

# RIGHTS SITES NEWS

PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM

A Publication of The Advocates for Human Rights



## Human Rights Education

The Advocates for Human Rights introduces international human rights and responsibilities to K-12 students. It uses the framework of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to help students understand and appreciate common human values, to encourage them to apply international standards to their own lives, and to support positive student action to remedy human rights violations in their own communities.

## The Rights of Workers

*“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home...the factory, farm or office...unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.”*

~ Eleanor Roosevelt, *United Nations Remarks, 1953*

Millions of workers around the world suffer from inhumane working conditions. In many countries, there is little or no labor law enforcement, and many workers are prevented from joining organizations, such as unions, to advance their interests. In a globalized economy, some corporations take advantage of cheap labor and lack of environmental or community protections. Workers, including child workers, must toil extremely long hours for subsistence wages, and often under unsanitary and unsafe conditions.

An alarming 211 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are forced to work around the world. These children work in agriculture, mining, and manufacturing to produce goods that are traded to the United States and other developed countries. Unable to go to school, these children face little hope of escaping poverty in their future. Even in places where there are laws to protect workers' rights, such as the United States, child labor, human trafficking, and unfair or unsafe working conditions continue to exist. It is estimated that, at any given time, between 10,000 and 50,000 workers in the U.S. are victims of forced labor.

Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a great time to remember the struggles and victories of the workers who came before us and to honor the men and women who fought for the rights we enjoy today. Teaching children about the struggle for workers' rights in the U.S. and around the world is an important step in raising a generation of globally conscious and educated consumers and workers. To commemorate Labor Day, this edition of Rights Sites News is packed full of lessons, ideas, and resources on teaching about workers' rights, and is dedicated the promotion and advancement of the rights of all workers.

### FEATURED RESOURCE: WORKERS' RIGHTS IN THE U.S. TOOLKIT

The Advocates is pleased to announce its newest toolkit on the rights of workers. This toolkit is an important resource for learning more about the realities workers face in the United States. The kit will help you and your students:

**Get informed** about the rights of workers! Use our fact sheet to learn about workers' rights and then test your knowledge of workers' rights in the U.S. with our quiz.

**Get involved** in promoting the rights of workers! Use the resources and ideas in our Take Action Guide to start advocating for workers' rights.

**Get others interested** in the rights of workers! Use the PowerPoint presentation and lesson plans to educate your school or community about workers' rights.

**The Workers' Rights Toolkit** is free and downloadable at [www.discoverhumanrights.org/uploads/rights\\_sites\\_workers.pdf](http://www.discoverhumanrights.org/uploads/rights_sites_workers.pdf).

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## Lesson: Truckers Make History

**Objective:** To learn about the historical importance of the labor movement in U.S. in achieving key workers' rights, including a living wage and the right to collective bargaining.

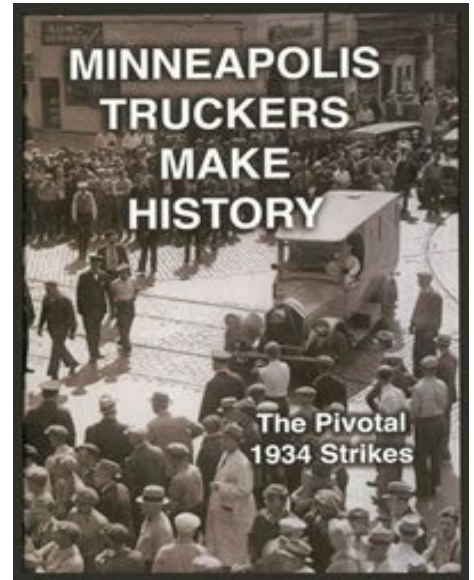
**Time Frame:** 1 class period

**Grades:** 8-12

**Materials:**

- Union Buttons Handout  
(download at [www.minneapolis1934.org/handouts-pdfs.html](http://www.minneapolis1934.org/handouts-pdfs.html))
- Minneapolis Truckers Make History DVD - 18 minutes  
(Stream online at [www.minneapolis1934.org](http://www.minneapolis1934.org))

