



Philly
Yearly Meeting *of the Religious Society of Friends*

Quaker Kidz Bring the Peace!

A handbook for Friends Meetings to follow the leadings of the children of Philly Yearly Meeting in inspiring people to find the peace within.



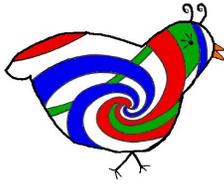


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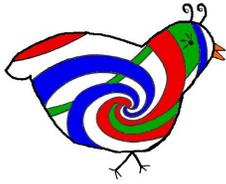
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To download additional copies of this handbook, go to www.pym.org/education and click on the link at the bottom of the page for *Free online curricula and other publications*.





Introduction

A foundational practice of Quakerism is the corporate discernment of the sense of the Meeting. This is a practice that seeks to uncover the wisdom and patterns of the Divine through worshipful attention to a task, problem or question. It is familiar to adults who participate in business meetings, clearness committees and planning groups, but not so familiar to many kids. At the March Sessions of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting the children (preschool through 5th grade) learned about this important practice through storytelling, circle time and practice (for more information on their program see the last section of this handbook).

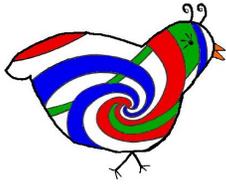
The children of Philly Yearly Meeting (as they called it) addressed the query “What are the kids of this community called to do about Peace?” by centering into worship, listening deeply within and then sharing and listening to each other. **This handbook is an expression of the ideas and actions that came out of the children’s discernment. It is an invitation to other kids, to Monthly Meetings, to First Day Schools and to Peace & Social Concerns committees to join them in this work. It is not simply a peace activity resource, but a sharing and continuation of their spiritual experience.**

Some of the opportunities described in this handbook can be planned the night before and done in an hour. Some require more time and resources. Much of the work can be done either on a one-time basis or as an on-going project. All of it can be done by kids or by adults or by kids and adults together. **The point of all of it is just to DO it. Don’t wait for the right moment or for the chance for the biggest impact. Just get up and go have a peace vigil on your corner, clean up a park or be nice to the people around you. This is one of the myriad gifts that working together with children gives us: Just get up and do it.**

After your Meeting helps to bring the peace by participating in one of the projects discerned by the kids in this handbook, please share your experience by sending a report back to them. See the Report Form page of this handbook for the extra simple instructions. All reports will be posted on the kids’ blog (www.QKidsBringThePeace.blogspot.com) and compiled into a regular report to the children and to the Yearly Meeting.

Bring the Peace!





Main Ideas & Actions

Below is a list of the ideas and action steps that came out of the discernment process by the elementary age children of Philly Yearly Meeting. Work began on several of these ideas at Arch Street Meetinghouse during March Sessions. See details and reports of that work at the kids' blog:

www.QKidzBringThePeace.blogspot.com.

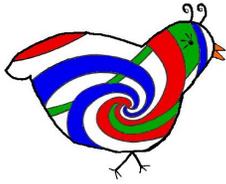
Main Ideas

-  Peace starts with you: Be peaceful within yourself!
-  Be Nice! When you are peaceful and nice, it makes peace around you and others can be peaceful. Then those others can go be peaceful and create peace wherever they go!
-  Be Friends! It's not just about raising money and solving problems. It's about making friends with people around you and different than you. Make friends with the people you are raising money for.
-  Focus Locally! Yes, peace on the other side of the world is important. But what Friends said over and over again is to be peaceful, friendly and helpful right here in our own neighborhoods and towns.

