



Tajikistan School Connectivity Project

NEWS

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The Tajikistan School Connectivity Project for Central Asia has established 24 Internet Learning Centers (ILCs) in secondary schools across Tajikistan. The program's main goal is to increase global dialogue and educational opportunities by installing modern computer equipment with Internet access in schools, as well as developing training and learning projects for teachers and students.

Tajikistan School Connectivity Project activities include:

- teacher training on using computers and the Internet in classroom teaching
- US school partnerships on civic education projects and teacher exchange
- public access and programs for community members and disadvantaged groups
- development of sustainable practices for schools and communities

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Stop the Tsunami - through the eyes of students. A drawing by Niezova Tavshanoy, 10th grade, Chkalovsk ILC

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On the first page of our newsletter I would like to sum up last year's activities and to talk briefly about our plans for the future. We can say that our collaborative project has achieved great results. In 2004 students from the US and Tajikistan worked on various projects together, and received lots of new knowledge about culture, traditions, religion, rights and duties of people in each others' countries. They have also learned how to send messages, presentations and photos to each other and most importantly - how to respect each others opinions. Students, teachers, and community members have learned basic computer skills, in fact many of them had never seen a computer or the Internet before.

This year we are planning even more interesting educational activities. Students and teachers of both Tajikistan and the US will have a chance to learn more about each others' history, migrations and national games. They will also participate in forums and chats with each other.

Of course next year we will continue our collaborative projects with kids with disabilities from Ora International. We have a new group of kids from 6-14 years old. We will be happy if we can help these kids learn how to use the computers and the Internet.

Last year also brought great sorrow to all the world. The tsunami in South Asia took away the lives of thousands of people. This tragedy has changed us and our planet forever. Please, read the story on the next page to see how students in the US and Tajikistan have reacted to this tragedy.

At the end, we want to thank everyone who has worked with us in 2004 and we look forward to our future cooperations in 2005!

Anastasiya Reshetova,
Editor



6 year old child, Bahri Mirzoev, from Dushanbe trying to type a message. He can't walk but he has a goal and a hope for his future. Group of kids with disabilities from Ora International. ILC of School #10, Dushanbe.



Relief International medical relief team providing health services in Sri Lanka.

Relief International and Youth Help in South Asia Tsunami Disaster

On December 26th, 2004, a massive 9.0 earthquake caused a devastating tsunami in South Asia which has killed over 150,000 people. Relief International is working to help the victims of the tsunami by providing immediate relief in the short-term and livelihoods-rebuilding programs in the long-term. Currently Relief International has a medical and relief team in southern Sri Lanka providing medical assistance to survivors of the tsunami and focusing on the provision of clean water. With the generous support of donors and concerned citizens, Relief International has been able to raise funding to provide these relief and health services to people who desperately need them.

The *Quarters from Kids* project is a great new opportunity for youth to get involved in helping the victims of the tsunami. Quarters from Kids is a nationwide grassroots initiative in the U.S. to mobilize youth, as well as adults who support them, to join the effort in helping the affected people in South Asia. Kids across the U.S. are encouraged to fundraise and support an organization in its relief work for the tsunami disaster.

Relief International will be providing Kid Kits to the children in South Asia, which include food and school supplies. The Kid Kits will provide children with items they need during these difficult times. With the support of School Connectivity U.S. partner schools, as well as other youth across the U.S., Relief International will be able to further help children in South Asia recover from the tsunami disaster and build brighter futures.

(For our Tajikistan and Central Asian readers: a Quarter is 25 US cents, a quarter of a dollar and the largest denomination coin in common every day circulation in the US)

For more information, visit www.ri.org and click on Quarters from Kids.

Tajikistani Internet Project to Victims of the Tsunami in South Asia

While thinking about how we can support the countries of South Asia in their sorrow, we had an idea: to ask our students in ILC's to draw pictures for the children in South Asia, what they feel, what they know about this tragedy.

Students instantly responded to our request and we have already received more than 50 drawings. We were surprised to find the emotions and compassion of the Tajik students in their drawings, which included: a painting of a devastated beach, a crying child, kids hand in hand around the globe, images of loss and loneliness, and many others. There was one drawing of people trying to stop a huge wave with their hands. The students are trying to tell the kids of South Asia, that they understand their sorrow and want to help. They are trying....

All these drawings were sent to the kids of Sri Lanka and will be given to a displaced person's shelter. Hopefully these colorful images of compassion and unity will raise spirits and remind the victims that kids in Tajikistan are thinking about them. Some of the drawings also can be seen here: <http://www.connect-tajikistan.org/en/Tsunami/Tsunami.html>. Please, visit this page.

We have also asked our ILC's to create at their schools "walls of remembrance" where they could display materials they find about tsunami: news, letters, photos and words of grief. This way they can teach the entire school about the tragedy. The first school to respond was School #1 in Sarband.



Wall with flowers and pictures in Sarband School #1. Students in this school are grieving with South Asia.

**A Poem by Shuhrat Shodmonov, 11th grade,
School #101, Tursun-zade**

To All Victims of Horrible Tsunami

Oh My God!
Whats happening to the world
I haven't seen anything like this at all!
For what sins are hundreds of kids crying
Seeing how their relatives are dying?
Tsunami came and broke my house
Mother, sister, father – are not survives
Poor boy – doesn't know what to do?
Numbers of victims are sharply rising, what can he do?
The water is proliferate, but never ending,
Every human this day is damning!