**Source:** This featured lesson is from an online curriculum and film entitled "Minneapolis Truckers Make History." The lesson includes an 18-minute film, designed for classroom use, which chronicles the 1934 strike by Minneapolis Teamsters. The strike paved the way for landmark federal worker rights legislation. The video streams on the website [www.minneapolis1934.org](http://www.minneapolis1934.org) and is also available for purchase on DVD through Labor Education Service (LES) and the Minnesota Historical Society. For more activities and resources designed to be used with the video, go to <http://www.minneapolis1934.org/index.html>.



**Appropriate Subject Areas:** Social Studies. Many of the resources and activities included as part of this curriculum would also work well in English, Art, Music, and other classes.

**Vocabulary:** For a list of vocabulary words, see the following website: [www.minneapolis1934.org/key-vocabulary.html](http://www.minneapolis1934.org/key-vocabulary.html).

**Procedure:**

1. **Brainstorm.** Ask students to brainstorm what they think of first when they hear the word "work." Ask the students to free associate with the word "work" and write their responses on the board. Ask the students to do the same thing with the term "labor union." Review their responses and reflect upon the positive and negative feelings people have expressed.
2. **Analyze Images.** Give each student the Union Buttons Handout (similar images shown on the following page). Explain that these buttons and bumper stickers are tools unions use to convey their message. Ask students what they think the different buttons and bumper stickers mean. Ask if they can tell what values or principles the labor movement is saying that it stands for.

Possible values and principles:

- People have power when they unite and speak with a common voice
- Equality, non-discrimination, and fair treatment matter - apply rules equally
- The right to leisure time rather than having to work excessively
- Opportunity for all people to have decent jobs
- The right to jobs with dignity and fair pay
- Activism – get involved – participation is essential to making change

3. **Watch Film.** Show students the 18-minute film "Minneapolis Truckers Make History."





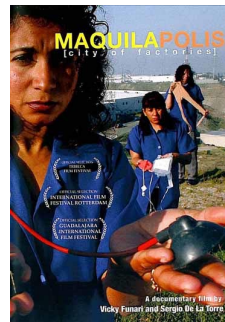
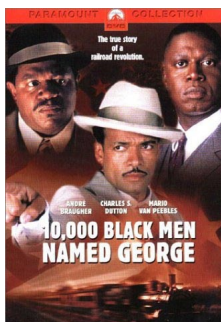
4. **Discuss.** After viewing the film, discuss the following questions as a class.

- What is a union? What are some of the things that union members negotiate with their employers?
- Have workers always had the right to join a union?
- What was happening across the nation following the stock market crash in 1929? What happened to workers' wages in Minneapolis in the 1930s?
- What was the goal of the 1933 National Recovery Act?
- Why did the workers in the coal yards and the coal drivers band together? What was their strategy for improving their wages and working conditions?
- In what other cities did workers go out on strike in 1934? What industries did they work in? What impact did the news of these strikes have on the workers in Minneapolis?
- What was the new tactic used by the workers during the truckers' strikes?
- What was "Bloody Friday?" What happened to the strikers on that day? What happened to public opinion after "Bloody Friday?"
- Why did the Governor of Minnesota order the National Guard into Minneapolis? What effect did this have on the strike?
- What was the impact of President Roosevelt's visit to Rochester, Minnesota?
- What was the impact of the workers' solidarity during the strike?
- What happened across the country as a result of the Minneapolis truckers' victory? What law did Congress pass in 1935, in response to the strikes of 1934? What was the impact of this law?

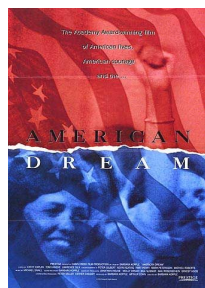
For more film questions see, <http://www.minneapolis1934.org/film-questions1.html>.

