process and **learn how to use the skills critical to resolving interpersonal conflicts that often occur on school campuses among middle schoolers**.



Once students completed the 12-hour training, they **received certificates** of completion from WPDI and **became eligible to resolve suitable conflicts on their respective school campuses**. Students who completed the training will help mediate interpersonal conflicts on their school campus and help their peers resolve conflicts under the supervision of their school counselors and leaders. This is critical in maintaining a peaceful school campus as these are the types of conflicts that have the potential to escalate and become very challenging issues for the school in the future. The DHP team truly enjoys delivering this training to students and helping them to cultivate this important life skill.





“ Participating in the Domestic Harmonizer Program has been such a great experience for me as an educator. The program that I am really impressed with and am so glad to be a part of is the Peer Mediator Program. I love watching the students learn about the Peer Mediation process and seeing their growth from the first day of training to doing their first Peer Mediation. It is exciting to see the students' growth in their personal skills of identifying their own unmet needs and helping their peers do the same to help resolve conflict.

*— Anh Nguyen,
School Counselor | Ball Jr. High School*



“ This program and training was fun. Ms. Karen and Ms. Monya showed us that conflict mediators are important because they can stop a problem from getting bigger. I would recommend this program because if at least we have ten people at a school to help resolve issues, I think people might be more happy with each other.

*— Justin S.,
7th Grader | Walker Junior High School*



“ Mediation is when two mediators guide disputants to solve their problems. When I took mediation training, I learned a lot that will benefit me and my daily life. These skills are essential to learning because it opens your eyes to a lot of things. One of the main things that mediation has opened my eyes to was being biased and putting myself in other people’s shoes. Ms. Karen and Ms. Monya have taught us many things that can benefit us in many ways, such as restating, not judging people quickly, and most importantly, guiding other people to solve their conflicts calmly and in order. I hope this can make me a better leader because now I have the proper training to help people with a conflict. I would recommend this training to other people. Anyone at any age can do it, and it will help out a lot in the community.

— Sophia K.,
7th Grade Student | Walker Jr. High School



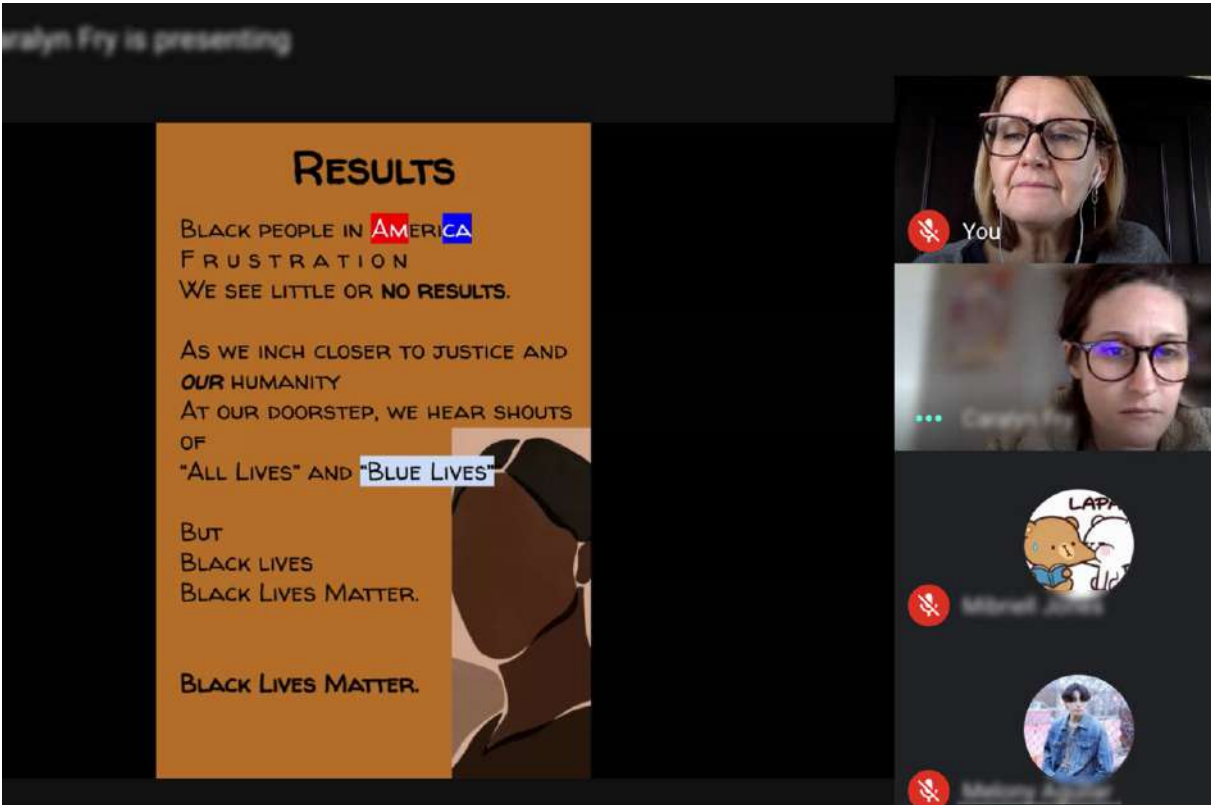
“ The Domestic Harmonizer Peer Mediation Program has been an amazing asset to have here at Stephen White Middle School for our students. The program has taught a group of students how to become better leaders through mediating conflicts. Not only has it helped that group of students, but it also has helped the culture of our campus shift as well. Students are learning to handle situations on their own, which shows a lot of growth.

