

Interview by Juilee Decker and Dr. Fayth Vaughn-Shavuo of the PEACE Program
<https://www.peaceafterschoolprogram.org/> with 8 children from the program in Hempstead, NY.

Recorded September 24, 2020

5:30 pm ET, lasting 40 minutes

Conducted over Zoom. Only first names of the children and audio (not video)

P.E.A.C.E. is an acronym for Partnerships in Education to Avoid Criminal Justice System Entry. The P.E.A.C.E. Afterschool Program, Inc., operates a year-round program consisting of an after school program where children are provided with free homework assistance, social/character development, academic enrichment and community service projects. Ongoing workshops engage cognitive skills that enable the students to say no to gangs.

The program is spearheaded by Dr. Fayth Vaughn-Shavuo who sat down with us, and invited 5—which grew to 8!—children to tell their stories. Of particular interest is the words that the children used to talk about COVID. Warren felt it has been boring; Kaymauri was sad that she had to social distance while Fatamata was sad in the beginning of COVID, but is now kind of happy; Jahcai didn't like that in school there is no more sharing of items/materials; Daniel mentioned being worried and also spending time watching YouTube and eating marshmallows. Jayvien mentioned having to survive and to be careful but not being able to feel anything. Ivrrhim felt scared at the beginning of COVID but feels safe now, while Joshua feels annoyed and angry about COVID. Some bright spots: Kaymauri learned how to beat box!

In the final interview, Dr. V mentioned the ways in which differences and inequities have been exacerbated by COVID, particularly the dependency upon internet and need to have access for children and everyone in a household. This is particularly a challenge in government housing and situations where there is only 1 device with a parent.

Anyone interested in learning more about PEACE, can visit their website:
<https://www.peaceafterschoolprogram.org/>