

משרד החינוך
המינהל הפדגוגי
הפיקוח ליישום חוק זכויות התלמיד

About "Big Small People"



International Project

Creating Animation Films on Children's Rights

Background and Rationale

The world in which we live is a variegated jigsaw puzzle of nations, religions, cultures, beliefs, colors and languages. History has been a succession of wars, conflicts, disagreements and controversies - on every topic and in every era. From this chaos has emerged a developing international consensus regarding our obligation to defend the rights of children, who are the weakest, the most vulnerable, and the most exploited minority on earth.

Despite humanity's great advances in almost every possible field, we are still shocked to discover anew that the abuse and exploitation of children has not ceased, but has simply assumed new and different forms. Whereas other disadvantaged groups have learned to organize in order to wage the struggle for their rights - children, as a group, have been unable to do so.

The history of the fight for equality and equal rights on the part of minorities points to the need for empowering group members and making them aware of their rights. We, the adult population, may and likely will continue to legislate laws for the protection of children's rights, write international charters, hold conventions and symposiums, and conduct many other welcome activities - but most if not all of them will also continue to be aimed at an adult target audience.

The existing situation, in which adults serve as the mediators between children and information regarding their rights, is one that leads to a conflict of interest. In many cases, the children's rights need be safeguarded where none other than an adult is trampling it.

Objectives

Our plan consists of creating a series of about 30 films, approximately 60 seconds of length each. The films are to be designated to the focused topics elected by UN for the year of 2004. A major emphasis will be applied on the matter of basic rights of children for education, health treatment and on specific issues that characterize modes of discrimination and exploitation of children in different societies around the world.

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The purpose of this film series is to arouse awareness using the advantage of the unique visual and communicative language of animation, treating the subject through wide ranged perspectives, to spot on the crucial issues and to raise public and communal consciousness and conscience to this potential danger for humanity and mankind. Some of the films are as well aimed at young children, who may not have learned to read or write. The preparation of the animated films will be monitored professionally from psychological, anthropological and interdenominational aspects, with an aim to creating a product whose contents are offensive to none, and which serves the purposes of all with appropriate dignity.

The project's end product will be a set of animated films, comprising a modular series that can be dubbed in any language, and whose contents and animated characters are suitable for children of every age, faith and culture.

We are seeking to distribute the series for broadcast in every communications media around the world, and have requested assistance from the Israeli branch in UN.

Timetable

The project is scheduled for execution during the academic school- year (starting September - November 2004), and will continue throughout the school year. Each school will produce a predefined number of films.

The conception and the production of the films were defined in the framework of a "**Development Seminar**" attended by representatives of all parties, which was held in September 2004, in Tel-Aviv. This report summarizes this meeting. A launching event for this project is plane to be held on the period between September-November 2005.

Participants

The UNESCO office in Israel has recommended this project for their 2004-2005 planned activities.

The project is the initiative by the animation Department of Camera Obscura School of Art. It is supported by the Ministry of Education and Culture and Sports, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Israel Educational Television, and assisted by the Children Legal Counseling Center.

Expected Output and Results

The problem of illiteracy is not something of the past. Even today millions of children around the world do not know how to read or write, sometimes due to their age but often due to deprivation and the poverty of their surroundings. These children have been denied access to knowledge about their status or their rights. The importance of our project lies in exposing young children to information about their rights and helping them define themselves as human beings, by "leapfrogging" over the barrier of illiteracy and using the visual language of digital media and animation to deliver the message.

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The use of pictures and icons rather than written letters is perhaps the oldest form of communication in the world. In the course of history it has often served as a simple and efficient informational tool to get a message across to an illiterate adult target audience as well.

The use of a pictorial sign language lays the foundation for an international language that any child, of almost any age, can understand, eliminating the need for a spoken or written language. Digital media in general and animation in particular are ideal for our purposes, because they bypass the limitations imposed by the spoken or written language, draw the attention, arouse the interest and stir the curiosity of children, and facilitate the assimilation of values and knowledge in an experiential, picturesque, amusing and easily memorized manner.

Another offshoot of the project will be the creation of a common foundation for agreement and understanding with regard to international basic rights - handing down a uniform conceptual basis to future generations can contribute to an understanding among the many nations and faiths that coexist upon this planet.

The international project for animated films was organized

School of art "with the collaboration of "Camera Obscura.