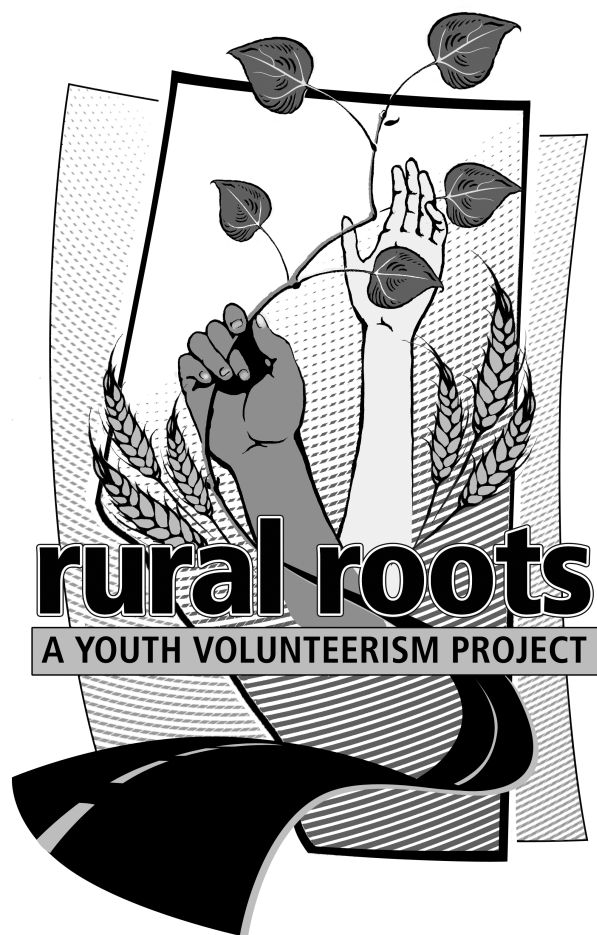


## Change for Children *Rural Roots Youth Action Project*







# **Guide for Taking Action**

**IN YOUR SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY**



Change for Children Association



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# C HANGE FOR CHILDREN



## What is Change for Children?

Change for Children Association is an Edmonton-based, non-profit organization with over 28 years of creating sustainable community development work in Latin America and education for social justice and solidarity in Canada. Change for Children was founded on the principle that the way to achieve real and sustainable change is to work not only in partnership with communities in the developing world, but also with schools, organizations and communities here in Canada. As a result, our organization prioritizes an education program that works to facilitate dialogue around the root causes of poverty and social injustice, and to provide opportunities for greater exploration and understanding of these issues.

## What is Rural Roots: A Youth Action Project

- Is a project **by youth and for youth**
- Is for youth who are interested in sharing skills, ideas, deepening their understanding of global issues and moving forward into action

Rural Roots Youth Action Project is a project that is designed to assist youth to examine the root causes of poverty and social injustice. The project will encourage youth to explore these causes within the global context – a context that includes not only youth themselves but their personal, local and national communities as well.

We gratefully acknowledge the Wild Rose Foundation for their support of this project.



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**Rural Roots is about youth empowering youth to question social injustice and to act on their awareness of issues currently affecting our world.**

**This is your community**, the key theme of the project, encourages youth to use their own community as a basis for learning, sharing and making connections to what is taking place on a global level.

This guide is designed to support all youth who are thinking about getting involved in their community, and in their school. It is also for those who have a desire to understand better what is happening on a local and global level. It is for youth who are already doing amazing work to share their ideas, develop networks and to strengthen the impact youth have on their communities. It is designed with the belief that youth in all communities, but particularly those in rural communities, have diverse untapped talents and ideas to share.

### **The Rural Roots project is based on the following ideas:**

- Youth have the capacity to understand, analyze and act on issues of global justice and global poverty.
- Youth desire and are capable of playing meaningful roles in the planning and development of their own schools, and communities.
- Effective community building needs the ideas, energy and creativity of all youth.

- Developing a network of youth in Alberta will strengthen the participation and effectiveness of youth.
- The skills and knowledge of youth are necessary in the creation of systemic change and sustainable development.
- Each young person, top student or not, has something to contribute.
- All of us are part of the problem and of the solution.

### **Benefits of participation in the Rural Roots Project:**

- An opportunity to share experiences and develop new skills through work with peers
- Provide a positive, living model of youth action
- An opportunity to organize and participate in a youth summit
- Be a part of an active youth network for social change
- Experience working with a non-governmental, non-profit organization with a 28 year history of working for sustainable grassroots community development in Alberta, Latin America and the Philippines.

### **Acknowledgements**

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#### *Content:*

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**"Before asking young people to relinquish their dreams we should do everything in our power to make them come true."** – Anonymous

## Why are we looking at the theme of poverty?

The Rural Roots Project hopes to act as a catalyst for dialogue around the root causes of global poverty and social injustice. This project involves asking youth to share the knowledge they have on poverty. We chose this theme as a starting point to begin thinking about ourselves and the world around us and about the differences and similarities that exist between our communities and communities in the global south.

Poverty is a complex issue that involves many different topics and themes. It can seem like a large and overwhelming topic but breaking it down allows us to find solutions. Poverty, a part of so many other issues and themes, is a good place to start. Poverty affects individuals, communities, countries and the world on a global level.



## Youth on the Issue of Poverty:

A key goal of the Rural Roots project is for youth to engage each other in dialogue around root causes of poverty and social injustice. This process is already underway as youth participants in Rural Roots contemplate poverty in their own communities and work towards the creation of tools to engage others on the topic.

“The globalization of resource-based industries such as farming, forestry, and fishing has changed the face of rural communities forever. The effects of market changes, drought and stress on my family and friends in the farming community where I lived often made me feel helpless to make changes or to act. If there is a way to acknowledge these feelings of helplessness or to move someone from apathy to action, I would like to be a part of it. Rural youth have so much to offer in terms of ideas and options. It is imperative that they learn to examine their realities, question their own assumptions and work for change.”

“What was poverty like in a small northern community? Poverty was the few blocks of houses that were called low income; poverty was only for some folks, mainly those who were aboriginal. I do not think people talked about poverty too much because *everyone* could get a job on the rigs or at the mill. Rural Roots is about confronting a sensitive topic one community at a time and I think youth have the ability to do that. It is also about confronting the complicated assumptions and ideas we have about poverty, and focussing on long term solutions.”



“There are all sorts of really damaging assumptions about poverty: that it doesn't exist in industrialized nations, that poor people are usually alcoholics, and that all people have equal opportunity to get out of poverty. There's a need simply to talk with high school students about poverty as a problem - a complicated one, but one that has solutions.”



