

## HONOURING CHILDREN

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### ***A Covenant for Honouring Children***

We find these joys to be self-evident:  
That all children are created whole, endowed with innate  
Intelligence, with dignity and wonder, worthy of respect.

The embodiment of life, liberty and happiness,  
children are original blessings, here to learn their own song.  
Every girl and boy is entitled to love, to dream, and to  
belong to a loving "village". And to pursue a life of purpose.

We affirm our duty to nourish and nurture the young,  
to honour their caring ideals as the heart of being human.  
To recognize the early years as the foundation of life, and to  
cherish the contribution of young children to human evolution.

We commit ourselves to peaceful ways and vow to keep  
from harm or neglect these, our most vulnerable citizens.  
As guardians of their prosperity we honour  
the bountiful Earth whose diversity sustains us.  
Thus we pledge our love for generations to come.

*A Covenant for Honouring Children* is written by Raffi Cavoukian, award-winning  
song writer and recording artist, ecology advocate and author of *Child Honouring:  
How to Turn this World Around*

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The following are **Child Honouring Principles**:

- Respectful love which sees children as persons in their own right.
- Celebration of diversity of human dreams, intelligences and cultures and the biodiversity of the earth.
- Caring communities composed of child-friendly shopkeepers, family resource centres, green schoolyards, bike lanes and pesticide-free parks.
- Conscious parenting skills, taught in both elementary and secondary schools; emotionally aware parents are less likely to abuse or neglect.
- Emotional intelligence, developed through cooperation, play and creativity to teach the skills of empathy.
- Nonviolence: no corporal punishment, no humiliation, no coercion; a nonviolent heart and a loving home contribute to a culture of peace.
- Safe environments: protection from domestic neglect, corporate mind manipulation and poisonous chemicals.
- Sustainability so that the lives of future generations are not compromised.
- Ethical commerce to enable a restorative economy devoted to the well-being of the very young.

**Activities:**

1. Make a short presentation on Raffi, the author of this *Covenant* and these Principles. Play and display the lyrics to Raffi's song, *Turn this World Around*. Then lead a discussion about the song. Who is Mandela? What is the thesis of this song? Do you support this goal? Why or why not?
2. a) Make a list of the changes that would have to occur if Canada were to adopt these Child Honouring Principles.
  - b) Are you in favour of adopting these principles?
  - c) What benefits would result from making these changes?
  - d) What are the disadvantages of making these changes?
3. If a majority of students support the Covenant and Principles, print both, post in the room, and refer to both during your study of War and Children.