

HRE as preventive measure in youth work

The following abstracts from the WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM (Durban, South Africa, August 2001); explicitly show the importance of the HRE as a preventative measure in youth work.

Anti- Racism Education from a Human Rights Perspective

HRE can be used to affect personal transformation and help prevent and combat racism. Participants from many part of the world told stories of successful struggles against racism and noted how success often depended on the solidarity of others and a willingness to challenge state oppression of rights. Participants shared their experiences, describing effective practices and discussing the challenges and potentials of HRE as a tool against racism.

Breaking through the Vicious Cycle of Humiliation: Racial Justice through HRE

This workshop examined the oppression of women as a prevailing system that underlies racism and socializes people from a very young age to accept discrimination as a social given. An open discussion among human rights educators explored how the patriarchal system – in which we all comply- perpetuates racism, classism and many other human rights violations both against women and men. The participants strategize how the human rights framework can be used to achieve full equality and overcome discrimination of all kinds, asserting that HRE for social transformation has been proven to be a powerful tool for people to take action and participate in claiming economic and social justice.

Fighting Racism and Xenophobia through HRE

This workshop stressed the importance of human rights education in building unity among social justice activists, especially in combating racism. It challenged the "tolerance paradigm" of the conference, which implies that we judge and "tolerate" others on the basis of their likeness to us. Human rights theory would instead propose a starting point of human equality. Presenters also emphasized the paradigm of the victimized violator as a tool for analysis and response to racism and the revolutionary and transformative power of human rights education.

Racism, Education and Youth

This workshop addressed these topics and activities:

- Urging officials and people generally to become informed about CERD: e.g., to train employees and others to make periodical reports on violations by individuals and corporation.
- Giving examples of successful efforts by the City of Berkeley, California, the State Bar Association of California, labour unions and media to implement report and monitor CERD.
- Discussion of the growing movement to demand that the US government and corporations admit their racist actions throughout history and make reparations.
- Brainstorming for new, dramatic, effective strategies on health care, including labour unions in India, using the mobilization of shame and wide media coverage.

"During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people, I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an idea, which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

Nelson Mandela