— Andre Hill and Adriana Dillon,
School Counselors | Stephen White Middle School
and STEAM Magnet

Demonstration Lessons

In order to help teachers implement the DHP, experts from WPDJ helped curate content for teachers and students in all subject areas across our school partners. These “demo lessons” help teacher and students learn from WPDJ experts directly, take the tools that are instructed in the demo lessons, and make their own projects based on the concepts instructed. These demo lessons are a key instrument employed by the DHP team to help students and teachers become familiar with the DHP content, and in turn, shift the way conflict is viewed in general.

We hope to help teachers and students become familiar with the vocabulary of conflict resolution and peacebuilding so that they use the skills routinely, inside and outside of the school community. The chart below showcases some examples of demonstration lessons led by the DHP team in 2021.

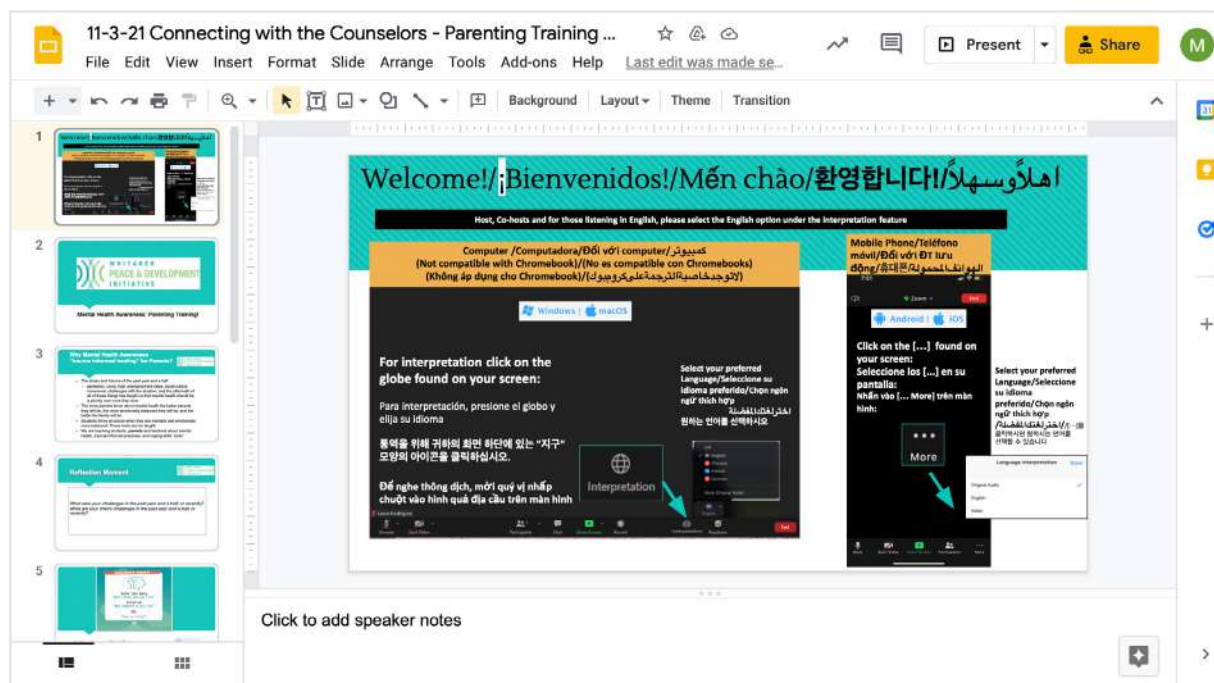


Subject	School	Number of Students Impacted
Advisory – classes in general conflict resolution education and restorative practices. These sessions are delivered over the course of a week each month.	Stephen White Middle School and S.T.E.A.M. Magnet	1,600 students (entire student body)
Science – a project-based learning initiative that involved students learning about human needs during the COVID-19 pandemic and creating a coding project.	Ball Jr. High School	190 students
Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) classes – DHP delivers monthly classes, in general CRE, to 7th and 8th grade students to provide them essential life skills.	Ball Jr. High School	80 students
Leadership – working with a group of leadership students on learning about restorative practices to bring people with opposing views together.	Stephen White Middle School and S.T.E.A.M. Magnet	18 students
Associated Student Body – working with a group of 7th and 8th grade students to advance their leadership skills and learn about conflict as an opportunity. This is a monthly training.	Ball Jr. High School	25 students
Drama – worked with a group of students to act out communication skills and practice positive communication.	Stephen White Middle School and S.T.E.A.M. Magnet	30 students
History and Social Studies – the WPDI team covered the Black Lives Matter movement.	Ball Jr. High School	71 students
Home Economics – looking at student conflict styles and taking the assessment tool.	Ball Jr. High School	145 students