# THIS IS YOUR COMMUNITY

Youth are uniquely positioned to act in creative and meaningful ways and to facilitate positive change in their communities

Is the key theme of the Rural Roots Youth Action Project

*What is happening in your community?*  
*What are youth doing in your community?*

## Why we chose this theme:

The reason that we chose this theme for the Rural Roots project is that we think that effective change can happen one community at a time. It is also because every community has unique ideas to share and by creating networks between communities we can create a larger movement of active citizens, particularly active youth. Finally it is to celebrate all of the positive aspects and learn more about the great things that are happening in communities across Alberta.

- Increase awareness and opportunities for youth in rural communities to develop leadership skills and to be active citizens.
- Increase the knowledge of available resources and opportunities and assess where there is a need.

- Rural Roots is in its first year but in coming years we hope to support and work in partnership with schools and communities to assist with leadership training for youth particularly those in rural and northern communities.
- To connect global issues to our local contexts.

Using the school or town community allows us to start small and make change more attainable and local. It also allows us to feel a greater sense of connection with other youth in Canada and across the world. It allows us to understand that issues of poverty and social injustice are connected to **what is happening in our own communities.**

## POSTER PROJECT

Call for submissions  
for the Change for  
Children Youth  
Summit

Deadline: March 1, 2005  
Youth Summit:  
March 10, 11, 12, 2005

### Part 1.

#### Representing an issue that is key to your school or community

A) Using photos, drawings and words, **illustrate an issue** that is key to your school or community. Show what the issue/problem is on a local level and then show how that issue looks like on a global level. For example, if environmental destruction is your topic, show both local and global examples.

B) On the second half of your poster express the **local and global solutions** to the problem. For example, one solution to environmental destruction might be using reusable cups.

## 1) Getting to Know Your Community

**Objective:** To get to know your community and identify key resources and projects needed.

This involves looking at the many aspects of your community and examining the following components:

### Culture

- Are there festivals or special events in your community?
- Are there artists and musicians?
- How many churches are in your community and what religions are there?
- Does your community have a slogan or a mascot?

### Economy:

- What are the main industries? What businesses are there? What services are available?
- What does poverty look like in your community?
- What jobs do youth have if they have jobs?
- What types of banks are there

### Environment

- Where is the source of water?
- What type of geography is part of the community?
- Where is your community located?
- What natural resources exist?
- What does the community do with waste?
- What types of food are grown in your community?

### Political System (formal and non formal)

- What type of government is there?
- Are there town councilors? What is their role?
- What areas of community development are priorities for your town?
- Are youth involved?

### Health and Recreation

- What recreation exists in your community?
- What can youth do in their free time?
- What health services exist?

### Education

- How many schools are there?
- Are there post secondary institutions in your community?
- Where do youth or adults go if they want to study in university, college or a technical institute?
- Are there organizations or groups that do community education?

## 2) Interviews and Story Telling

Do interviews with local business owners, retired individuals, youth or others and use their ideas for a class project or to help you identify a project you would like to volunteer with or begin. Use their stories to understand and analyze what is happening in your community.



# C COMMUNITY MAPPING

## WHAT IS MAPPING?

### GREEN MAPS

There are many different kinds of maps, each with its own purpose (s). An interesting project that you can do is community mapping. One type of community map is a "green map" created by an organization called Green Maps. This group have been doing maps in communities. Their maps look at how, "nature and the designed world connect" (website at [www.greenmaps.org](http://www.greenmaps.org)). This means that you can create a map of your community or part of your community and identify where there are lakes, water reserves or bicycle paths and then where there are housing areas, hospitals, or waste areas or where there are historical sites in the community.

To do a Green Map go to the website. There is an instruction guide and all of the things that you will need to get started. ([www.greenmap.org/ymaps/ymindex.html](http://www.greenmap.org/ymaps/ymindex.html)) The youth section of the site provides a very useful guide. The City of Calgary made their first youth green map in 1998 and you can check it out at this same website.

### YOUTH MAPS

Youth Mapping is about empowering youth to discover what resources are available in the community for them. It also educates youth on researching and interviewing skills, as well as develops relationships between the community's youth and adults.

Youth Mapping was done by youth in the United States in Denver, Colorado. Hundreds of youth got together with support from adult mentors in different community organizations to create youth mapping.

This project, a joint partnership between schools and many different community organizations, enabled youth to, "document youth-friendly places in their towns and cities and to identify resources and places that are lacking" (Project for Public Places at [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)). Doing a youth map means that youth are investigating all of the resources and activities that exist for them at churches, non-profits, after school clubs, schools, businesses and other institutions. Community mapping can also help youth to identify possible employment opportunities for the present or future within their communities. You can find out what is in your community or school and maybe also identify a possible project to work on with others.

Youth mapping is about listening to youth and using the ideas and knowledge they have to be active participants and engaged citizens.

Youth mapping is about learning skills such as research, data-gathering, record-keeping and documentation through drawings or photography, map-making and communication

For more information and resources on Youth Mapping check out the following websites:

[www3.telus.net/cground/index.html](http://www3.telus.net/cground/index.html)  
[www.communityyouthmapping.org/youth/about\\_cym.asp](http://www.communityyouthmapping.org/youth/about_cym.asp)

There are many types of maps. Be creative and get help from teachers, community members and others.

**"Be the change  
you want to see  
in the world"**

– Gandhi

The opportunity for community collaboration on mapping projects engages a sense of place and active citizenship within students. When framed within a larger local and global sustainability context, community mapping develops both a sense of local responsibility and a sense of global citizenship. Home becomes more than the immediate community; it extends to the whole planet.

**Schools and communities  
function most effectively  
when they know what  
youth really want and  
what they really need.**

Map-making is taking off in schools and more initiatives are on the way! Students have created school yard, neighborhood, community and ecosystem maps and mapping projects, including:

- Re-designing and greening their school yards
- Creating historical walking tours
- Mapping First Nations, Japanese and Chinese histories of James Bay and downtown
- Identifying ecologically sensitive areas and creating habitat protection plans"

*(Common Ground Community Mapping Project in Victoria BC)*

# Kids Can be Activists or Bystanders

BY CRAIG KIELBURGER

*The following is adapted from a speech by Craig Kielburger, a student from Canada who has been active in building a campaign against the use of child labor to produce products such as sports equipment, clothing, and handmade rugs. The speech was delivered before the American Federation of Teachers at its 1996 convention.*

**W**e have started a movement called Free The Children, a youth group made up of young people mainly between 10 and 16 years of age. Our purpose is not only to help those children who are being abused and exploited, but to also empower young people to believe in themselves and to believe that they can play an active role as citizens of this world.

People sometimes look at me and say, "Well, you're only 13 years old, and 13-year-olds don't do these types of things, and is it normal?" And I ask you, why are people so surprised when young people get involved in social issues?

In other countries, children our ages and younger are working up to 16 hours a day in factories and fields. They are fighting in wars and supporting entire families. Drug dealers don't underestimate the ability of children. So often I find myself believing that the schools and that the adults in our lives underestimate who we are or what we can do, the good that we can do in making this world a better place.

