

Legislative Council Sessional Order 5(14)

Government Administrative Committee 'B'.

Invitation for submissions Inquiry into Tasmanian Adult Imprisonment and Youth Detention Matters.

My name is Helen Hussey. I am a retired high school teacher.

I would like to address sections 3. and 4.

3. The provision of, and participation in services for people in prison and leaving prison.

Over the past nine years I have voluntarily facilitated over seventy five, free, ten week, Peace Education Programs in the wider community in Hobart. I was a semifinalist at the Statewide, Outstanding Community Achiever Awards at the Grand Chancellor Hotel with Premier Jeremy Rockcliff in November 2022.

For the last three years I have been running The Peace Education Program at Bethlehem House in Warwick Street, Hobart. Bethlehem House provides accommodation for men recently out of prison, as well as those on bail and other men needing accommodation. The program has been well received by those men who choose to participate. Many have commented that they would have appreciated access to the program whilst in prison.

I have had many meetings with Ian Thomas, Director of Prisons, about co- facilitating a 10 week trial Program in the Women's Prison for some time. Covid and various staff changes have put this on hold. However I maintain a good relationship with Ian. I am hopeful of this commencing when practicable..

The Peace Education Program provides a calming experience for participants. It is strength based, which is essential for any behavioral changes. It provides a flexible template for adult learning through reflection and self-exploration. It enables people to get to know themselves positively, encouraging their own innate values of hope, inner strength, appreciation, dignity and choice. It can stand alone, or prepare people, with their own motivation, for participating in existing programs.

This short clip will give you an overview of the program.

[Helping People Discover Personal Peace](#)

This clip shows the diversity of people and institutions worldwide, whom have participated in the Peace Education Program.

[Peace Education Program: Empowering People](#)

Closer to home, these are comments made by men at Bethlehem House Homeless Men's Hostel, while voluntarily participating in the Peace Education Program.

To someone making a noise outside, "Shut up! We want to find peace".

"I have some anger issues. I was laughing and that makes me feel good."

"I need to bring that compassion to myself."

"Every one of these sessions is about everyday stuff. It is about something you know, but haven't put any thought into. I was narrow minded before, but now I am open to the whole world. "

"It is OK to be who I am and doubting myself."

"I would like to mull over it for a few days."

“Prem speaks to all human beings, prisoners and world leaders. Peace begins with Individuals.”

The Program is cross cultural and well received by Drug and Alcohol spaces in Kathrine and the Northern Territory.

In Victoria, in the Melbourne Remand Centre, The Peace Education Program is used in groups, also on in house television, or on secure tablets for individuals. It is inexpensive and with little training can be used by existing staff or motivated fellow prisoners.

The program is held in over 600 prisons world wide.

Dr Andrew Ramsay and Dawn Rees will be speaking about the Peace Education Program at the National Future Justice and Corrections Summit in Sydney this week. This is described as Australia’s Leading Future Justice and Corrections Event for delivering better outcomes for people in custody through reform, rehabilitation and facilities. Andrew has run emergency hospital rooms. He facilitates the Peace Education Program at the Adelaide Women’s Prison. He has also facilitated the program in hospices and community settings. Dawn, working in Legal Aid, has also trained correctional officers to run the Peace Education Program in their own facilities, including Melbourne Remand Centre .

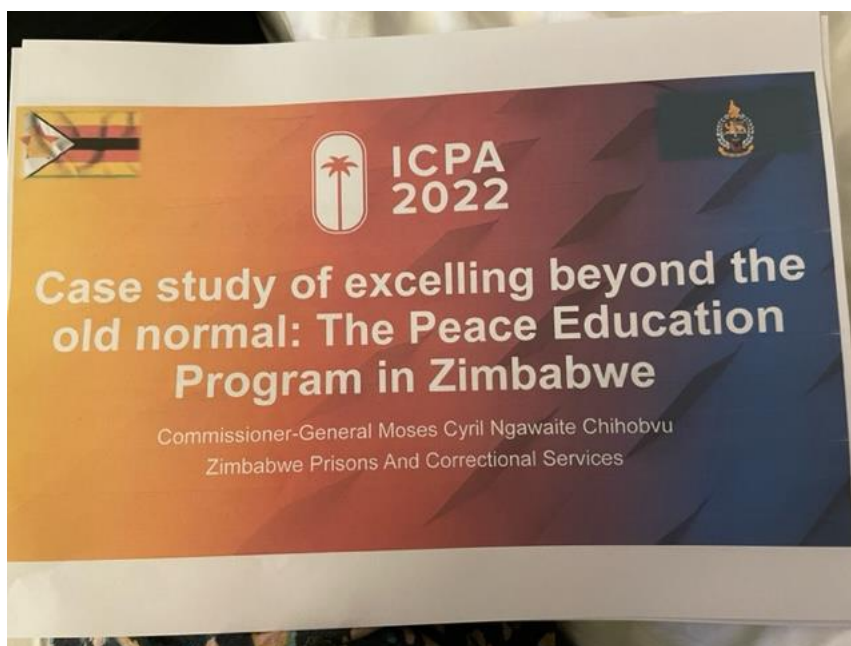
4. Training and Support Initiatives for corrective service staff related to increasing individual wellbeing,, professionalism and reduced absenteeism.