## TEACHING RESOURCES: WORKERS' RIGHTS MOVIES

**10,000 Black Men Named George** (2002) Based on the true story of the formation of the first black union in America. Asa Philip Randolph, a black journalist establishes a voice for the forgotten workers of the Pullman Rail Company, where all black porters were simply named "George." [www.amazon.com/000-Black-Men-Named-George/dp/B00009AV7Q](http://www.amazon.com/000-Black-Men-Named-George/dp/B00009AV7Q).

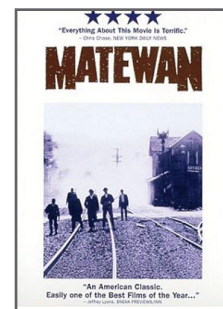


**Maquilapolis—City of Factories** (2006) This documentary tells the story of the good and bad aspects of the maquiladora system through the lens of Carmen, one of the Maquiladora workers—her work life in chemical-saturated manufacturing plants; her home life with her kids in their garage-door house in a neighborhood beset by industrial pollution; and, when Panasonic pulls out of Mexico almost overnight, her legal battle over promised but unpaid termination pay. [www.maquilapolis.com](http://www.maquilapolis.com). Also see lesson plan: Examine Incentives in a Market Economy at: [www.pbs.org/pov/maquilapolis/lesson\\_plan.php](http://www.pbs.org/pov/maquilapolis/lesson_plan.php).

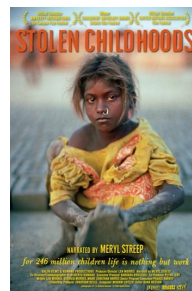


**American Dream** (1990) This film recounts an unsuccessful strike in the heartland of America against the Hormel Foods corporation from 1985-86. The film features footage of union meetings, press releases, news broadcasts, and in-depth interviews with people on both sides of the issue, including Jesse Jackson. [www.amazon.com/American-Dream-Jesse-Jackson/dp/B0000DZTKP](http://www.amazon.com/American-Dream-Jesse-Jackson/dp/B0000DZTKP).

**Matewan** (1954) Based on true events, a labor leader seeking to organize the workers of a company town sets off a powderkeg of racial hostility, corruption, and betrayal in this dramatic retelling of the bitter clash between unionist miners and the tyrannical coal company owners in West Virginia in the 1920's. 100 min. See lesson plan: Whose Fruits and Just Desserts at: [www.voicesacrosstime.org/come-all-ye/ti/2006/Lesson%20Plans/06SaariFruits.html](http://www.voicesacrosstime.org/come-all-ye/ti/2006/Lesson%20Plans/06SaariFruits.html).



**China Blue** (2006) This documentary journeys into the harsh world of sweatshop workers. Shot clandestinely, this is a deep-access account of what both China and the international retailers don't want us to see - how the clothes we buy are actually made. [www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/china.html](http://www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/china.html).

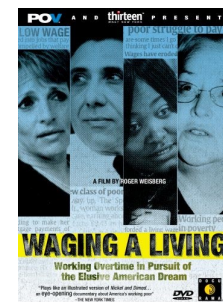


**Stolen Childhoods** (2003) This film is a feature-length documentary film shot in seven countries, profiling laboring children and the pioneering efforts to get them educated, break their family's cycle of poverty, and lead them into a hopeful future. [www.stolenchildhoods.org/mt/index.php](http://www.stolenchildhoods.org/mt/index.php).



**A Day Without a Mexican** (2004) California awakens one day to discover that one-third of its population has vanished. A peculiar pink fog surrounds the state and communication outside its boundaries has completely shut down. As the day progresses, it becomes apparent the sole characteristic linking the missing 14 million is their Hispanic heritage. 95 min. [www adaywithoutamexican.com/](http://www adaywithoutamexican.com/).

**Waging a Living** (2006) Waging a Living chronicles the day-to-day battles of four low-wage earners fighting to lift their families out of poverty. Shot over a three-year period in the northeast and California, this documentary captures the dreams, frustrations, and accomplishments of a diverse group of people who struggle to live from paycheck to paycheck. See lesson plan: Living Wage v. Minimum Wage: What's the Difference? at: [www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/lesson\\_plan.php](http://www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving/lesson_plan.php).