Oh My God!
Horrible tsunami tore apart kids from their mothers,
Caused hundreds of people dead
People just wanted to live like others,
But met this day of the end.
Nowadays people are suffering like no others
Tears are streaming with no end,
But remember, Tajikistani kids like others
Are praying for you and will be with you till the end!



Broken house —Drawing by **Kadirova Nasiba, 9th grade, Gymnasia 'Khurshed', Tursun-zade, Tajikistan**

Tajikistani Students are Solving their own Problems During December Activity

In December we asked our schools to come up with some educational ideas. Please read about the activity that the Tajik schools created by themselves.

ILC's designed an activity, called «Problems in Teenagers' lives». The purposes of this lesson were for the students' to analyze deeds made by teenagers' and their possible solutions. Almost all ILC's participated in this activity.

Teenager's problems are always a vital topic for all mankind. For this reason, many scientists have devoted their work to these problems. The science which most extensively is engaged in studying the problems of modern youth is psychology. Psychology allows people to learn information about their own problems. People have been able to shine some light on their psychological problems with the help of newspapers, TV, radio, printed editions; now we have a chance to use the Internet.

During these seminars students had a chance to discuss their problems. All together they looked for the right solution – learning to analyze their own deeds from different points of view. Students analyzed various problems: relations between adults and teenagers, alcoholism and narcotism among teenagers, teenagers isolation

in their own small worlds, a transition period in teenagers life, unrequited love and many other problems. As a result each center has created presentations on those themes which they consider the most pertinent to their lives. See them here: http://www.connect-tajikistan.org/en/sc_teenagers.html

Also the forum offered a professional psychological consultation from psychologists of The National Association of Small and Average Business of Tajikistan for the students to discuss problems in their own lives. Click here <http://tojikiston.com/connect/forum/viewforum.php?f=10> to see the forum attendance.

This forum was lead in Russian and Tajik languages and was very successful. Together with the psychologists team we decided to continue our cooperation, and offer a continuation of these consultations in a chat room. Now, every day students can talk about their problems with professionals. The chat room, called «The Jungle Book», is where you can talk about personal issues with Maugli, Balu, Bagira, Sherkhan and other heroes from the fairy tale. Students liked this idea very much. Most importantly, we hope that students will receive answers to all their questions and their teenage years will be a little easier.

The Tajikistan School Connectivity Project for Central Asia is a project of Relief International - Schools Online's Global Citizenship & Youth Philanthropy Program and has been made possible with major funding from the United States State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and the Global Catalyst Foundation

Useful English Club Website

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence ends" (Henry Adams)

Since April, when Isfara ILC - situated in Northern Sughd Region of Tajikistan was opened, teachers have been coming to the ILC and trying to use the Internet resources, as well as encouraging their students to get to know about the world from the Internet.

Ibrahim Rustamov, On-Site Educator of Isfara ILC wanted to find a way for English language teachers of the region to better understand the potential of the internet for English teaching and to use websites with English language online. As he was one of the creators of the Schools Online English Club website, he decided to organize a seminar for the English language teachers where he could show them all useful links and sources.

On December 20th, a group of teachers and their supervisor Akmalxon Saidov from Isfara Department of Education were invited by Ibrahim to the ILC in order to learn the basics of the Internet and its resources for English Teachers. 15 English teachers from different schools of Isfara, participated in the training. They learned about the Internet, as well as were introduced to the newly launched English Club website www.connect-tajikistan.org/Club.

They were very impressed by the interactivity of this website, where at the same time that you are learning something you can write to Amber Ward, who is a native English speaker, and ask her your questions.

As a result, the English teachers expressed their wish to attend the ILC on a regular basis and expressed their gratitude to the RI-SOL team for carrying out such an indispensable project in Tajikistan.



English teachers at the seminar in Isfara ILC, taught by On-Site Educator, Ibrahim Rustamov

Seminar on Gender Issues in Rudaky ILC



Connectivity students drawing their gender issues plan. Lycee #1, Rudaky

On December 23rd 2004 in the ILC of Lycee #1 in Rudaky there was a seminar called «Gender and position of the woman in a family». Connectivity students from Rudaky and students from School #3 in Nurek took part in this seminar.

Nurek ILC is located in Khatlon Region, more than an hours drive over a small mountain pass from Rudaky town, but the connectivity students had their aim to overcome this distance to talk with their partners about these important topic.

Students got acquainted with each other, and then were divided into small teams. Each team received the task to write an essay on 'How I would live if I were born a girl (a boy)'. Afterwards representatives from each team gave presentations of their work, which was followed by questions from the other students. The presenters did their best to defend their viewpoints.

Then representatives from each team gave presentations of their work. During each student's speech, other students were asking many questions. The presenter did their best to give full answers and defend their own thoughts.

The gender issues subject was chosen because of its relevance in Tajikistan, where girls in a villages often have to leave their school before finishing because their parents would expect them to be married. This problem is not the only gender issue in Tajikistan. During this seminar students had a chance to learn more about this problem. Most importantly girls and boys were standing next to each other talking about gender issues.

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