Science and Technology – a look at the human brain and the creation of an emotional fit bit.	Stephen White Middle School and STEAM Magnet	24 students

Initiating New Collaborations

▶ Parenting Classes

In order to address the entire school community, this year WPDJ began to offer educational sessions to parents at Ball Jr. High School. Initially, **WPDJ delivered a session on trauma-informed concepts to a group of parents**, who responded positively. Many parents at the session noted that their kids faced issues such as trauma and depression induced by the pandemic. Following this session, Ball Jr. High School's counseling and family services team invited WPDJ to provide a longer session to parents at Ball as well as its feeder school, Loara High School. **The topics included grief, trauma, needs, and coping strategies – all to help students and parents address the stress, loss, and trauma many of them faced during this pandemic.** Many of these families come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and therefore, lacked the financial resources to host funerals for loved ones lost during the pandemic. The grief and trauma that they have faced has also significantly impacted students, who do not know how to talk about emotions with their parents, and vice-versa. Our training provided some ways for parents to learn how to cope themselves and to help their children cope and heal as well.





Youth Peace Bridges Program

One of the latest integrations for the DHP this past year was the **cross-connection with another WPD I program, the Youth Peacemaker Network in South Sudan**. Thanks to funding from the U.S. Embassy in Juba (the U.S. Department of State), WPD I was able to connect students at WPD I's partner schools in the United States with youth involved in WPD I's programs in South Sudan. The purpose of this collaboration – the Youths Peace Bridges program – is to **build new connections, relationships, and cross-cultural understandings among youths from the two countries**. Essentially, this program serves to build a virtual bridge between students to learn about one another and grow as global citizens. Students from Stephen White Middle School's leadership class have connected with students from the Yambio region of South Sudan, while students from Walker Jr. High are connecting with students from Juba and Torit in South Sudan. The ultimate goal of this program is to cultivate a cross-cultural growth mindset among youths in the two countries.