**Made in L.A.** (2007) This documentary film follows the remarkable story of three Latina immigrants working in Los Angeles garment sweatshops as they embark on a three-year odyssey to win basic labor protections from a trendy clothing retailer. [www.madeinla.com/](http://www.madeinla.com/).



Also see lesson plan: Examine Labor Practices in the Garment Industry [www.pbs.org/pov/madeinla/lesson\\_plan.php](http://www.pbs.org/pov/madeinla/lesson_plan.php).

**HISTORY**

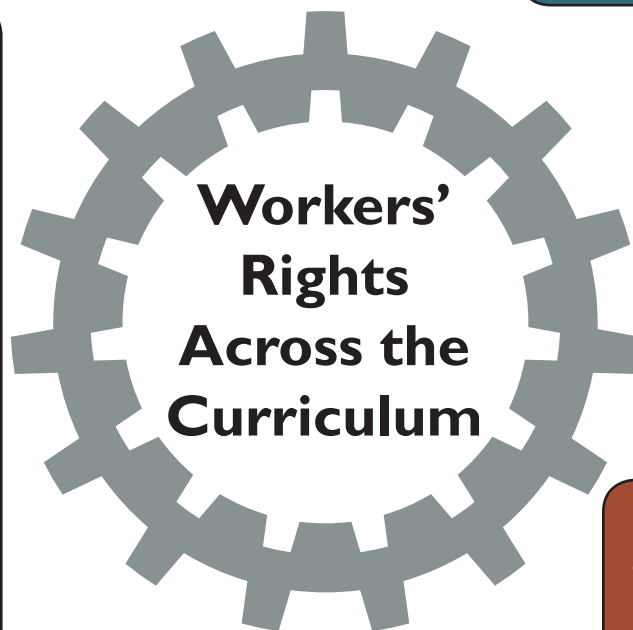
- Connect the struggle for labor rights to other human rights movements, (civil rights, suffrage, immigration).
- Explore the history of the labor movement.
- Discuss how industrial development impacts labor rights.
- Discover the impact of labor standards on national policies, trade, and economics,
- Analyze the effects of globalization on labor, (e.g., IMF, World Bank, NAFTA, FTAA, Fair Trade).

**ENGLISH**

- Read personal accounts of laborers across the globe.
- Respond to media and advertising claims about labor practices.
- Research and debate the issues (e.g., labor standards vs. jobs, wages vs. profit).
- Write persuasive letters and essays to representatives, corporations, etc.

**SCIENCE**

- Explore labor standards and the impact on human health, (e.g., child labor and development).
- Investigate the types of chemicals used as pesticides and discuss their impact on human health.
- Discuss the pros and cons of organic farming.



**ART/MUSIC**

- Explore self-expression in other cultures through workers' art.
- Discover the musical traditions of the labor movement.

**MATH**

- Incorporate labor data into word problems.
- Use labor statistics to discuss trends and make predictions.
- Use profit and salary figures to discuss percentages, proportions, fractions, pie charts.
- Discuss budgeting by comparing and contrasting the expenses of two workers - one in a developed nation and one in developing nation.

**GEOGRAPHY**

- Locate where common products were made.
- Trace the journey of goods across the globe.
- Discuss the interdependencies produced by the globalization of trade.

**ECONOMICS**

- Investigate the global distribution of money, production facilities, and raw materials.
- Research and evaluate the impacts of trade policies on local economies, working conditions, living conditions.

Source: "Where do Labor Rights fit into your curriculum" International Labor Rights Forum.

<http://www.laborrights.org/files/LaborRightsLessonPlanIdeas.pdf>

## TEACHING RESOURCES: WORKERS' RIGHTS

### American Conflict in Print: A Literary View of Class Struggle

[cwcs.yzu.edu/resources/cwcs-projects/steeltown/teaching-local/conflict](http://cwcs.yzu.edu/resources/cwcs-projects/steeltown/teaching-local/conflict)

A five-week unit designed to help students gain an understanding of how literature reflects struggles among people of diverse class, race, and ethnic backgrounds.