Action Steps

-  Give away or sell some of your toys to benefit homeless children – you probably have more than you need already!
-  Put peace signs in your yard and have peace vigils – all the time, even if they are little.
-  Pray for peace
-  Sing peace songs
-  Make a movie or commercial about peace
-  Raise money for organizations that help the homeless in your own town
-  Write letters to the government to tell them you want peace – make it a letter writing party so it's fun!
-  Clean up litter and recycle and make the environment beautiful and healthy!
-  Put on a show about peace to raise money for the homeless.
-  Make friends with people
-  Smile!
-  Be nice to someone you don't like



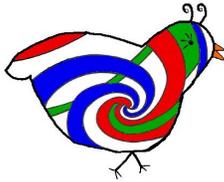


How to Get Started

Anyone can get this work started—Adult or Children’s Religious Education, Peace & Social Concerns committees, kids, adults—anyone! Below is everything you need to know:

1. **Committee Work, Kid-Style:** Every time anyone gets together to do one of the actions in this handbook, those Friends have started a committee and the work they do is committee work. Here are the big differences from adult committees: as soon as the work is done, even if it’s just an hour, the committee is done. Also: all participants in the action are committee members and anyone can wander into or off of the committee at any time. This is committee work for the attention-challenged and the busy Friend!
2. Read through the Committee Opportunities in the next section and choose one that looks like a good fit and gets the participants excited.
3. If you are planning a multigenerational committee, consider carefully the time and place of doing the work so that kids, teens, parents, and seasoned Friends might all be able to participate. Also, for multigenerational committees, read through the *Multigenerational Committee Work* page in the last section of this handbook.
4. Remember to settle into worship before and after all committee meetings! This is not just peace activities we are doing, but deepening our spiritual connections by following the leadings of the children of this community.
5. Please write up a short report of your work and forward it so that other Friends can see what you’ve done. The *Committee Report Form* page walks you through the steps and they’re really simple! Send pictures too! Some committee work results in materials (like drawings of peace and violence) that may need to be sent to PYM.
6. Check out the blog (www.QKidsBringThePeace.blogspot.com) to see your own report and the work that others have done. Make sure that all the committee members know how to check out the blog as well.





Committee Report Form

Information to include in your report:

- 👉 Committee Name
- 👉 Monthly Meeting Name
- 👉 Number of participants
- 👉 Amount of money spent on materials for this committee
- 👉 Complete these sentences:

This is what we did to create peace:

We think (or feel):

Sentences that are longer than a couple of lines may be edited for some contexts, such as the blog.

How to submit your report:

- 👉 Email the text or as an attachment to PYMkids@gmail.com
- 👉 Mail it to Christie Duncan-Tessmer, PYM, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

Next step for reports:

- 👉 It will be posted to the *Quaker Kidz Bring the Peace* blog (www.QKidzBringThePeace.blogspot.com)
- 👉 It will be included in a regular report sent electronically to PYM MM's and the kids originally involved in the discernment process and Interim Meeting

Questions:

Contact Christie Duncan-Tessmer, Children's Religious Ed Coordinator, PYM
215-805-5963; 800-2200-PYM, ext 7008; christiedt@pym.org

KEEP IT SIMPLE!





This is a sample of the Philly Yearly Meeting kids' blog!

Every time you (or another kid, a Meeting,, a First Day School, etc.) joins in the Kidz Peace effort, you can post your report on the blog so others can see what you've done as well! All you have to do is email your report (and pictures!) to PYMKids@gmail.com and PYM will put your report up on the web. Check out the page in this handbook about reporting for all the details. And...

Check out the blog!

www.QKidzBringThePeace.blogspot.com

Quaker Kidz Bring the Peace

Quaker Kidz Bring The Peace! Philly Yearly Meeting's elementary group is inspiring people (and ourselves) to find the peace within.

The older elementary kids at the March Sessions of the Yearly Meeting designed the layout, title and description of this blog so that Yearly Meeting's kids' peacework can be shared. Monthly Meetings, First Day Schools and Peace & Social Concerns Committees are invited to join in the work of the children and post their activities here! Friends can download the booklet of the children's ideas from www.pym.org/education. To post your activities, complete the Committee Report Form (see the website or the post labeled "report form") and email it to: pymkids@gmail.com.