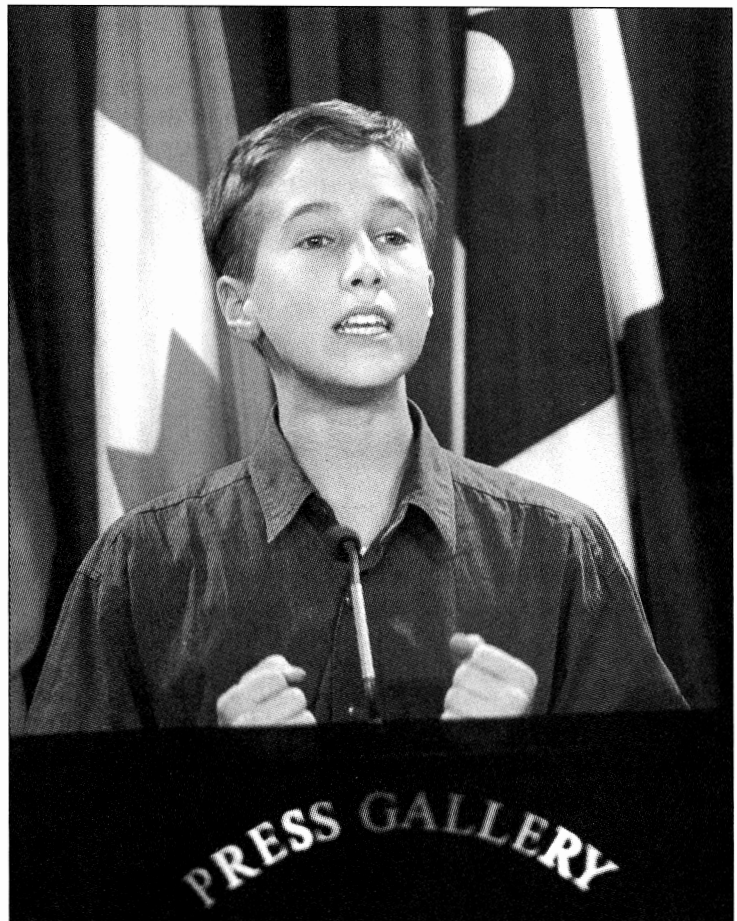
We have been receiving hundreds of copies of letters written by children all over the United States, and I would like to read one of them to you now. This letter is to the president of the Nike Corporation.

"Dear Mr. Nike President: My name is Jamie, and I am eight and three-quarters years old. My Nike shoes are all worn out, but I will buy no more Nike running shoes if you don't tell me that you have no child labor in all of your factories" — and "all" is underlined. "Yours truly, Jamie."

Jamie may only be eight and three-quarters years old, but he's already learning that he does have a voice, that he is important. Jamie is learning to be an active citizen of this world.

It is not often that a young person my age has the opportunity to give his teacher advice — let alone nearly 3,000 teachers. But I believe that in this information age, with its global economy and global human rights, one of the greatest challenges that you as teachers and educators will face is to prepare your students to live in the new global village and to become active citizens of this world. As young people, we are capable of doing so much more than simply watching TV, playing video games, hanging around malls, or simply regurgitating information that is fed to us through schools or the media.

Now, don't get me wrong. I personally love hanging out with my friends and playing video



Child labor activist Craig Kielburger, then 13, in 1996.



**We can either grow up as bystanders simply closing our eyes and becoming immune to what is happening to the people in the world around us, or we can be taught that we can participate, that we do have a voice, that we are important, and that we can bring about a change.**

games. But there is much more on top of that that young people can do. Today, young people in North America are more aware, more informed, and perhaps more frustrated than any other generation of youth, for we see all the poverty and injustices in the world. Yet, what role do we play in today's society? Where are the infrastructures, the opportunities which allow us to participate, to give, and to help?

We can either grow up as bystanders simply closing our eyes and becoming immune to what is happening to the people in the world around us, or we can be taught that we can participate, that we do have a voice, that we are important, and that we can bring about a change. And this is why I believe so strongly that service to others, whether at a local — for we have many problems in our own neighborhoods — at a national, or even an international level should be an integral part of our school, of our education.

I say education because when young people are challenged to look at others and to help others, we realize how lucky we truly are. We learn leadership skills and self-respect. We are able to put our energy and enthusiasm to a worthwhile cause. We learn that we can make this world a better place. Some people say that I am exceptional. But to me, the true heroes are the boys and the girls who work in near slave-like conditions to make the soccer balls which your children play with, to make the clothes which your children wear, and who even make the surgical equipment which saves lives in American hospitals.

As educators, you are such a powerful group. You have the power to motivate people, to stand up, and to bring about a change. What will you do to help these children? People, especially young people, live up to those expectations which others draw for them.

Today, if I leave behind one message with you, it will be to believe in us, the young people of today. Don't be afraid to challenge us to play a greater role in society, and please, don't underestimate who we are or what we can do. Our generation may just surprise you. ■

*Craig Kielburger continues to work with Free The Children (see "Organizations and Websites for Global Justice," p. 384). Free The Children describes itself as the "largest network of children helping children with over 100,000 active youth in 35 countries around the world."*

## Youth Participation in Rural Roots

“I was initially interested in the aspect of an initiative specifically for rural youth. My own experience of growing up in a very small farming community has shaped my views, my values and my life in ways I continue to realize. As one of the rural out-migration “statistics”, I am a defender of rural livelihoods, youth opportunities in smaller areas, and basic resources for rural residents. I also firmly believe that solutions to rural problems will come from within rural populations themselves. I am involved in this project because I feel it is absolutely necessary for youth to be exploring the issues of poverty, privilege and power in rural areas.”

“I joined the Rural Roots project because I think that even though poverty is probably the single most important issue facing the world, it's very rarely talked about, especially in schools.

“As a youth I remember some of the negative portrayals of my community, “end of the road, isolated, having nothing to offer its youth.” I really hope that youth in northern communities have access to many resources and that they feel that their experiences are diverse and important. I am also involved because as an educator and now urban dweller, I hope to have my own assumptions challenged and transformed”

# A CALL TO ACTION

## ► BECOME ENGAGED IN YOUR COMMUNITY ► TAKE NOTICE WHAT IS GOING ON and LEARN

A key goal of the Rural Roots project is to create opportunities for youth to feel empowered to act within their own schools and communities on the issues that they feel passionate about.

This guide is for each one of you as students and youth to get started, to support you with creative ideas for action planning and lots of resources. This guide is to support you as you make a difference the world. **We are calling you to act within your own school community.**

**Our first challenge to all of you is to initiate a social justice club or activity in your own community or school and this guide will assist you to achieve that goal.**

**Our second challenge to you is to discover, and rediscover your community and share that knowledge with other youth across Alberta.**

**Our third challenge is to tell us about the initiatives that you start in your community or school so that this can be shared with others.**



# GUIDE FOR TAKING ACTION IN YOUR SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY

This guide is to help you start a project in your school or community. We hope it also provides you with some ways to take social justice action wherever you are. It provides practical advice and information on where to start thinking about ideas and on everything involved from planning to evaluation. We hope that everyone who uses this guide will give their feedback on what is missing and things that were really successful in schools and communities. We chose to work on poverty but this may not be the issue you choose.

