

# Pilot Project Blends Storytelling, Peace and Kids

by Caren Neile

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BOCA RATON, Fla., USA – In the spring of 2006, 15 middle-schoolers and a teacher at Boca Raton Middle School in Florida embarked on a pilot project to determine if storytelling could be used effectively in an afterschool program to promote peace. The project, called Youth Peace Leaders, was a joint effort among the school, nearby Florida Atlantic University's South Florida Storytelling Project, Rotary International, and the International Storytelling Center. Actually, I should say "is" — because YPL, now entering its second year, is still going strong.

I created Youth Peace Leaders based on my experience with storytelling and peace in a variety of settings, including in my role as consultant to the International Storytelling Center (ISC), for which I created the center's web pages on storytelling for peace. My idea was based on the premise that storytelling — based as it is on face-to-face communication, cause and effect, and imagination — can promote empathy, identification, ethical

**[SNIP – End of preview.]**