Report: Peace Witness Committee at Ses-



~Committee Name: Peace Witness
~Monthly Meeting Name: March Sessions of the Yearly Meeting
~Number of participants: around 20

This is what we did to create peace: Made signs and took them out to the corner of 4th & Arch Street and then the corner of 4th and Market for a peace vigil. We are taking the signs home for

Quaker Kidz



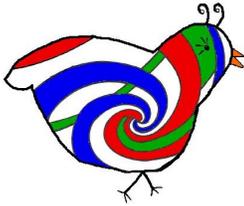
Introductory Posts

- [The Kids' Discernment Process](#)
- [Creating this Blog](#)
- [How to report your own Peacework](#)

www.qkidzbringthepeace.blogspot.com



Be Nice Committee



Children's Thoughts How do you create peace? By being nice to others! Then they will feel good and be nice to other people. And before you know it, your niceness has gone to the other side of the world.

Materials construction paper cut in 2x11" strips, tape, markers, 4x6 index cards, Meeting address book, postcard stamps.

Action Steps

Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

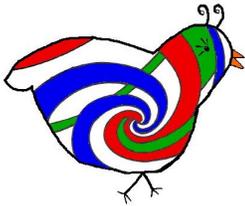
Here are three possible activities to do during your Committee Meeting. The possibilities for appropriate activities are only limited by your imagination!

- ✎ Give each committee member enough strips of paper so that they have one for every person present. Each person then writes or draws something nice about each other person on a strip of paper. Give the strips to the Friends for whom they were written. Make a paper chain with the strips and wear it or keep it at home.
- ✎ Draw beautiful pictures on the fronts of the index cards. On the backs, draw a line down the middle. On the left side, write a nice note to someone from Meeting who is not in the committee meeting. On the right side, address the postcard and put the stamp on and mail!
- ✎ Pair up. Each pair sits facing each other quietly. The pairs try to match their breathing without talking or signaling so that they breathe in together, hold the breath for the same amount of time and breathe out together.
- ✎ Before closing worship, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.





Images of Peace & Violence Committee



Children's Thoughts People need to make the choice to be peaceful. Let's give them pictures of peace and of violence and say "What do you want? Make your choice."

Materials good quality paper and drawing materials such as colored pencils, pastels, crayons, watercolors. If you are going to print your own cards, you will also need: a scanner, good quality color printer, computer program (such as Word or Publisher) to design a greeting card, cardstock and envelopes.

Action Steps

Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

- ✎ Spend a moment (or as many as each individual needs—adults are likely to want more moments than kids!) considering how to express PEACE in an image and how to express the *absence* of peace in an image.
- ✎ Create!
- ✎ Share your images with each other and if Friends want to, make space to talk about what the images mean to their artists.
- ✎ Before closing worship, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.

Action Follow-up

There are two options for your images: produce peace cards in your Meeting and share the images with the Yearly Meeting collection for Peace Cards and Peace Trading Cards. You can do either or both of these.

To produce your own cards:

- ✎ Scan them into a computer and print them out on blank cards or cardstock. The cards printed by PYM have a message inside: **Peace starts in you. Make your choice.** The back of the card can iden-



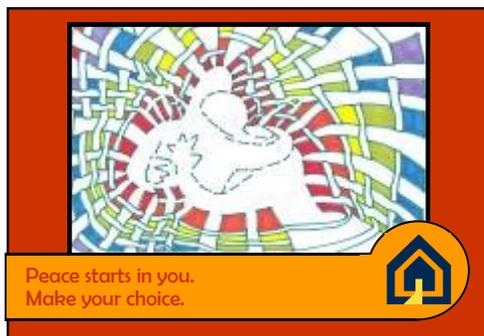
Action Follow-up, continued

tify the origin of the card and where recipients can find more information. To tie your cards in with other cards made by other Images of Peace committees, somewhere on your card it should say Quaker Kidz Bring the Peace: Inspiring people (and ourselves) to bring the peace.