### California Federation of Teachers

<http://cft.org/about/comm/labor/rguide.html>

CFT provides teaching materials, curricula, and links about workers' rights and César Chávez.

### Center for Labor Research and Education

<http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/>

This site provides access to research about labor-related topics, such as minimum wage, and links to informational workshops. Some advanced curricula appropriate for secondary school students are also provided.

### Collective Bargaining Education Project

<http://www.lausd.k12.ca.us/lausd/offices/cbep/>

An extensive curriculum entitled "Workplace Issues and Collective Bargaining in the Classroom," that assists social studies teachers in incorporating labor relations education into their units of study.

### Critical Thinking Lesson: Workers' Rights

[idaho-humanrights.org/content/lessonplans\\_detail.cfm?lesson\\_id=90](http://idaho-humanrights.org/content/lessonplans_detail.cfm?lesson_id=90)

A lesson from the Idaho Human Rights Education Center aimed at middle and high school students, with the goal of teaching students that violations of workers' rights occur across the globe. It uses the UDHR as one of its core materials.

### Health and Safety Curriculum for Working Teens

[www.uworksafe.com/request/index.cfm#general](http://www.uworksafe.com/request/index.cfm#general)

The curriculum teaches teens their rights in a workplace as well as methods for keeping oneself safe and healthy. There is a general guide for all teens, as well as specific guides tailored to certain workplace environments, like agriculture.

### The Human Rights of Migrant Workers

[www.pdhre.org/rights/migrants.html](http://www.pdhre.org/rights/migrants.html)

This site by the Peoples' Movement for Human Rights Education provides an overview of the rights of migrant workers and governments' responsibilities to them, using various international human rights documents as sources.

### Labor Day Resources for Teachers

[www.teachervision.fen.com/labor-day/teacher-resources/6639.html](http://www.teachervision.fen.com/labor-day/teacher-resources/6639.html)

The site by TeacherVision offers activities and projects that can be used around Labor Day (or any time) to teach about workers' rights. The sampling includes a lesson plan about child labor, historical labor statistics, and a section about the history of Labor Day.

### Labor Rights in the Classroom

[www.laborrights.org/labor-rights-in-the-classroom](http://www.laborrights.org/labor-rights-in-the-classroom)

These lesson plans by the International Labor Rights Forum covers current issues in the area of labor rights, including child labor and sweatshops, as well as more specific issues, such as cocoa cultivation in Africa and the cut flower industry in Latin America.

### The Right to Work

[www.itvs.org/educators/lesson-plans?topic=49](http://www.itvs.org/educators/lesson-plans?topic=49)

In this lesson and film module, students investigate the concepts of unemployment, unions, and worker's rights as universal human rights. After listening to various voices involved in an indigenous workers' struggle in Bolivia through the film "Waiting for the Revolution," students research an organization and create a media campaign for it.

### Teaching About Labor

<http://mn.aflcio.org/stpaulunions/index.cfm?action=cat&categoryID=ff35145e-3d05-4025-9e12-766ef833b86f>

"Teaching About Labor: An Elementary and Secondary Curriculum," was created by the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation in coordination with Saint Paul Federation of Teachers Local 28. This downloadable secondary curriculum includes a unit on having choices in the workplace, wages, labor laws, and workers' rights.

### Teaching Materials: Labor

[www.zinnedproject.org/posts/category/explore\\_by\\_theme/labor](http://www.zinnedproject.org/posts/category/explore_by_theme/labor)

The lesson plans from the Zinn Education Project cover a variety of historical events and players in the labor movement, including the 1908 Textile Strike and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

### Teaching with Documents: Court Documents Related to MLK, Jr. and Memphis Sanitation Workers

[www.archives.gov/education/lessons/memphis-v-mlk/](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/memphis-v-mlk/)

This lesson from the National Archives uses primary sources and additional side research to understand the Memphis sanitation strike, as well as the general ideas surrounding strikes and boycotts. Links to primary documents, suggestions for additional readings, and audio-video materials are provided.