### BENEFITS OF GETTING INVOLVED

- 1) Increased understanding of local and global issues
- 2) Develop new friends and networks of youth in Alberta
- 3) Making a positive contribution - changing something, creating something and giving something back
- 4) An opportunity to learn about talents and abilities
- 5) Increased knowledge of volunteer, education or employment opportunities
- 6) Provide a youth perspective in your school and community
- 7) Opportunities to develop leadership skills for social action such as communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, employability and organizational skills.
- 8) Create recreational and social opportunities for yourself and others in your school or community.
- 9) Share the unique ideas and information about your community and school with other youth

If you have this document in your hands then you have expressed some interest in getting involved, in expressing your opinions on topics that are important to you, or, perhaps, you got it by accident. Whatever the reason, we hope you will read it, use it or pass it on to someone else.

We are not experts but we are committed and passionate individuals who are excited about the projects and ideas that exist in every community and school. **We want to assist each one of you in your journey to impact your school and become an active citizen!**

## Step 1

# MAPPING OURSELVES

You are your most valuable resource. What are the interests, abilities and personal characteristics you have that can be shared with others? **Make a list of your assets!**

Things you are able to do:

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Things you enjoy being involved in:

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Thinking about yourself (Make a list of descriptive words about you)

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Make a list of skills that you want to learn and a brainstorm where or how you might acquire those skills

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## Step 2 CRITICAL THINKING AND BREAKING IT DOWN

This step is really important as there are so many ways to get involved and so many topics to think about. It is really easy to become overwhelmed and not know where to begin. Take a minute or two to think about the world around you. Imagine what your world is now and what you would like it to be.

Here are some questions to help and a list of possible topics.

- 1) What would you like to see different or changed about yourself?
- 2) What would you like to see differently in your school?
- 3) What is one change that you would like to see in your community?
- 4) What is one change that you think would really benefit the world?

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What are some of the key things that you see as really needing change in that vision?

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### Creative Brainstorming!!

In this moment the sky is the limit. With yourself or your group take some time to write down every area that you are interested in or excited about.

## Step 3 FINDING FUEL FOR THE FIRE

In order to start a social justice club or activity in your school or community, it can be helpful to think about the issue or topic that you are really interested in or really passionate about.

If you are really excited and energized about the work that you are doing then this energy will spread to those around you. Also, it takes passion and enthusiasm to create projects that are long term and that you will want to commit to. Perhaps this will lead you to your project or club idea.

What do you feel strongly about or what issues are really important to you? **Make a list and then decide what the top three areas that you see as most important.**

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One way of thinking about this is to remember a time when you felt some anger in the bottom of your stomach because you saw someone get treated unfairly in your school or community, or you saw something happen that really made you think.

Here are some possible ideas but remember these need to be your own!!

- Human rights
- Literacy
- Homophobia
- Genetically modified food
- Local food production
- Environment
- Recreation activities for youth
- Globalization
- Animal rights
- Media
- Pollution
- Peace and conflict
- Poverty
- Music, art and social justice
- Landmines
- Pesticide use
- Community development
- Racism
- Energy conservation

## Step 4 INVESTIGATING

This is where some of the previous tools for learning about your community can be really useful. A lot of the questions that are listed above can help you to identify where you can find information in your community which is a good place to start. Once you have done some research on your own community then you can use your library, school and internet to search for other information outside of your community.

**REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE MANY VALUABLE EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE. USE THIS TO BEGIN.**

Once you have identified the three areas that are most important to you then you can begin to find information about them.

**What do you want to learn more about?**

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**Make a list of information sources in your school and community.**

Remember that people are valuable sources of information. This may include: Other youth, your family, church, groups, elders, town councilors, business owners, teachers and many more.

Here are some suggestions:

- In your library look at magazines, films, books, and more
- Internet: Find out where you can use the internet and then make a list of five websites that are related to issues that you are working on or are interested in. Try to find local sites, national and then international
- Organizations: Make a list of two organizations that you can contact to do an interview. Write down their name, position and phone number. There are many organizations that have already done lots of research, prepared materials such as posters, hold events etc. **USE THESE RESOURCES IN YOUR OWN GROUP.**

