

ACTIONS

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The following initiatives are under way:

Childrearing

- 1) The Symposium is working on bringing the Canadian Roots of Empathy program, www.rootsofempathy.org, into central New York. ROE is changing the nature of Canadian society by showing how infants can profoundly enlarge the humanity of children and adults.
- 2) We are encouraging the installation of a mandated non-violent-parenting course in 8th- and 11th-grade school curricula. The course draws from *Touchpoints* by T. Berry Brazelton and *The Baby Book* by William and Martha Sears.
- 3) We are appealing to members of Congress to strengthen federal child-protection law. We are asking specifically for revisions of Title IVB of the Social Security Act and of the definition of child abuse in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. The present definition of child abuse in federal legislation is, “An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.” We are recommending the following revision: “An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of

serious harm. Acts presenting imminent risk of serious harm include the striking, spanking, or slapping of a child under the age of three with a closed fist, open hand, or an implement such as a belt or paddle.” This expanded definition is being studied by the publications committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the legislative office of the Department of Health and Human Services.

- 4) Similarly, we are asking the Surgeon General’s Office to mount a national educational campaign concentrating on (a) the removal of screens from the experience of children from birth to three and (b) the curbing of the corporal punishment of children, recommending non-violent disciplining methods along the lines of (2) above.

Socio-economic imbalance

We are studying the installation of Time Banking, www.timebanks.org, in central New York. Time Banks are based on the following principles:

- 1) *Reciprocity*. The mission of Time Banks is “strengthening communities through reciprocity.”
- 2) *Equality of human worth*. Everyone can help another human being, and, in the spirit of reciprocity, receive help. Time Banking occurs apart from the money economy.
- 3) *Equality of “Time Bank hours.”* You give an hour of your time doing something for someone in your community; that hour goes into the Time Bank. You now have a “time dollar” to call in an hour of someone doing something for you. A coordinator lists the membership of the Time Bank, the services they have to offer and the needs they would like met, and where everyone stands in the network of reciprocal helping.

All hours are absolutely equal: the hour a physicist spends helping someone understand quarks is the same as an hour someone else spends scrubbing a floor.

Time Banking is helping to balance socio-economic relations in twenty-two countries.