

THE WELL WISHES PROJECT: PART 1: WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS (KIDS IN AMERICA TO IRAQ)



"Peace Explosions
Worldwide"
--Jake and Warren
Grade 8"



All of the artwork on each of these pages has been created by kids across the U.S. These and other pieces are being shipped with each case of CD's sent abroad.

This award-winning audio initiative, featuring children and youth exclusively, is now successfully opening unprecedented lines of communication globally and literally saving lives.

Endorsed by Dr. Jane Goodall, Iraqi scholars, American teachers, parents and grandparents, this remarkable collection of spontaneous thought, songs, and raps has been created through interviews of kids ages 3 through 19 by the award winning composer/producer Ruth Mendelson in her travels across America. Her mission included interviewing American kids to generate a collection of well wishes for the people of Iraq, as well as thoughts about peace and life in general.

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Awarded
"Top 100 Products in K-12 2007"

-District Administration Magazine, a periodical for K-12 education leaders.

NOW BEING DISTRIBUTED TO CHILDREN/YOUTH/ ADULTS GLOBALLY.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

IN IRAQ:

THE CD HAS CREATED INTERNATIONAL LINES OF COMMUNICATION RESULTING IN IRAQI INFANTS RECEIVING SUCCESSFUL MEDICAL TREATMENT AT AIMS HOSPITAL IN COCHIN, INDIA.

IN KENYA

THE CD IS BEING USED AS A TOOL OF RECONCILIATION AND HAS PREVENTED MURDER AMIDST THE UPRISINGS THROUGHOUT 2008.

IN DENMARK

THE CD HAS SERVED AS A TEMPLATE FOR KIDS IN EUROPE TO MAKE A WELL WISHES VERSION OF THEIR OWN.

IN JAPAN

THE CD IS NOW BEING TRANSLATED INTO JAPANESE FOR BOOK PUBLICATION.

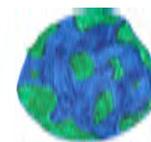
IN THE CONGO AND TANZANIA:

YOUTH LEADERS IN CHILDREN'S REFUGEE CAMPS ARE REQUESTING WELL WISHES CD'S FOR DISTRIBUTION IN FRENCH AND SWAHILI.

GLOBALLY

THE CD WAS FEATURED AT THE FIRST JANE GOODALL GLOBAL YOUTH SUMMIT (2008) UPON DR. GOODALL'S PERSONAL REQUEST.

WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS
(KIDS IN AMERICA TO IRAQ)



WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS: COMMUNICATIONS FROM LISTENERS IN IRAQ

“When I listened to the Well Wishes and Blessings CD I thought these are the words that everyone in the two countries and in the world should know, say and spread for their heart-to-heart innocence. It is essential that such words as selflessness, tolerance and empathy be in our mind before we say or do anything. Many thanks to you for having the friendly words from the friendly souls said and heard.
Dr. A. A-H., Fulbright Scholar and Research Assistant, School of Medicine, Mosul University, Iraq”

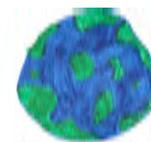


“I'd like to inform you that I received the Well Wishes And Blessings CD's , we listened to the CD's and it touches our hearts directly and we do not know how to express our feelings by using words , it has a great impact on us as Iraqis and it will have the same effect on our children because it is full of honest feelings coming from the Americans towards the Iraqis and it shows that they do care for us. Thank you very much again we will distribute them to the broadcast.
Keep in touch.
Regards
Mohammed”

“I knew about the Well Wishes and Blessings CD in 2007 on an online youth network that I am a member of. I liked the idea and contacted the author on the email provided and I got a reply from Ruth Mendelson. At that time I was a senior medical student studying in Baghdad to get my degree, the security level then was bad, one day when I was going back home on the high way a bomb exploded nearby and the windshield broke and debris fell on me, on several other occasions there were shootings near the college and we would be locked inside waiting for things to calm down. Many students left the country. So when I listened to this peace-building CD, I loved it, the words were simple but powerful. Among my favorites is when a kid on the CD says people are like M&Ms, they come with different colors but all are chocolate on the inside. It really got to me and as an Iraqi, it is touching when you know that people thousands of miles away are thinking of your safety and wellbeing not in a political way but just on a human level to show that they care.”
- M. J. Saeed