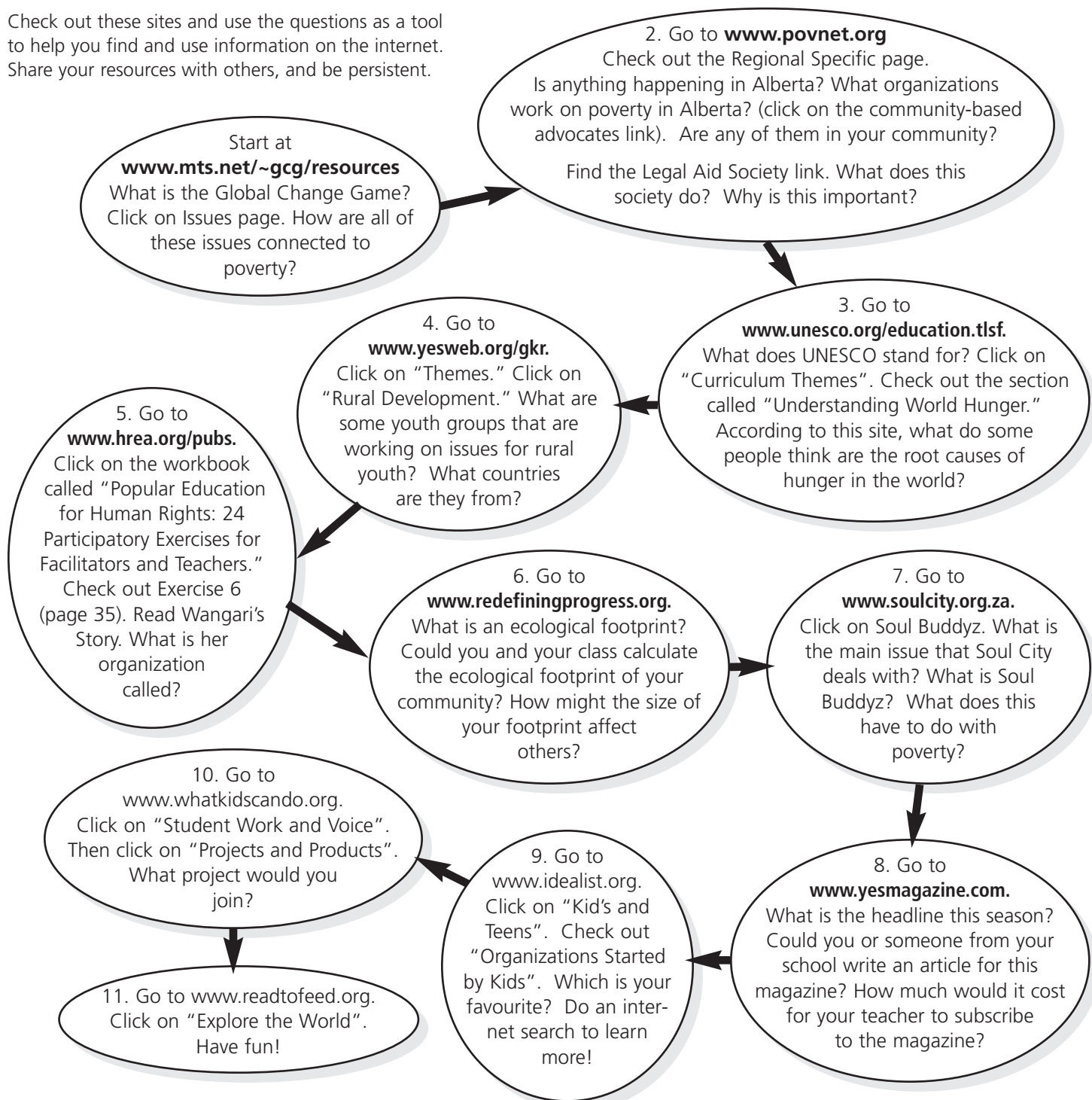


# Step 4 INVESTIGATING

If you are thinking about using the internet for resources then you may want to try out the website scavenger hunt below. It is easy to get really overwhelmed with all of the information so here are some good sites to get you started. In addition to this internet access may not be readily available to you or in your community. Do not let this discourage you as there are many other sources. **Internet access may be the issue you decide to work on!**

## WEBSITE SCAVENGER HUNT

Check out these sites and use the questions as a tool to help you find and use information on the internet. Share your resources with others, and be persistent.



## Step 5 FOLLOWING IN FOOTSTEPS: FINDING POSITIVE MODELS

If you are reading this guide then it may be the first time that you are getting involved in social justice. If it is, then it is really helpful to find examples of other groups or individuals to give you some inspiration. Take a minute to think about someone you really admire, respect or someone that represents something important to you.

- 1) What gives you inspiration or desire to take action or get involved?
- 2) Who inspires you or is a model for the things you would like to do? These might be a teacher, another youth, a community leader, a musician, an artist etc.
- 3) Learn a little more about history and some of the powerful changes that came about by individuals or groups. The internet or the library may prove to be helpful.

### Mentors:

If you are doing work in your school or community, it can be beneficial to find a mentor that can help you if you have questions, doubts or encounter barriers that you need support to work through.

If you are going to start a social justice group then here is some advice from a group that was started in Red Deer called, "Students and Teachers Opposed to Prejudice." This version has been adapted.

"Find an open-minded and popular teacher or administrator (or community member) to serve as an advisor. It is useful to have someone with connections to "go to bat" for your group, to offer support and resources, to make crucial phone calls that require an adult figure, to help coordinate events and, perhaps, to identify some possible barriers to your success. It is important to keep the project or group student centred and cooperative. Therefore your mentor should be open to being supportive but not in a decision making role and also someone who can handle some resistance, opposition as sometimes this type of work is not desired by all. A mentor is also someone who can be a reference to check in on school or community regulations for projects."

Now that you have done some of the background work you are ready to plan your action and activities. The first five steps are pre-planning and can be done as an individual or a group. We recommend that you spend some time



by yourself so that you can identify what will be the best project for you. We recommend looking for allies or support from others. This may mean finding others who want to work on the project or those who will help you at very specific times or on specific goals.

You may also discover that the project or topic that you really want to work on, needs a team or a group as it may be too much work for one person. This may include things like painting a mural, starting a community garden, or holding a fundraiser for your school or community.

Quotations and words from others are often useful to read and reflect upon if you have are starting social justice activities or you are looking for more fuel for your fire. Here are a few quotations that you may find inspiring:

**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful citizens can change the world, indeed it is the only thing that ever can”**

– Margaret Mead

**“If you think that one person cannot make a difference, think of how effective a mosquito in a tent is”**

– said by who?

## Step 6 PLANNING POSSIBLE ACTIONS

This part of the process involves using the first five steps and doing a brainstorm on possible ideas or ways to take action.

### Make a table with the following information

- What is important to you / What you are passionate about
- For each topic list a possible action
- What have you learned about your topic?

### Here is an example:

Fighting poverty as a possible area to work on and collecting clothes for a shelter as a possible action or looking at ways to get local food producers to donate healthy food to those who need it. This is based on what you know about the topic

It is also good to go back to the map you created of your skills and talents

and think of actions that would best utilize those skills. For example if you are very artistic then maybe making a mural could be a potential action or making t-shirts to sell at your school.

**\*\*Use a red pen to circle actions you could do right away, yellow for those that require some more planning and blue for long term.** Think about how much time you can contribute to the project.

## Step 7 DEVELOPING A PERSONAL ACTION PLAN: "THE POWER OF ONE"

### When goal setting remember that no action or idea is too small.

You can take little actions such as how we treat other people, to making different choices about what you buy.

### Now that you have identified what you are passionate about, what you want to work on and have some inspiration to keep you going, what is one or more goals that you would like to accomplish?

It may help you to write this down or create a chart that looks like the following:

#### EXAMPLE: Goal is to cut down on the amount of energy that you are using

Steps towards goal	Support that is needed	Possible challenges	Indicators of success
Ride a bicycle	Biking buddy	Weather, equipment	Physical health, money
Shut off lights	reminders from friends and family	Forgetting or laziness	Money saved on electricity bill
Lower heat	Family support/ school support	Others whom share living space are not in agreement	Money saved on gas bill

### Making Leaps and Bounds: Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles

Once you have thought about some of the possible challenges to reaching your goal, it is important to brainstorm on how you might overcome those obstacles. This might be a good to check in with other people and get some new opinions.

Once you have created a personal action plan, you may want to think about the benefits and fun that can come out of working with a group.

### TIPS FOR ACHIEVING GOALS

- **Reward yourself** as this will also help with motivation
- Remember to set goals that you have time and energy to accomplish. It may be useful to think about the **SMART** guidelines when setting goals. **Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, Time targeted**
- Set goals that you can accomplish **in a month** and **in a week**
- Look for **new inspiration** and do not give up, develop networks
- **Be creative** and spread let others know what you are doing
- Identify a **support group** of friends, family, teachers and community members
- Be SMART but dare to **think big** - many things are possible.