### Teaching with Documents: Photographs of Lewis Hine: Documentation of Child Labor.

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/hine-photos/>

An array of images, correlating standards, and teaching activities on child labor in U.S. history.

### What You Should Know about Safety and Health on the Job

[www.cdc.gov/niosh/adoldoc.html](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/adoldoc.html)

This Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website summarizes the possible dangers that teens (or anyone) can face at the workplace, as well as the rights of workers, including the special rights of teen workers. The information is useful for teachers with students of working age.

### Working Heroes: Men and Women Who Shaped America's Labor Movement

[www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/historybios.cfm](http://www.aflcio.org/aboutus/history/historybios.cfm)

This AFL-CIO webpage gives complete descriptions of the lives of the men and women who played significant roles in America's various labor movements.

### Worker Safety: The Triangle Fire Legacy

[www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lesson=542&page=teacher](http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.php?lesson=542&page=teacher)

The lesson plan investigates the complexities of worker safety issues by looking at historical and recent violations of the right to safety for workers. It also requires students to learn about policies that address safety concerns.



## FEATURED WEBSITE: THE CHILD LABOR EDUCATION PROJECT



Child Laborer, Nepal (David Parker)

**The Child Labor Public Education Project** of the University of Iowa Labor Center and Center for Human Rights provides basic information surrounding the history of child labor and areas interlinked with child labor, such as law, health, and economics. The Center also provides educational workshops and materials on a range of issues regarding child labor in the U.S. and other countries. Educational materials are also available that you may adapt to meet your needs. Training manuals for adult education and K-12 teachers are available, along with overheads and educational handouts. K-12 lesson plans are provided for teaching about subjects such as child slavery, child soldiers, child trafficking and sexual exploitation, and hazardous child labor. Each of the subjects has a manual which lays out several lesson plans that can be used in a variety of ways. Visit the Child Labor Education Project at: [www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/laborctr/child\\_labor/materials/k-12.html](http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/laborctr/child_labor/materials/k-12.html).

## FEATURED LESSONS: VIVA LA CAUSA



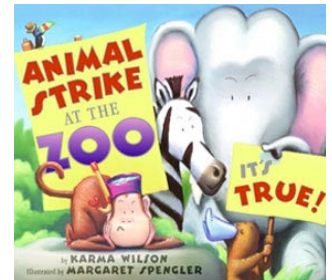
**Viva La Causa** focuses on one of the seminal events in the march for human rights - the grape strike and boycott led by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta in the 1960s. *Viva la Causa* shows how thousands of people from across the nation joined in a struggle for justice for the most exploited people in our country - the workers who put food on our tables. The kit includes: 39-

minute film on DVD and a teacher's guide with standards-based lesson plans. *Viva La Causa* meets content standards for social studies and language arts, grades 7-12. Available for free from the Teaching Tolerance website at [www.tolerance.org/kit/viva-la-causa](http://www.tolerance.org/kit/viva-la-causa).

## FEATURED BOOK: ANIMAL STRIKE

### **Animal Strike at the Zoo:**

**It's True!** (2006) A rhyming, rhythmic, and lyrical charmer about zoo animals going on strike. It all starts when the elephants complain, "We're paid only peanuts!" and all of the animals follow suit. What's a zookeeper to do when the lions and tigers and bears refuse to roar and prowl and growl? And when little Sue, who has been waiting all year for this trip to the zoo, enters the gate, will the animals decide to give their strike a break? Karma Wilson's fun, playful text paired with Margaret Spengler's bright and lively pastels create an unforgettable, irresistible zoo of chaos and fun! Available at most online bookstores or check out your local library! ISBN: 0060575034. Appropriate for grades K-2.