“In 2007 violence in Iraq reached its peak with sectarian killing, bombing and chaos, 4 years has passed since the war and I haven't seen but aggression. Hope in a better future seemed like a far-fetched possibility. I truly believed we (Iraqis) were alone in this misery without anyone outside Iraq to care or to understand. At that time, a friend of mine introduced me to the Well wishes Cd.

The well wishes Cd had great impact on me for many reasons; I was deeply moved by Ruth's initiative to send a message of peace and to choose children to convey that message, the words came from their mouths honest, innocent and sincere. Also, I was impressed by Ruth's effort to spend great amount of time traveling across the US to record children's feelings and thoughts. her vision and efforts were about encouraging love and compassion, emphasizing on the deepest bond between people which is humanity and promoting peace which was and continues to be the right answer for many of Iraq's problems.”
- Farah B.



WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS: COMMUNICATIONS FROM LISTENERS IN KENYA

"I had the motive of revenging for loss of loved ones and property of my tribe in the ethnic violence but after listening to the CD, my heart softened and now I will continue to pray so that peace may return to our beloved country. The cards are also like the prescriptions I got from the Doctor. May God bless the people of America for their concern."

- Lucy Wairimu, Nakuru, Kenya

"Thanks for the CD; its really inspiring and it has brought in my house a sense of understanding, love, assurance, hope, and confidence especially after what our country went through, the gift was timely, i hope and trust that such sensitizing program should also be started here; it will help my children learn that inspite our ethnicity difference we are still one people.they were so moved and asked me, "how come American do care a lot and are always the ones who are much more willing the help whenever need arises than any other people the world?"

-Nancy Nyambura (Nairobi City Council)

"I have never seen or listened to other CD by children with such strong message of peace and hope, this children speak so bluntly and so candidly,i wish we can borrow from them and avoid un necessary wars and distructions.The work Ruth has done i amazingly human,thank her for the brilliant and noble idea of coming up with this Cd's where the students have turned into teachers and teachers into students."

-Ruth Okoba

"This is the mot refreshing CD that i have ever listened to, its message is so touching ;it a taste of a bitter past and a better and rich tomorrow'. A must listen to by people of all ages who really care and value humanity."

Charles m Esilaba, Baraton University of Eastern Africa

"The Cd's -- i gave them all to my colleagues, you know that was the greatest gift at a time of national physic dislocation and in trauma.The CD'S, "WELL WISHES AND BLESSING" were the mot powerful tool that provided instantly the badly needed rehabilitation from the spread of ethnicity cleansing that was going on in villages/slums around our campus to restore us and others to senses; what we know,should know for a moment to be truthful right and forgiving. Although i will be trans faring this fall one thing am certain is that many people have and will still benefit alot after listening to it."

-Michael Ayoro, second cohort of Egerton-WMU Twining program, Egerton University-Nakuru Town Campus.



WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS: COMMUNICATIONS FROM TEENS IN THE U.S.



This pillow was made by Mikayla, age 16, as an offering to kids in Iraq. Embroidered is the Chinese symbol for love.

“I LOVED it. I loved listening especially to the translated part of it, because when I hear the Arabic, I know that’s what is going to help the kids literally understand what we’re trying to tell them and its so awesome to listen to!! When I first started thinking more about it and it actually brought tears to my eyes because now, listening to it all together as a whole, made me feel so happy to hear what the kids are hearing all the way in Iraq, and I know that when they hear this they’ll feel much better and I know they need it. Its so special because the CD is the connection for kids all over the U.S. as well as in Iraq. When I was listening to it, I actually felt a connection to the other kids in the U.S. who spoke on the CD, because we were all a part of it and I know that many other kids in the U.S. also feel the same way we do. And being able to let the kids in Iraq know this, is such a good feeling because otherwise, there would really be no way for them to know that we actually do consider the way they feel about the circumstances, and we really DO care about them. Its important because what they see everyday leads them to believe otherwise.” --Hyatt, age 16

“My vision of a world in harmony is one filled with music. Music is joy and life, hope and spirit all wrapped in one. So just let the music play until the last note fades into the atmosphere.”
–Jasmine, Youth C.A.N.