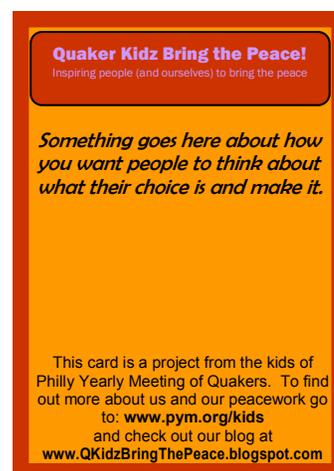
- ✎ Distribute the cards however you like. Remember the point is to get the images and the idea of a choice for peace into the community. If you sell the cards, discern with the kids where the profits will be donated. (note: the kids of the Yearly Meeting had a clear leading toward both helping the homeless and supporting peacebuilding in our own neighborhoods. Please include these insights in your process).

To include your committee's artwork in the collective of images:

- ✎ Send the artwork (or high-quality scanned images of it) to Children's RE at PYM. The images will be added to our collection of greeting cards and to the collection of Peace Trading Cards.
- ✎ Peace Trading Cards: These cards are produced by Philly Yearly Meeting, following the leading of the children. The idea behind the cards is that they show images of our choice between peace and violence to be handed to those we know. People who receive trading cards will be encouraged to pass them on because peace is passed from one person's experience of it to another. Below is a sample of the prototype of the cards. The plans for distributing (selling?) them are still in process.



Front

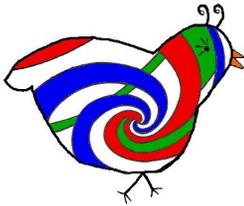


Back





Peace Signs Committee



Children's Thoughts Let your neighbors know that you stand for peace!

Materials Foam core (or another more environmentally-friendly option), wooden stakes (garden stores and hardware stores will carry these—hardware stores may cut long wooden poles to the right size for you), really strong duct tape; permanent fat markers. You may need a cutting blade to size the foam core down to smaller sheets (Have a grownup do this before the committee meeting)

Action Steps

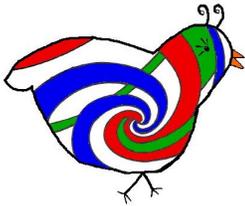
Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

- ✎ Make sure everyone (or every family or every pair of people) has materials.
- ✎ Make signs!
- ✎ A couple sign making hints: big is good—so that the words and images can be seen easily. Fewer words and pictures is better—again, it's easier to see while just passing by. If someone is having trouble thinking of something to do—ask him/her: what is important about peace to you? Help the person turn their response into a 3-4 word sign: Peace is _____.
- ✎ To turn your sign into a yard sign, securely duct tape one or two stakes to the back of the sign.
- ✎ Put the signs in the Meetinghouse yard and/or in their makers' yards.
- ✎ Consider making it a community event! Invite members of other places of worship to join you; advertise an invitation to join you in the local paper. Consider having a one-time 15 minute vigil on the corner when your signs are finished, before they go home to live in yards.
- ✎ Take pictures to send to local papers and to PYM!
- ✎ After making signs, before closing worship, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.





Peace Vigils Committee



Children's Thoughts Let people in your community know that you stand for peace. It doesn't matter how small the vigil is and it doesn't need to be a regular thing. One morning out on the corner with signs is doing something!

Materials Peace Signs. If you have peace fliers, grab them too.

Action Steps

Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

- ✎ Make sure everyone has a sign or something to carry (if they want it). You may want to spend the first 1/2 of the committee meeting making signs or have a separate committee who makes signs beforehand (see the Peace Sign Committee in this book).
- ✎ Go stand together somewhere where you will be seen with your signs!
- ✎ After the vigil, before closing worship, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.