# Step 8 WORKING COLLECTIVELY

This step is a big one and requires excellent organization. The work of developing a strong, inclusive, energetic group is a **goal and task in itself**. One important part of getting involved in your school and community is about creating new friendships, and learning from others. Make room for all sorts of different people, perspectives and ideas.

## A. CREATING A GROUP: "THE POWER OF MANY"

- i) Find a **place** in your school or community where you can have meetings. Make sure it is accessible (a classroom at lunch hour or after school, youth centre, library etc).
- ii) Decide on a **time** when the largest number of individuals would be able to attend. Also think about who is giving you access to your meeting space and if they need to

be there to open the space).

- iii) Find some **individuals** that you know are interested so they can help you to make a poster and publicize your first meeting
- iv) Make a **poster** that has the location, time, date and what the meeting is about. Ensure that you publicize your events well in advance and find out if there are any big events at your school or community that might conflict with your meeting. If you or anyone in your school has artistic talents, ask them if they can help make a poster. If it is fun and interesting it will catch the attention of more people. Make sure that you put up lots of posters and in many different places.

**Publicize, Publicize, Publicize !**  
Spread the word and the energy.

**Promotions:** When your group is more established then you can

become more creative in your publicity. Things like using your local newspaper, starting an email list, radio etc. Remember to think about who has access to your promotions, not every has access to email or uses it regularly. Do not rely on only one method. **This topic will be discussed in greater detail in the section on media.**

- v) Create a list of **things to talk about** for your first meeting. Some suggestions:
  - getting to know one another
  - what is important to your group
  - what do you want to work on
  - what skills are in the group
  - list things that your group will need such as resources or support
  - list contact information
  - next meeting
  - things to do before the next meeting

## 10 QUESTIONS TO ASK:

1. Will your group members be excited by the project? Have you built in a "fun" or social time?
2. Does the project offer opportunities for members to develop student leadership, real learning, sharing and friendship?
3. Have you set aside time for orientation, reflection, and evaluation?
4. Will the project be challenging, meaningful, valuable, and necessary?
5. Is there enough work for everyone to do? Is the formula balanced? (Volunteers/Task Hours=Results!)
6. Is it "Do-Able?" – Is the project within the resources (time, people, money, and expertise) of you, your group, or your volunteers? Any special training, orientation, paperwork, medical checks, fees, or background checks needed first?
7. Will it conflict with any other groups or events in your school? Is there a way for you to work together? Would there be groups or individual opposed to your group?
8. Will your group be open to a diverse group of students?
9. Do you have a clear entrance and exit strategy for our project? Do you all understand the roles and responsibilities within the group? Are you prepared for what you will experience?
10. Have you consulted your teachers/principal about how they can help you with the project? Do they know that you are doing this project? Can you get a teacher to help or advise your group?

## PLANNING YOUR PROJECT

Three things can happen when students try to get involved in their communities:

- Students can learn about themselves, their community, and about social issues in their community and around the world.
- Students could learn nothing. A group may be involved in a project, but if they are not encouraged to think about their experience, they may leave unaffected.
- Students can learn the wrong lessons – prejudices and stereotypes can be reinforced or created through unexamined and poorly planned projects.

To be successful, your group will need to think, talk, and then act! Remember the ultimate goal of your project and keep working to achieve it.

*Adapted from an article called Planning Your Next Successful Volunteer Project, by Mark Cooper. FIU Action Project, 2000. USA.*

# Step 8 WORKING COLLECTIVELY

After you have established a group then the following are next steps that you can discuss at next meetings. Do not feel discouraged if members of your group leave or decide that this is not what they want to participate in. However make sure that you or someone asks why they decided not to participate.

## B. CREATING SOME GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Creating a guiding principle allows you and your group to clearly communicate what it is you are about and this will really help when you are looking for support or looking for more people to join your group. It will also help when you are thinking of goals that you want as a group, as often a big obstacle or conflict in a group happens because not everyone was clear from the beginning what kind of group or club they were joining.

Here is an example of one guiding principle

"We promote the belief that people should be judged based on their own merits, rather than on characteristics like age, gender, religion, "race," ethnic background, physical appearance, sexual orientation or other factors unrelated to the quality of their character. We stress education over confrontation, but are not afraid of challenging racism, sexism, homophobia, narrow-mindedness, and other forms of discrimination that exist".

A simple statement in Article 1 of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights states,

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

*(This is from Students and Teachers Opposed to Prejudice, 2000)*

## WORKING COLLECTIVELY: AN OVERVIEW

- A. Creating a Group
- B. Creating Some Guiding Principles
- C. Creating Group Norms
- D. Identifying Priorities
- E. Creating an Action Plan
- F. Putting the Fun in Fundraising
- G. Calendar of Events and Strategies for Action
- H. Networking
- I. Skill Building

## C. CREATING GROUP NORMS

Having some group norms can really help a group to keep and increase its membership. It is also a group that allows for diversity, and many ideas. Remember that the more ideas and voices that you have, the stronger your group will be. In addition to this you will create a place where people do not get hurt, are discouraged from being involved, or are seen as not needed. A sign of success is many different people working on diverse things.

Some examples of group norms are things like:

- i) Respect the opinions of others
- ii) Create a non-threatening way of giving and receiving feedback or suggestions
- iii) Conflict is good but we commit to creating positive ways of resolving it
- iv) Have a social activity to celebrate successes once a month
- v) Everyone is valued regardless of characteristics listed above as are in the Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms.



## D. IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES

For this step it is useful to start big, and do an initial brainstorm. The objective of a brainstorm is to get all ideas down and is not to decide whether a decision is good or bad. Your group can go through the positives and negatives at a later stage.

This part of the process is the same as doing your personal action plan. You will need to combine your passions, inspirations and the things that are really important to you as individuals.

**Remember that combining your interests and skills will require compromise, flexibility, patience and respect.**

Do not do this step unless you have adequate time as a group. Ensure that all group members are aware of meetings where decisions will be made. Finally take some time to get to know one another and build the group before all decisions are made.

**Remember that having lots of money does not mean your project will be successful. It is important to start with a project that does not require a lot of money or it requires things that can be found or donated. Be resourceful and creative**



## D. IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES cont'd.

What is important to us	Possible actions	Skills and Experience	Other groups or individuals doing similar work
<b>Fighting poverty</b>	Start a lunch program at school	Sue: math skill for budget Phil: Communication skills for finding community partners	Another school or organization that has info on poverty
<b>Waste</b>	Recycling program in school	Vadim: organization skills to make a list of materials	Community waste management

## E. CREATING AN ACTION PLAN

Creating a table like the one here is something that can help you to make a plan, to learn about all of the components of project planning.

Do not forget to seek support and advice from mentors as they may have experience in project planning. Also do not be afraid to make mistakes as these can be valuable learning tools. Remember keep having fun and do not forget the social events.

