

ISSUES AND ACTIONS

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The mission of the Earth Charter Initiative is to promote the transition to sustainable ways of living and a global society founded on a shared ethical framework that includes respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, universal human rights, respect for diversity, economic justice, democracy, and a culture of peace.



The following are issues acknowledged during the month of April on the Internet, television, calendars and radio:

- ♦ Keep America Beautiful
- ♦ Sexual Assault Awareness
- ♦ Month of the Young Child
- ♦ National Child Abuse Prevention
- ♦ World Health Day — April 7th
- ♦ Earth Day — April 22nd

Obviously, all of these issues are vital, but they seem to be unrelated. Yet, there is a common denominator if we look more closely: an awareness of the presence of neglect, abuse and exploitation in our nation and our world, to people and to our home, Earth.

EARTH DAY AND EARTH DAY NETWORK

April 22nd is designated as *EARTH DAY*. This year Earth Day falls on Good Friday, a day we observe the death of Jesus but know and envision His resurrection at Easter. Good Friday is an appropriate time to remember the many ways we are heaping carnage on the Earth and her people, and be stimulated to work at restoring life and energy to our world. Let it be a wake up call that rouses us to renew our awareness and then focus on remedies to repair this fragile planet. May we be prompted to ask, on Good Friday, Earth Day “Am I responsible; what can I do?” The visionary answers:



I am only one, but still, I am one.

I cannot do everything but still,

I can do something.

And because I can not do everything,

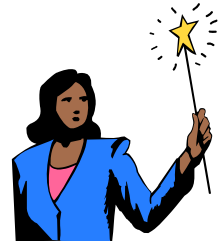
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.

Edward Hale

Earth Day is now recognized globally, consequently Earth Day Network (EDN) was founded to promote, inspire and mobilize individuals and organizations worldwide to demonstrate their commitment to environmental activism through year round progressive activities. EDN works with 192 countries and more than a billion people now participate in Earth Day activities making it the largest civic observance in the world.



On December, 2010, Earth Day Network created Women and the Green Economy (WAGE), a campaign to accelerate and provide the new thinking and creative power for a global post-carbon economy.



WAGE establishes a road map for women to aggregate their power, and to promote their leadership in creating a sustainable green economy, particularly since the following facts have become a reality:

- * Women constitute more than half of the world's population;
- * Women make 85% of all consumer choices;
- * Women are rising to key positions of power;
- * Women can lead the way to a sustainable green economy.

Together our most talented and successful women
Can fast-forward the green economy.

WAGE

www.earthday.org

www.wedo.org

www.savetheearth.org

www.womenenvironment.org

www.womenvoices.org

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION

In 2007 approximately 772,000 children were confirmed by the Child Protection Services as being abused or neglected. These confirmed cases do not represent those children whose cases have not nor ever will be disclosed. Child abuse remains a largely hidden problem

April was designated as Child Abuse Prevention Month in 1983. This initiative began as an effort to raise public awareness of this abuse and to strengthen and support families, as well as improve parenting skills. Since its designation twenty eight years ago, child maltreatment still remains a significant public health problem in the United States and a global problem the extent of which is uncertain, as this data is lacking.



An article in the San Francisco Chronicle on February 17, 2011, reported a horrible example of infant abuse. A two month old baby was badly beaten by his 23 year old father, who has a history of abuse to the child's mother and to another child. The infant sustained broken bones, internal injuries, and bleeding of the brain. The infant was declared brain dead when hospitalized.

Perhaps you didn't know....

- ♦ children whose parents are unemployed have almost two times the rate of child abuse and two to three times the rate of neglect than children of employed parents.
- ♦ almost 32% of the victims of child abuse and neglect are under the age of four.
- ♦ no group of children is immune from abuse or neglect. Girls are more often victims of sexual abuse, but statistics show other types of abuse or neglect are equal for both girls and boys.
- ♦ an average of four children die every day as a result of abuse or neglect.
- ♦ neglect infers a parent or guardian fails to provide for the child's basic needs.
- ♦ neglect includes educational, emotional and/or physical neglect.
- ♦ children's experiences are defined through their relationships with parents, teachers, and other caregivers.
- ♦ healthy relationships act as a buffer against adverse childhood experiences and are necessary to ensure long term physical and emotional well-being of children.

In this time of economic world upheaval extreme, pressure is being exerted upon all segments of society, but families are among the most affected. As each country deals today with poverty and declining monies, one can only wonder what the statistics will reveal next year. Martin Luther King reminds us never to lose hope in the midst of the insurmountable, *"Our eternal message of hope is that dawn will come."* Extraordinary! Welcome Easter dawn, Resurrection, and Hope.



PERSONAL CHALLENGE

Today, as I go about my daily activities I will ask, "How will this affect the common good?" *Joellen Sbrissa, CSJ, LaGrange Park, Il.*

www.childabuse.com/prevent
www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention
www.childwelfare.gov
www.childabuseawareness.com

Prepared by the Peace and Justice Committee