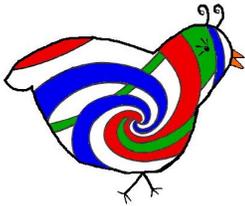
Additional Thoughts

- ✎ Consider if you want to do this in any kind of regular way (one Sunday a month; every Sunday for a week; every Wednesday evening, for examples) or just this once. This considering can happen before, during and/or after the vigil.
- ✎ Particularly if the vigil is likely to happen more than once, you may want to think about if you want to invite others to join and how you would do that. Some possibilities are the local newspaper, other places of worship, having a sign that says "Come Join Us!".





Letter Writing Peace Party Committee



Children's Thoughts It is important to tell the government that we want peace. It's also important for it to be fun!

Materials letter-writing supplies (postcards, pens, stamps, drawing materials to decorate the postcards, addresses of lawmakers (see www.fcni.org for listing); Party supplies (depends on the plans of the committee).

Action Steps

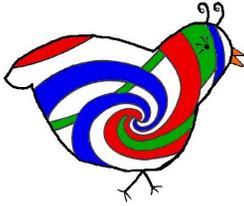
Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

- ✎ You will need to meet to plan the Letter Writing Peace Party and to have the party.
- ✎ Things to consider when planning:
 - ☞ Who will you invite and how will you invite them (word of mouth? Invitations? Announcements? Local newspaper article?).
 - ☞ Are you going to write on a specific topic? Do you need to educate the letter-writers? If yes, who will do that?
 - ☞ Are there particular snacks that fit in with the theme of letterwriting that you want to serve? Who is going to buy the food and prepare the snacks?
 - ☞ What party decorations match the theme? Who will be responsible for getting decorations and putting them up?
 - ☞ Think of a couple of games to play during the party. Who will make sure all game supplies are ready?
 - ☞ Do you want music playing? Who will be responsible for it?
 - ☞ Who will be responsible for making sure the postcards get into the mail?
- ✎ Have a party! Here are a few suggestions:
 - ☞ Set up a couple of tables with supplies for postcard designing and writing. Make sure all necessary supplies are present and attractively laid out. The organization of this is important because if it looks engaging, it will draw people in.
 - ☞ Have someone welcoming party-attenders at the door. Give them special nametags or their own pen or something to pull them in.
- ✎ Write a committee report with the planning committee and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.





Singing for Peace Committee



Children's Thoughts Singing songs is peaceful!

Materials songbooks or song sheets, paper and pen

Action Steps

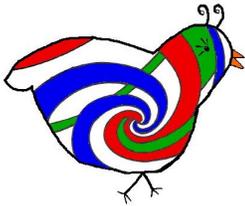
Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

- ✎ Gather together and sing! Choose peace songs from the song book. Choose some that nearly everyone knows and some that nearly no one knows.
- ✎ Make a list of the songs that you want to sing next time this committee meets.
- ✎ After singing, before closing worship, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM. Include your list of songs in your report.





Worship for Peace Committee



Children's Thoughts Worship helps you feel peaceful and you can worship with the intent to create more peace in the world.

Materials You!

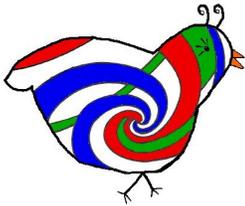
Action Steps

- ✧ Choose one person to introduce the intent of worship and one person to close worship.
- ✧ Begin meeting for worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.
- ✧ After Friends are settled, the Friend with the charge of introducing the intent of worship stands and invites the worshipers to open their hearts to 5 images of peace or to 5 actions that they can take.
- ✧ The Friend charged with closing worship does so when it feels to be the right time.





Trash Collectors Committee



Children's Thoughts Cleaning up trash in our neighborhood makes it more beautiful which is important for peace. Also it takes care of the environment. Friends participating on this committee found that they were more connected to the community and appreciated by the neighbors. Plus, as they walked around and talked, they built a peaceful link among each other.