## FEATURED EVENT: THE ADVOCATES AT ANNUAL NCSS CONFERENCE



### **The Advocates at NCSS Conference in Denver! November 12-14.**

This year, the National Council for Social Studies will celebrate 90 years of hosting the nation's premier social studies professional development conference with the theme "Vistas, Visions & Voices." The conference will bring together top professionals in social studies education and highlight the central role of social studies in our schools — preparing 21st century citizens who have learned from the voices of the past to envision an interdependent global society for the future. This year, the conference will be held in Denver, Colorado from November 12-14, 2010.

Human rights is one of the featured topics at this year's conference. As part of the program, The Advocates for Human Rights has been invited to present a workshop entitled, *Inspiring Student Activism through Human Rights and the Arts*. The workshop will be held on Friday the 12th of November at 9:00 a.m. in Room 212. The Advocates will also be exhibiting with a booth and will be giving a poster presentation on creating a welcoming classroom environment. Please join us for one of our presentations, or stop by booth #923 for resources and lesson plans — we would love to see you! To learn more about the conference or to register online, please go to [www.socialstudies.org/conference/2010](http://www.socialstudies.org/conference/2010).

# HUMAN RIGHTS CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

**Latina/Chicano Heritage Month** (September 15 - October 15)

- 6 Labor Day - [http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Labor\\_Day.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Labor_Day.shtml)
- 8 International Literacy Day - <http://www.reading.org/General/Conferences/InternationalLiteracyDay.aspx>
- 16 International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer - <http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/events/ozoneday/>
- 21 International Day of Peace - <http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org/>

## OCTOBER

**Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

- 1 International Day for Older Persons - [www.un.org/Depts/dhl/olderpersons/](http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/olderpersons/)
- 5 Day of Unity Against Domestic Violence  
World Habitat Day - [www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=588](http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=588)  
World Teachers' Day - <http://www.unesco.org/en/teacher-education/advocacy/world-teachers-day/>
- 10 World Mental Health Day - [www.wfmh.org/00WorldMentalHealthDay.htm](http://www.wfmh.org/00WorldMentalHealthDay.htm)
- 10-16 World Rainforest Week - [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)
- 11 Indigenous People's Day  
Dia De La Raza  
National Coming Out Day
- 16 World Food Day - [www.worldfooddayusa.org](http://www.worldfooddayusa.org)
- 19 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty - <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/poverty/>
- 24 United Nations Day - [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)
- 24-30 Disarmament Week - [www.un.org/depts/dhl/disarmament/index.html](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/disarmament/index.html)

## NOVEMBER

- 9 Mix it Up Day - [www.tolerance.org/teens/lunch/jsp](http://www.tolerance.org/teens/lunch/jsp)
- 15-20 Bullying Awareness Week - [www.bullyingawarenessweek.org](http://www.bullyingawarenessweek.org)
- 15-21 Geography Awareness Week - [www.mywonderfulworld.org/gaw.html](http://www.mywonderfulworld.org/gaw.html)
- 16 International Day of Tolerance - [www.un.org/depts/dhl/tolerance/index.html](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/tolerance/index.html)
- 20 Universal Children's Day - [www.un.org/depts/dhl/children\\_day/index.html](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/children_day/index.html)  
Transgender Day of Remembrance - [www.gender.org](http://www.gender.org)
- 25 International Day for the Prevention of Violence against Women - [www.un.org/depts/dhl/violence](http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/violence)

# RIGHTS SITES NEWS

Volume 6 Issue 3 Summer 2010

Rights Sites News is published quarterly by the The Advocates for Human Rights to promote human rights education in the classroom and support human rights teachers. We welcome suggestions and comments.

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To sign up to receive this free quarterly newsletter and periodic e-mail updates about opportunities related to human rights education, please send your name and your e-mail address to: [efarell@advrights.org](mailto:efarell@advrights.org).

For free human rights educational materials and past editions of Rights Sites News please visit the "For Educators" section of our website:

[www.DiscoverHumanRights.org](http://www.DiscoverHumanRights.org)



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