**Creating an action plan helps you to develop many skills and allows you to foresee possible obstacles. You can also identify ways that more and more people can get involved. Remember that participation can take many forms from donating supplies, to time, etc.**

For another good example on budgeting see "How youth can create Community Based Initiatives" at Dauphin Youth Service, Manitoba, Canada

Another idea is ask a teacher or mentor to do a training workshop for all of your members. Combine it with a potluck so socializing and skill building happen at once.

You will meet new people and friends along the way. Find partners and share resources. **Have fun and create activities for celebrating success and keeping members interested.**

### SAMPLE – Project Goal: Creating a recycling project in your school

What needs to be done?	Who is responsible?	Resources	Deadline	Concrete steps
Develop a budget				- Create a list of everything needed - Create a list of things that can be donated or found for free
Create a schedule				
Get approval				
Find partners				
Create a design				
Train volunteers				

### SAMPLE BUDGET – Project Cost of Recycling In School

Services	Amount	Total
Photocopying	(100 copies)	
Transportation of recycled goods	(1 time per week)	
<b>Supplies</b>		
Recycling bins	(2 for each classroom)	
Paint for promotional posters		
Paper for making a schedule		
<b>Equipment</b>		
Vehicle for transport		
Pens, markers, etc. for promotion		
<b>Social events and volunteer appreciation</b>		
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Postage		
Paper for making a schedule		
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>		

## F. PUTTING THE FUN IN FUNDRAISING: ABCS

## Fundraising 101

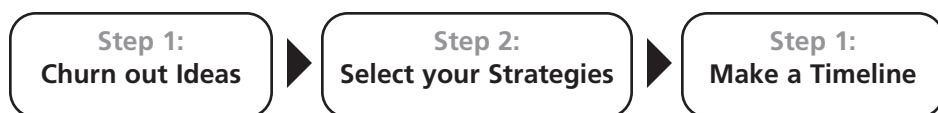
Through your fundraising efforts, you will:

1. **Contribute toward the costs of your project.**
2. **Raise awareness.** By doing outreach activities and spreading the word about your interests or project ideas, you let people know that global issues matter, that community development is important, and that youth can make a difference. When you raise money for project or group you ensure that there is a network of people, organizations, and businesses supporting our programs.
3. **Develop new skills.** Your fundraising and public awareness activities will help you develop some of the skills, knowledge and attitudes that can help you in future education and employment.
4. **Make a connection to your community.** By seeking support within your community, you will make new contacts and strengthen your ties. Sharing your ideas and experiences can be an important contribution to community life.

## a) Take time to develop an action plan now!

This plan will help you to figure out how you can reach your fundraising goals within the timeframe you are given. You will surely modify it as time progresses, but your plan will provide the basis for your fundraising activities.

Making your action plan involves **three simple steps**:



## b) Think about your community

What size is it? Find experienced fundraisers.

## c) Knowing your community is a great tools for fundraising

The better you know your community, the easier it will be for you to make contacts and to know which people, organizations and businesses to approach.

## d) Make a list of all the potential people that could support your project:

- Friends
- Local businesses
- Unions
- School board
- Youth groups
- Church groups
- Newspapers
- Municipality
- School
- Service Clubs
- College/University

## e) Preparing Your Message

What is your message? Your message is what you communicate to others when you are fundraising. It can take any form - it can be what you say in an interview or what you write in your letter to a service club. It can even be what you say over coffee with a friend.

Communicating your message effectively is essential. If you take the time to focus on your message now and prepare it well, you will be making fundraising much easier for yourself!



## f) Designing Your Message

Designing a message means thinking about "what you want to say" and "how you want to say it." There is no surefire recipe for creating an effective message.

Messages that work generally:

are brief

are accurate

use clear and simple language

focus attention

are appropriate for your audience

## g) Make a Presentation

Making presentations is another key strategy that everyone can use in their fundraising efforts.

- small presentation to a committee or board of directors
- classroom presentation
- meeting with an individual
- public speaking in front of a large group
- newspaper interview
- radio interview /public speaking

## h) Planning an Event

### Work out 3W's

**Where** will the event take place?

**When** will it take place?

**Who** will attend the event (who is your target group)?

### Set Objectives

**How much money** would you like to raise?

**How many people** would you like to attend?

Make a **timeline**.

### Get the Word Out!

Spread the news far and wide, but **focus on your target group**.

### Think of Every Detail

Work out all the logistics of your event:

- Do you need volunteers? Who will they be?
- Who will collect the tickets or set up the chairs?
- What if there aren't enough chairs?
- Where are you going to get a sound system? etc.

*(Adapted with permission from Canada World Youth)*

## EXAMPLES OF SOME FUN EVENTS

### ✦ Car wash

Gather together a group of your friends. Ask the local gas station, the mall, or the grocery store manager for the use of a portion of their parking lot and access to their water tap.

Ask the local hardware store to donate some of the soap and sponges. Make posters. Be visible... and wash away.

If you have enough people helping out, a great location, and wonderful weather, you could raise a few hundred dollars this way. This is a work-intensive activity.

### ✦ Garage Sale

Ask your friends and family to donate items they no longer want. Place an ad in the local paper or put posters up around town. Tell potential buyers that the money raised will go towards your project(s).

Baked goods, drinks, raffle tickets and a lot of other things can also be sold at your garage sale. This can also be a good opportunity to recognize your donors by mentioning them on your poster.

### ✦ Potluck dinner with a movie/ music event

Have everyone bring food to share. Rent a movie from the library, a movie store, or community organization.

### ✦ Coffee House

Ask a local coffee shop or restaurant if you can use their space for one evening. Pick one of their slow nights. Ask some local youth or adult artists or musicians to donate their time and put on some performance. Let people know that all money will go towards your projects. Have information available on the issue you are working on.

### ✦ T-Shirt Sale

Ask your local used clothing store to donate some used t-shirts or to give a discounted price. Create a fun design and then sell them as a fundraiser. Use positive messages and information so that they are also used to raise awareness.

## SUMMARY

- Organizing fundraising events takes a lot of planning, but it can be rewarding.
- Special events can increase awareness about the projects and campaigns that you are working on.
- You will need support from others

- Set a financial objective for the event. Make sure it is worth your while.
- Publicize the event well.
- Remember to delegate responsibilities to your volunteers.
- Don't lose heart when there are setbacks — persevere and make your event come together.

## Grants

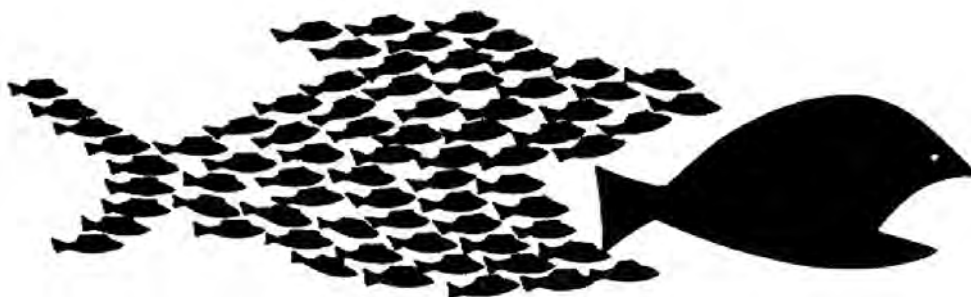
Another way to raise money is to look at what grants are available to youth in your community, province and country. Ask teachers and members of your community if they know of grants that are available. Also do an internet search.



