



Vermont Holocaust Education: Why Is It Important?

There has been a significant increase in efforts at the state and federal levels to ensure that the factual history of the Holocaust is taught in our nation's schools, fueled by a dramatic rise in Holocaust denial and misinformation, as well as antisemitic violence.

- The Holocaust was a universal tragedy that didn't start with gas chambers, it started with words of hate - Education is the important tool which can prevent history from repeating itself.
- Holocaust education encourages students to promote empathy, social justice, human rights, and genocide awareness.

Other States:



26 U.S. States have Holocaust education legislation. *

*Vermont is the only New England state without
Holocaust education legislation.*

*Echoes & Reflections. "College Survey Summary Article." *Echoes & Reflections*, Sept. 2020,

echoesandreflections.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Updated-6.14.2023-College-Survey-Summary-Article-September-2020.pdf

Findings of the Claims Conference 2020 Nationwide 50-State Study on Holocaust Awareness:

Much of today's generation has no connection or even knowledge that the Holocaust occurred.

- 65% of Vermont Millennials & Gen Z do not know that 6 million Jews were killed during the Holocaust and less than half of adults could correctly answer multiple choice questions about how Hitler came to power.
- 56% have seen Nazi symbols in their community or on social media.
- 48% could not name any concentration camps or ghettos.
- 15% believe it is acceptable for someone to hold Neo-Nazi views.
- 10% did not believe in the Holocaust.
- 79% of Vermonters believe it is important to teach about the Holocaust, in part, so that it doesn't happen again.

Students with Holocaust Education:

- Report having greater knowledge about the Holocaust than their peers and understand its value.
- Have more pluralistic attitudes and are more open to differing viewpoints.
- Report a greater willingness to challenge intolerant behavior in others.
- Show higher critical thinking skills.

**Students and teachers need the tools to prevent genocide in the future.
Holocaust education is crucial to prevent it from happening again.**

**There has never been a more important time to expand Vermont students'
educational opportunities regarding the Holocaust.**

Supporting Teachers and Students:

" It is utterly impossible to fully comprehend the magnitude and malfeasance of the Holocaust...It is crucial that they put a face with the numbers told to realize we are talking about real people. Your courageously expressing what happened, along with your emotions, helps them to begin to understand."

-- Teacher, Crossett Brook MS

Legislators can make high-quality Holocaust curriculum materials such as those created and provided by the [U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) (USHMM) easily available to educators.

- The passage of the [Never Again Education Act](#) directed \$10 million to the USHMM to aid the development and distribution of Holocaust curriculum materials. (*Bipartisan [reauthorization of the Act](#) has recently been introduced.*)
- Annual professional development workshops for educators provide a range of educational entry points to examine critical themes of the Holocaust.

THE POWER OF SHARING A LIVED EXPERIENCE

Each year, since the 2017 founding of the Vermont Holocaust Memorial, requests for speaker presentations to classrooms and communities has increased.

The legacies of survivors, whether via video or in-person, is one of the most requested educational opportunities provided to students by the Vermont Holocaust Memorial.

Not only is this method popular, but it also has lasting results. Students that learned via supplemental survivor testimony:

- Had the strongest positive changes in attitudes and behaviors.
- Displayed a greater sense of social responsibility & civic efficacy.

Please contact us at:

Info@HolocaustMemorial-VT.org

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