Materials Trash bags, work gloves

Action Steps

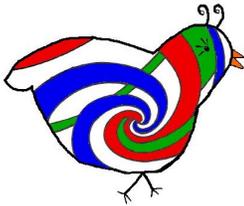
Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

- ✎ Make sure that safety issues are addressed: Be explicit about the boundaries within which participants are expected to work; do not pick up glass unless wearing gloves; pair younger children up with older Friends who can watch out for cars on streets.
- ✎ Give a trashbag to every one or two people and go clean up the neighborhood! You may choose to clean up around the Meetinghouse, around individuals' homes, a local park, or anywhere else.
- ✎ After collecting trash, before closing worship, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.





Peace Play Committee



Children's Thoughts Putting on shows is really fun! You can put on a show that is about peace and use it to raise money for peace—probably for homeless people in your own community.

Materials paper and pen to write down ideas. Any props your script requires.

Action Steps

Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

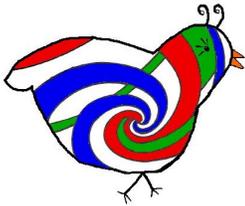
This committee will probably need to meet several times to plan the show, then practice it, then perform it.

- ✧ Listen to everyone's ideas about what the show can be about. Think about what kind of show can help people want to create peace.
- ✧ Write down all of the ideas and look for patterns and ways that ideas group together into one set for a show.
- ✧ You may want to break into small groups and assign different parts of the show to different groups. You'll need a costume group and possibly some tech people as well to turn lights on and off, run a CD player, etc. Figure out who is going to be responsible for publicizing the show.
- ✧ Plan how you are going to use the show to raise money and where you will give the money.
- ✧ Assign parts and practice!
- ✧ Perform your show!
- ✧ Write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM. Include a copy of your script so we can share it with other Friends. Send pictures too!





Raising Money Committee



Children's Thoughts Raising money can be really fun AND it can help make a difference for people who benefit from it. The kids of Philly Yearly Meeting particularly advocate for supporting local organizations that help homeless people.

Materials This depends entirely on what money-raising activity you decide to do!

Action Steps

Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

- ✎ Together, brainstorm ways that the committee and its larger community can raise money (see the Tips for Grownups on this process below).
- ✎ When you know what you want to do, form subcommittees to prepare for your event. You will need subcommittees for: advertising (announcements, fliers, press releases?), supplies (borrowed, bought or donated), making space arrangements and possibly others.
- ✎ Set the date and time for the event and draw up a timeline of what will need to be done by which dates leading up to the event. Identify who will do those things.
- ✎ Decide where the raised money will be donated. This may need its own separate meeting, depending on how old the kids on the committee are and how long the previous steps took!
- ✎ After your event, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.

Tips for Grownups

This committee requires a lot of thinking and talking in its planning stages. Here are some tips for doing this bit effectively when the committee members are children or are a mixture of adults and children:

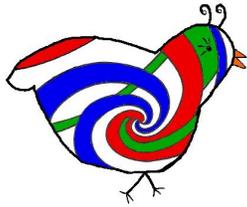
- ✎ Keep it short. Two short meetings will be more effective than one long one. Resist the desire to get everything done today! The process of working together on this project is as important as the project itself.



Tips Follow-up, continued

- ☞ Instead of writing down all the ideas on one big piece of newsprint, write each one down separately on a smaller piece (1/2 sheet of paper) that has a picture on it—like a peace sign or dove in the corner, or a big heart that you write inside of. Use colored paper! The attractiveness helps focus attention and ideas that are similar can be grouped together. Put each idea in the middle of the circle to keep the focus in the group, rather than up on a wall.
- ☞ Ask the Friends who are naturally very talkative to make space for those who are quieter and shyer to speak. Notice who has not spoken and without pressuring them, try to carve out room in the discussion for them to share. Particularly notice if the children or the girls have had room to speak (they are sometimes less used to breaking into a robust conversation).
- ☞ Write down all ideas—even if they seem crazy! You may not do them, but honoring the ideas may be very important to their giver and they may lead to something completely different and new and interesting—maybe even crazy!