In USA the program is used for helping staff members to start with appreciation, and valuing of their own lives. When they feel and acknowledge their own strengths, they form a personal base, which can be an anchor, to return to, in the very stressful situations they find themselves each day. They then begin to understand a more humanitarian approach to themselves and criminal justice. As staff members become aware of the positive changes in inmates, it affects the way they interact with them, which assists in providing a more positive prison environment.

I would like to share this clip of professionals who have done the program, speaking for themselves.


[Ohio Court Embraces the Peace Education Program](#)

In Zimbabwe it has also been used for administrators in numerous rehabilitation programs. Please see below.






PEP ROLLOUT IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS




- We adopted a unique strategy in implementing the programme through conducting mixed classes comprising inmates and officers.
- Incorporates all categories of inmates.
- Worked as a wellness programme that offered psychological support to inmates during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PEACE EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

ICPA2022



INTRODUCTION (cont...)



- The programme was launched by our Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs in 2021.
- It is running smoothly in six provinces and a total of 3605 people comprising inmates and Correctional Officers (both males and females) have undertaken the programme.
- ZPCS also administers numerous rehabilitation programmes such as skills training, education, and counselling with the view to correct, reform and empower.

PEACE EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

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The Peace Education Program is used in many countries including South Africa, India and Great Britain. They find there is a calming effect, as inmates feel hope and begin to think, rather than react. In India three prisons have closed down as the recidivism rate has dropped significantly.

The Peace Education Program is used with young Gang Members in South America. These young people now run it themselves in schools, and have developed peace and respect program on the streets.

In London it is used as a tool by Pastor Lorraine Jones, who has been on a mission, with police and community, to find solutions to gang violence, after her own son was stabbed to death.

I value this opportunity to present the Peace Education Program to the Committee and wish you to consider it seriously, as I have seen it work. It can stand alone or as a scaffold amongst other programs.

Yours Sincerely,

Helen Hussey.

The Prem Rawat Foundation (TPRF) supports the American Probation and Parole Association's values and vision for fostering an environment of wellbeing for community corrections clients and their support teams. The Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, makes the Peace Education Program available free of charge.



Scan for information

What people are saying

"Our participants are not coming to us as peaceful folks. They are in conflict and have been through a lot. For us to help them find the peace inside of them is a great anchor for the future. It puts everything else in perspective."

- Judge Kathryn Michael, Presiding Judge,
Domestic Violence Intervention Court
of Summit County, Ohio



"The Peace Education curriculum that TPRF has created is high quality, simple to understand, and non-denominational. I recommend this program to you as an effective means to help increase the harmony within individuals and the community in which you serve."

- Stephen J. Steurer, Ph.D., Former Executive
Director, Correctional Education Association, USA



Some facts about the program

- An innovative personal development workshop series that helps people discover their inner resources
- A transformative resource for wellbeing and personal growth
- Over 300,000 participants, including more than 100,000 participants in 775 correctional facilities
- Offered free of charge in 80 countries and in 40 languages
- Embraced in diverse settings, including corrections, probation and parole, homeless shelters, youth centers, universities, conflict zone environments & rehabilitation
- Features empowering videos of author Prem Rawat's talks on themes such as dignity, choice and hope
- Includes individual reflection, group discussions and workbook activities
- Research studies on the program's impact in correctional facilities world-wide cite that participants' "behavioral improvements included managing anger and avoiding fighting." Studies can be found here: www.tprf.org/peace-education-program/studies-endorsements/

The Peace Education Program is facilitated in correctional facilities, probation and parole in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Ireland, Italy, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad & Tobago, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay and Zimbabwe.