As a result of this initiative, WPD I has been able to connect youths who would not have otherwise been able to meet in a virtual program so that they can communicate. Students come to the program from a variety of backgrounds, skills, and interests in both countries and learn from one another about how they live their lives, what goals and interests they possess, and the kind of hobbies they have. Students had two live sessions held via Zoom when they were able to talk to one another and learn from each other's experiences. They were able to **showcase live**

performances for each other and ask each other questions. WPDI has helped youths from both countries with establishing pen pal relationships and will host more live sessions in the Spring of 2022. In the final stages of the program in the Spring, **students will create a culminating and community-service project to help others where they live.**



“ Working with the Domestic Harmonizer Program has been a wonderful experience for myself, colleagues, and students. Especially with the difficulties faced in the last several years it has been a great asset to further understand the needs of others and build each other up as human beings. The most impactful experience for my students has been the Youth Peace Bridges program. Meeting with students from another continent with different experiences helps our students see beyond themselves but at the same time realize at our core, we are just people with the same wants and needs. I am forever grateful for this experience and it has made me a better global citizen.

*— Ms. Valerie Armijo,
Social Studies Teacher, TUPE Coordinator | Walker Jr. High School*



Collaboration with the Institute for Theatre & Social Change

Early in 2021, WPDI became familiar with the groundbreaking work of the Institute for Theater & Social Change (ITSC) at the University of Southern California and immediately found a connection with the DHP. ITSC's expertise in producing powerful performances in the United States and around the world is backed by extensive research and scholarly field practice in drama, education, therapy, social justice, and dialogue. ITSC also hosts biennial conferences with scholars and provides trainings for local, national, and international organizations focused on the performing arts and social justice causes.

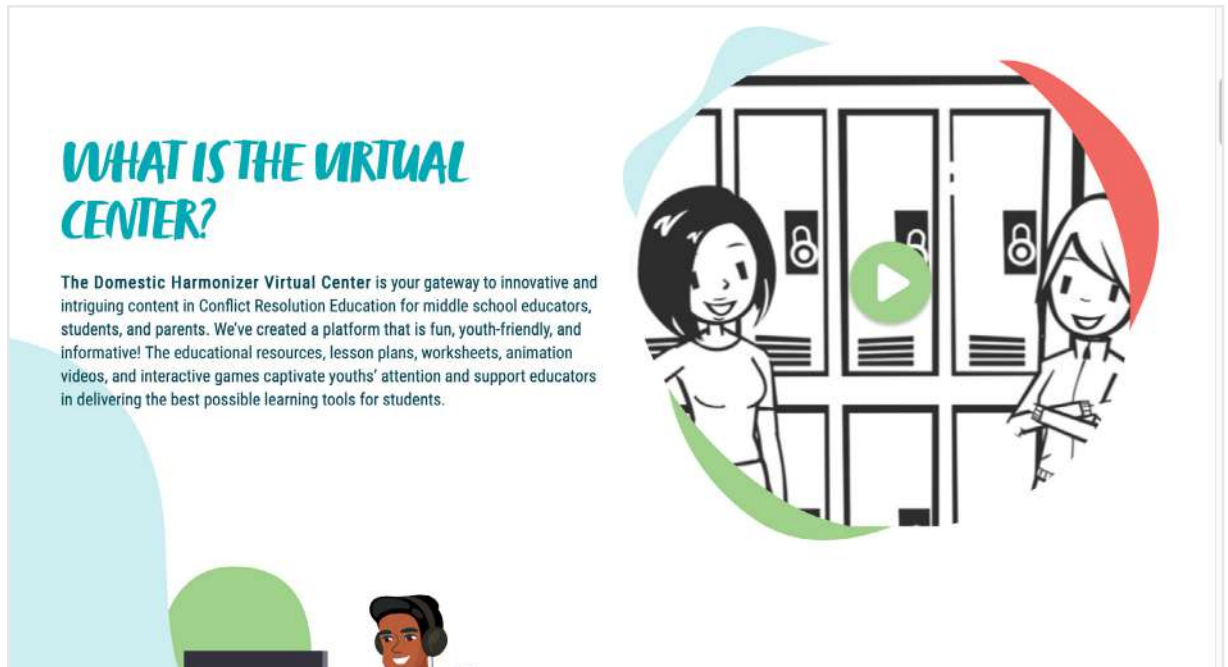
WPDI and ITSC worked with a group of students and teachers at Stephen White Middle School and STEAM Magnet to **learn about social justice issues through the medium of theater**. The students participated in the training with Dr. Brent Blair and other experts from ITSC over the course of 10 weeks in the spring of 2021 and chose three social justice themes to explore in depth in their uniquely developed play. After extensive training and practice, **the students performed the play to their group of peers and teachers**. After each segment, students engaged in meaningful dialogue with audience members. The inclusion of theater in the DHP augments the program immeasurably as it helps students, teachers, administrators, and parents connect with social justice issues through artistic and expressive means and enables audience members to learn about issues in ways that they would not be exposed otherwise. WPDI is eager to continue this collaboration with ITSC in 2022 and beyond.