Multigenerational Committee Work

Action Steps

Begin and end your committee meeting with worship—sink into the Peace that surrounds and fills and unites each of us.

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- ✎ After your event, write a committee report together and name who will be responsible for forwarding it to PYM.

Tips for Grownups

- ✎ This committee requires a lot of thinking and talking in its planning stages. Here are some tips for doing this bit effectively when the committee members are children or are a mixture of adults and children:
 - ☞ Keep it short. Two short meetings will be more effective than one long one. Resist the desire to get everything done today! The process of working together on this project is as important as the project itself.
 - ☞ Instead of writing down all the ideas on one big piece of newsprint, write each one down separately on a smaller piece (1/2 sheet of paper) that has a picture on it—like a peace sign or dove in the corner, or a big heart that you write inside of. Use colored paper! The at-

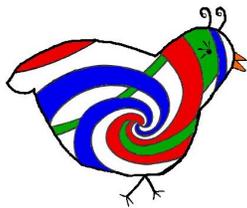


Tips for Grownups, continued

tractiveness helps focus attention and ideas that are similar can be piled together. Put each idea in the middle of the circle to keep the focus in the group, rather than up on a wall.

- ☞ Ask the Friends who are naturally very talkative to make space for those who are quieter and shyer to speak. Notice who has not spoken and without pressuring them, try to carve out room in the discussion for them to share. Particularly notice if the children or the girls have had room to speak.
- ☞ Write down all ideas—even if they seem crazy! You may not do them, but honoring the ideas may be very important to their giver and they may lead to something completely different and new and interesting—maybe even crazy!





Discernment with Children

The children at Yearly Meeting Sessions learned the process of discernment through hearing stories from Quaker history and the Bible, from the life experience of a Friend and from a fairytale. They also learned about each step of the process in circle time. Below is an outline of the process. *To learn more about using this process with children, contact the Children's Religious Education Coordinator of PYM, Christie Duncan-Tessmer (christiedt@pym.org; 215-241-7008; 800-220-0796 x 7008).*

Center

Move one's focus deep into the center of the Power and Life that unites us and breathes Truth through us. Let go of temporal, immediate concerns and thoughts.

Ask the Big Question

Name what it is that one needs to explore or find an answer to. This is a framing of what it is one is discerning. Sometimes it is the same as a query. Sometimes it is a desperate plea. With children, it is best to make this a short, disciplined and clear statement.

Listen with one's heart

Remaining centered, we allow ideas, thoughts, images, dreams to enter our hearts in response to the Question. This is *not* about trying to figure out what is reasonable and allowed or what we think is a good idea. In corporate discernment, we all listen together because we all hear and understand different aspects of God.

Share what one heard with others

Since we hear and understand differently from each other, we each have a gift from our heart to share. We need to share with each other what it is we ourselves know so we can all learn and grow together. For some people, it requires special bravery to share what they have heard with others.

Listen to others

Other people can understand and hear different Truths that you can! You need to listen carefully to what others say so that you can notice those gifts given to others and be ready to accept them and act on them.

Finding God's Big Idea

Some of the things that people share are less from the Universal and more from their own excitement, anger, fear, hopes, etc. Or they might be ideas given to an individual for that individual more than for the group. At this point in our discovery, we sift through all of the ideas for themes, for something that it looks like we are pointing to as a group. We'll examine each of the ideas and look for ones that go together. We'll look for ones that get our energy and excitement going. We'll look for ideas that seem like gifts.

Action Plans

This part of the discernment is more of a discussion than it has been previously. While we don't need to focus yet on how everything is going to be done, we do need to have a belief that the ideas actually can be done and can be done by the group of people doing the discernment.

After God's Big Idea(s) is named, we can set them up with more specific plans of how they can be done. Each one will be carried out by a specific committee.