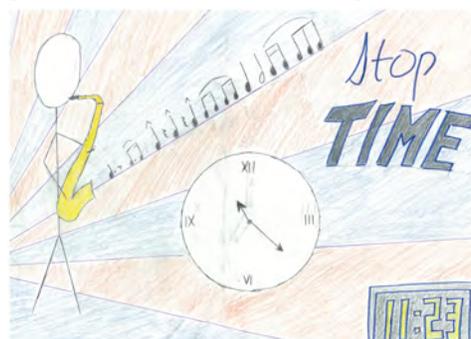
“It touched me in my heart. They should make more hit tracks like the ones we heard. I wish I was on the track to tell them how I feel.” --Cordante, age 17

“This was very inspirational, and its cool how they had the children speak. I think it was nice how the teenagers spoke how they felt and how caring they were. And it was real cool how they just show love.” --Leila, age 17

My Vision of Peace:
Where people can come to an agreement without a vicious battle. Where no lives are lost to fists, guns or knives. Where people understand one another. Where people are not afraid.

Explanation for My peace:
There are three of my personal photographs that show what I believe to be overused, hidden peace. Then is the right what I feel are personal words and emotions. On the peace sign is how peace is written in other languages because I feel that peace is a worldwide desire. And then the blue writing are definitions from dictionaries something agreed upon.

--Shannon, Youth C.A.N.



“My idea of a world in harmony is simply stopping time and listening to the beauty of the world—the music. In my drawing, time stops and a man plays the saxophone. The world, to fully understand harmony, should simply reflect on what has happened and stop time, if only for a second.”
--Andy, Grade 8

“I think it’s good that they made this for Iraqi children, to let them know that we care and feel for them.” --Darrius, age 17

“I feel bad for the little kids because they should not have to live through that.” --Shatori, age 14

“I don’t really have a vision of the world in peace, but, obviously, a world without war and hate... but I can’t explain the deep longing I have, except through music.” – Mike, Youth C.A.N.

For additional Listeners’ comments, please visit us at www.wellwishesandblessings.com.

WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS
COMMUNICATIONS FROM TEENS IN THE U.S.



Be the change.
Spread Love.

WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS: Public Reviews and Endorsements

“A large 'Thank you' from Baghdad to the students who are on the Well Wishes and Blessings CD. One of the most devastating effects of living in a war zone is the pervasive sense of isolation that works to break the spirit. 'Well Wishes and Blessings' has broken through this wall and brought smiles and hope to people who badly need both.”

--Bruce Wallace, Founder, 121 Contact Project

“In times of great pain, my father once told me, seek advice from an artist. On the world stage today, these are, indeed, times of great pain. “Well Wishes and Blessings” extends a hand rather than a hand-out, engages the heart rather than the battlefield, and lifts –rather than levels- the playing field. “Well Wishes and Blessings” is not simply a palliative for troubled times; it is a motivator and an urgent call to peace. With life precariously hanging on the balance, this project could not have come at a better time.”

--Dr. Fred Mednick,, Founder, Teachers Without Borders

“In war we orphan our children and their future. Terrorism and hatred are taught. They are not acquired or instinctive. Children *are* the future. I believe it is very important that the Well Wishes and Blessings CD is connecting kids around the world. Kids here in the U.S. are also having a hard time. What I like about your CD is that it is completely communicated by the kids themselves— they’ve created the bridge, a vehicle driven by innocence.”