“*The WPDI Domestic Harmonizer Program in partnership with Stephen White Middle School was one of the most rewarding experiences I have had working with interactive theatre, despite the challenges of being present in a virtual environment. Our team worked with the 7th and 8th graders for 10 weeks to produce some extremely moving, heartfelt stories of their personal experiences, tackling issues as diverse as gender presentation and identity, micro-aggression, bullying, and the extraordinary challenge of typical household stressors in atypical times. The youth participants were eager to learn, express, and write their own narratives, and the Zoom audience was engaged and playfully interactive! This was a delight to see the kids take on their own stories, and to see the great value their stories have in our larger society. We at the USC SDA Institute for Theatre & Social Change look forward to many more partnerships with WPDI and the Domestic Harmonizer Program!*

— Dr. Brent Blair,
Professor of Theatre Practice in Voice and Movement,
Head of Theatre and Social Change



Virtual Center Spotlight




One of the key objectives of the DHP team this year was to create a Virtual Center (www.domesticharmonizer.org), **an online hub for the DHP's activities and educational content for our partner schools.** The Virtual Center is now the central access point for teachers, students, administrators, and parents to access the resources and WPDI leaned heavily into the site as we entered the new school year in the fall. Thanks to the Domestic Harmonizer Virtual Center, WPDI conducted all trainings through this one-stop-shop and was able to navigate between our resources easily and provide a paperless access point for our educators.

As we enter the new year, WPDI aims to **market the Virtual Center widely to gain users from across the nation.** The goal of the Virtual Center as we create a national platform is to take our curriculum and make it available to school districts to use among their middle schoolers. The website will soon have several new features, including:

- ▶ **The educational game that WPDI began creating in 2020, which will be available to play on the Apple Store and Google Play as well as the Virtual Center;**
- ▶ **A podcast series that will host specialists from educational, peace-building, and other cross-disciplinary fields;**
- ▶ **Conflict Coaching to help school districts from around the nation connect with DHP experts to help navigate school-based conflict situations and provide support to resolve them using our restorative tools;**
- ▶ **Virtual "demo lessons" to help teachers and students use our curriculum in the classroom;**
- ▶ **Educational content for high school teachers and students; and**
- ▶ **Resources and tools for parents.**


RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

8TH GRADERS




PEER MEDITATION

7TH GRADERS



GENERAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION

6TH GRADERS



STUDENTS. CHECK OUT THE STUDENT TOOLBOX

Let's explore topics that you are curious about – such as climate change, social activism, empathy, cyberbullying, the role of power in current events and history, and resolving conflict with friends and family. You can watch animation videos that tie directly in your schoolwork, create projects with classmates, and play a fun game online. Register today to start your journey as a peace pioneer!

REGISTER


☐ Trauma-Informed Practices

GRADES


☐ 6th
 ☐ 7th
 ☐ 8th

SUBJECTS


☐ English Language Arts
 ☐ Math
 ☐ Physical Education
 ☐ Sciences
 ☐ Social Studies
 ☐ Visual Arts




Social Studies
UNIT #1 - INTRODUCTION TO CONFLICT
 6th grade




English Language Arts
UNIT #2 - PERCEPTION, COMMUNICATION AND UNDERLYING...
 6th grade




Math
UNIT #3 - ANALYZING OUR CONFLICT STYLES
 6th grade



Sciences
UNIT #4 - CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONFLICT




Social Studies
UNIT #5 - A LOOK AT VIOLENCE, POWER, AND CULTURE



English Language Arts
UNIT #6 - DIALOGUE

The DHP team is eager to begin the full launch and expansion of the Virtual Center in 2022 to reach thousands of more students, teachers, and parents around the nation. We hope to empower more school communities in using restorative tools to address common conflicts in schools, from interpersonal conflicts that can be resolved through peer mediation to resources to address bullying and restorative circles to help larger, school-wide problems.

