

Early Childhood Peace Consortium

Vision

To create a legacy of sustained peace drawing on the transformative power of early child development by building a global movement that values the role of young children and families as agents of change in peace building.



Increased conflict and the lasting negative impact of violence on children, families and communities is a matter of grave concern around the world. Approaches to prevent violence and maximize justice, equality, and harmony are important for building peace. Promoting peace is not a new enterprise with several organizations and alliances working hard to address the great risk of violence and conflict to individuals and society. The proposed consortium, presents an innovative approach to promoting and maintaining peaceful societies through the transformative power of early childhood. Evidence supports the claim that the formative years of life and intra- and inter-family and community relationships are powerful agents of change that can promote resilience, social cohesion and peace.

A growing body of knowledge suggests that the neurobiology of our early life bonds (e.g., parents and children) can have an impact on our physiology in ways that influences peace building. For example, and with particular reference to the proposed consortium, two neuropeptides, oxytocin and vasopressin, appear to be key elements in the neurobiology of affiliation. This complex bio-behavioral system is developmentally sensitive indicating that the earliest years of life are when we make the largest strides in holistic development. From a socio-ecological perspective, early interventions with parents and young children contribute to harmonious relationships, pro-social behaviors and resilience. Furthermore, recent evidence implies that when parents come together in groups as part of parenting programs, these groups have a transformative influence on building socially cohesive communities.

The consortium brings together leaders from multiple sectors including international organizations, academia, programme, philanthropy, networks, media and development institutions to address not only the consequences but also the causes of violence in society.

Consortium Action Agenda

- *To contribute to the debate on peace building by focusing on early childhood development (ECD), by engaging families, communities, civil society and governments, and philanthropists to ensure early childhood is central to peace building, resilience and social cohesion.*
- *To leverage the potential of partners and networks working to advance proven and sustainable ECD interventions and peace building.*
- *To link emerging knowledge from bio-behavioral and environmental sciences with existing programmes.*
- *To increase investment, advocate for and create local and sustainable programmes for peace building through ECD.*
- *To generate new evidence and advocate for policies and practices that promote peace for young children, families and communities in an ever-changing world.*
- *To advocate with member states to support the drafting a UN resolution on ECD and peacebuilding that complements other resolutions on peace building.*