--Terry Howard, Multi Grammy winning producer-Ray Charles, Merle Haggard, Fleetwood Mac, Barbra Streisand, James Taylor, Gladys Knight, Stevie Wonder, Nora Jones

“This project is not only timely but necessary. It speaks to the oneness of our humanity and strengthens the bonds connecting us all. 'Well Wishes and Blessings' deserves our highest honor. Listen to the children!”

--Richard Ragland, Recovery Program Coordinator, Indonesia Delegation
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



The Quilt “ My vision of a world in harmony is like a quilt, where each square co-exists with another square to create a beautiful design.” --Eliza, Grade 8

“When the 'Well Wishes' CD arrived, I put it on and just wept at the beauty of those children and their clear perceptions of how to make peace, their heartfelt love, their music, their creative expressions. As a mom and grandmother, I give them highest accolades — they are our best and highest good, progenitors of what is to come (lasting peace). Thank you so much for what you are doing. Thank you for teaching this teacher that hope is kindled in all of our children and it is up to us to fan those flames of love, goodness and caring always and without despair in these dark times.”

-- Ellen Louise Kahne, Grandmother, Mother, Teacher

“Besides being expressed entirely by children, what makes this audio project powerful and unique is that everything the kids say on the CD is also accompanied by an Arabic translation. In addition to letting the children of Iraq and the rest of the Arab world know exactly what the American kids are saying, the Arabic translation also lets Americans experience the Arabic language in a way that they rarely hear outside the stereotypical "angry terrorist" sounds depicted in American films and TV shows. Well Wishes and Blessings -- Kids in America to Iraq is an audio project that every human being--whether child, adult, American, Iraqi or anything else--could benefit from hearing. It conveys a universal message that, when heard in the words of children, is easy to understand and support.”

--Fett, Technology Editor, Performing Songwriter Magazine



--Elisha
19 years old

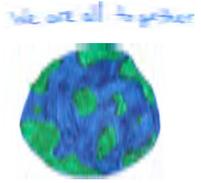
WELL WISHES AND BLESSINGS:
Public Reviews and Endorsements



Be the change.
Spread Love.

WHAT'S NEXT:

WELL WISHES PART 2 (KIDS IN THE US TO KIDS AROUND THE WORLD)



HERE'S WHY:

In the response to growing requests for WELL WISHES CD's from countries around the world, Producer Ruth Mendelson has recognized the need to create an expanded follow-up CD that will include topics not covered in the original.

For example, there are increasing requests for CD's from children's refugee camps throughout the Congo, where rape is a common reality for girls. Self-esteem for these girls is at an all time low. Here in the US, many girls across the country have spoken to Ruth about they feel unfairly sexualized by the media. As a result, Ruth has decided to include a section for kids/youth dedicated to discussion of what it means to have a positive feminine self image- what *girls themselves* have to say about the beauty and power of being feminine, what boys have to say re: what they respect about girls and women.

WELL WISHES PART 2 will feature honest commentary about:

- **Girls' empowerment**
- **The Environment**
- **How to stay out of gangs**
- **Inventions that would create a better world**
- **What it means to love, to be a friend.**
- **The Arts (dance, music, etc)**
- **Whatever else the kids want to say- as necessary members of society**

Like in WELL WISHES PART 1, PART 2 will provide a dazzling array of spontaneous interviews, original songs, raps and instrumentals all provided by the kids/youth themselves.

Here are the Ground Rules: all kids/youth are welcome and none are pressured to participate.

"Well Wishes and Blessings' is a fantastic program that is building bridges between our world's youth. By developing dialogues between young people, Ruth and her team have given us an important tool for developing understanding and therefore lasting peace. It is critical that we act now to support programs like Well Wishes and Blessings - not only to touch individual lives, but to make this a safer world for all."

-Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE
Founder, the Jane Goodall Institute &
UN Messenger of Peace

To learn more, please contact Ruth Mendelson at: ruthmx@gmail.com

MANY THANKS!