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Playing Games While Learning about Peace



Given the popularity of games among youths, WPDI has been busy creating an **educational game for middle school students**. Unlike most games, our game is not violent; in fact, this game will be educational and fun. The app offers both single-player and multi-player **games framed around the DHP's educational content and themes, such as cyberbullying, restorative justice, team-building, negotiation, peer mediation, and more**. Players learn about these concepts by playing the games and do not need to have any background knowledge on these topics prior to playing. In each game, players will be engaged in scenarios and problem-solving challenges that feature problem-solving concepts, including interpersonal and intergroup conflicts. Players will be able



to design their own avatars and earn unique badges related to the corresponding themes of each game. Each game also hosts different levels and fun mini-games that engage players of all ages. WPDJ aims to have players from around the world playing this **interesting and fun game to promote non-violence and peace education**. The game will be released on the Apple App Store and Google Play Store in early 2022 and will also be available on the Domestic Harmonizer Virtual Center.



Plans For 2022

In 2022, the potential to grow the DHP is stronger than ever, which is significant given that the need to help school communities is more crucial than ever. As we reach another year of the pandemic and continue to hear from our school partners about the social-emotional challenges that students are facing, our tools are more and more needed. WPDI is determined to continue providing professional development training to educators to provide more resources and support in conflict resolution education and trauma-informed practices to help them meet today's challenges. We are also committed to delivering our peer mediation training and demo lessons to support students in learning and using restorative practices on their school campuses.

We are also eager to expand our work to new local schools for in-depth implementation and support and the reach and scope of the Virtual Center to take our work to a national level. Experts from WPDI are excited to begin creating podcasts, a conflict coaching service, and more online training through the Virtual Center. We are looking forward to begin working on parenting groups and creating content for high schools. After five years of implementing this program, our next year is slated to be our most impactful year yet, and we are ready and willing to take this leap.

Our Partners



BANK OF THE WEST
BNP PARIBAS

About Bank of the West

At Bank of the West, we know money deposited in a bank has the power to finance positive change. So we are taking action to ensure our activities help protect the planet, improve people's lives, and strengthen communities. We are redefining banking for a better future by focusing on areas where we believe we can have a real impact: supporting energy transition, helping enable women entrepreneurs, and financing innovative start-ups. As the bank for a changing world, Bank of the West is committed to sustainable finance along with our parent company BNP Paribas. Through Digital Channels and offices across the U.S., Bank of the West provides financial tools and resources to more than 2 million individuals, families and businesses.



About Verizon

Verizon Communications Inc. (NYSE, Nasdaq: VZ) was formed on June 30, 2000 and is celebrating its 20th year as one of the world's leading providers of technology, communications, information and entertainment products and services. Headquartered in New York City and with a presence around the world, Verizon generated revenues of \$131.9 billion in 2019. The company offers voice, data and video services and solutions on its award-winning networks and platforms, delivering on customers' demand for mobility, reliable network connectivity, security and control.



About Ball Jr. High School (Anaheim, California)

Ball Junior High School is an inclusive community of students, educators, and families who are committed and involved. Together we forge a path toward college and career readiness through meaningful learning experiences. Our goal is to promote creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, character, and communication skills that prepare our students for lifelong success in a global society. The school operates within the Anaheim Unified High School District (AUHSD).



About Stephen White Middle School (Carson, California)

Our mission at Stephen M. White Middle School is to provide a nurturing environment that will motivate, challenge, and guide students through collaborative discovery, multiple perspectives, and high expectations.

The school operates within the Los Angeles Unified High School District (LAUSD) the nation's second largest school district.



About Walker Junior High School (La Palma, California)

The mission of Walker Junior High School is to provide rigorous programs and curricula in which our students are challenged to meet high levels of academic achievement. Students will become compassionate, life-long learners as they develop a greater sense of their role in the global community. Walker will provide a comprehensive system of support services that will ensure that all students learn.



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www.domesticharmonizer.org