# Step 8 WORKING COLLECTIVELY

## G. STRATEGIES FOR ACTION

**Flyers:** Flyers are a great way to get the message out and to attract people to come to meetings, particularly at the beginning of a campaign. They are a staple of most campaigns and serve to attract attention, inform, and update. Some people respond well to flyers that are posted around a school others respond better when they can take a flyer from a person and talk to them. Try doing both. Unusual artwork, humorous slogans, and fluorescent colored paper will make your flyer stand out.



**Petitions:** Have a petition that indicates support for an issue. Encourage students, teachers, parents, administrators, and other community members to sign on.

**Teach-Ins:** These are education sessions and workshops about an issue. They are a good chance to distribute detailed literature and to recruit people for the campaign.

**Letter Writing Campaigns:** Letter writing campaigns are a great way to bring about change on an issue. You should develop a sample letter that students, teachers, or parents can sign and send in or can use as a model for their own letter. The letter should include why you think your issue is important, any pertinent information such as why individuals should be concerned or involved, and who to contact. Write to your MP, MLA, town or band councillor. For MLA's go to [www.gov.ab.ca](http://www.gov.ab.ca) or MP's at [www.canada.gc.ca](http://www.canada.gc.ca).

Many schools have areas where student groups can set up tables with information, generally a good way to distribute literature and talk to people. Have copies of the letter available so students can copy in their own words. You can also just stand in busy areas with a clipboard and copies of the letter. If someone won't take the time to write form letters, signed petitions are weaker and less intensive ways to show support. All you need is their name, class year, and signature. It will make it even easier to get students to

sign if you offer to send the letter and/or petition to the administration.

**Educate your school:** Chances are not everyone in your school knows about the issue or topic that you are working on. One way to recruit more members to your group and to gather support from your school and community is to educate, educate and educate.

**Letters to the Editor:** Did you know that the letters section is a popular section of the newspaper? Not only do people in your community read the letters, government officials have clipping services that reprint the ones dealing with their area. Letters should be short, direct and well written. Of course, they should be accurate and educate readers about your issue. Watch for opportunities to respond to articles that have been in the paper.

**Radio:** Sometimes there are opportunities for free access to a radio program to a show once or twice before you call in. (There are some other grammar things)

Check out [www.cbc.ca/outfront/](http://www.cbc.ca/outfront/) or the teen guide to radio documentaries at [www.radiodiaries.org/handbook.pdf](http://www.radiodiaries.org/handbook.pdf) to make your own radio show or program.

**Websites:** Creating a website for your group can allow you to have permanent information and to keep people updated. It can also cut down on the amount of paper that is used by your

### CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES

- International Peace Day: September 21 (United Nations)
- International day for the Eradication of Poverty: October 17
- Buy Nothing Day: November 27
- World Aids Day: December 1
- End Violence against women: Montreal Massacre December 6
- Human Rights Day: December 10
- International Women's Day March 8
- International Day for the Elimination of Racism March 21, 2004
- World Water Day: March 22
- World Health Day: April 7
- Earth Day: April 22
- International Workers Day: May 1
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and transgender Pride Days: June

group or for your actions. Also with a website, interested students have somewhere to go for more information. If you do not know how to make a website find someone that does in your school or community and ask them to give a workshop on the basics.

**Tabling:** Set up an information table in a busy part of your school or community where you can hand out literature, talk to people one-on-one and get people to sign your petition. Tables also create visibility for your campaign and is a good way to recruit new members.

**Class Assignments:** If possible complete one of your class assignments on the topic or issue that you are interested in. This will help with your knowledge of the issue. You can also use the research you do for creating flyers or other publicity materials.

**Create a buzz:** Make your campaign an exciting issue at your school that everyone is talking about. All around your school or community, people should be seeing your campaign – through posters, literature and events. If you make your campaign exciting and appealing people will be asking for info about the issue and how they can support the campaign

## H. NETWORKING

Try to work with other groups and organizations. There is a lot of resources and information that already exist. This can save your group a lot of time and effort as well. Networking will help your group to develop support for your ideas and fundraising events, and increase your access to grants. Getting to know others is an important part of spreading the word and the energy.

As one group says:

“Any kind of networking that you do in your community can be useful. Send letters or make calls to agencies or groups that seem naturally related to the issues you are tackling. In many cases there are people who have an interest in your issues and want to get more involved, or have resources that can help you achieve your goals. Networking is also important as it allows your group to get new perspectives on issues and learn to work across differences in approach and priorities.”

*(Students and Teachers Opposed to Prejudice)*

## I. SKILL BUILDING

Skill building is related to networking as you can find opportunities in your community and school for you and your members to develop new skills. Training can also be an incentive to keep members interested and to offer a way to say thanks.

**Make a list of all of the skills that your group needs and wants to acquire.**

Here is a list to give you some ideas.

- 1) Conflict resolution
- 2) Team building
- 3) Organizing skills
- 4) Public relations and communication skills
- 5) Button making
- 6) Budgeting
- 7) Tie-dying t-shirts
- 8) Computer design skills
- 9) Leadership training
- 10) Consensus decision making
- 11) Anti-racism training
- 12) Media skills

Remember that skill building can happen within your group and does not always require someone from the outside. Share the skills you have!

### WAYS THAT YOUTH CAN MAKE AN IMPACT ON THEIR WORLD

- By sharing your interests in music, art, drama, sports, and culture
- By being yourselves, unique and different
- Share in decision making and vision for how you want your school and community to be
- As voices speaking out against injustice and oppression
- As volunteers at charities, churches, schools and fundraisers
- As organizers of petitions, campaigns and protests
- As advocates for social and environmental justice
- By being models through conscious consumption
- As entrepreneurs creating job opportunities and businesses

#### Reminder:

Youth are diverse and do not all feel, act or think the same way. Do not speak for all youth and do not allow others to do the same.

**Celebrate and recognize differences.**



### QUICK TIPS FOR BEING MEDIA SAVVY

- 1) **Be your own media:** Create buttons, stickers, t-shirts, posters, magnets, music, poetry, and/or theatre to promote your group or project and to talk about the issues that are important to you and your group.
- 2) **Publicity is necessary:** Telling about your youth initiated projects have many positive impacts and can attract new individuals, help develop partnerships, and importantly can break down the myths and stereotypes that some people may have about youth
- 3) **Word of mouth:** Remember to know your issues well and do the research before sharing the things that you have learned about issues. Many people will get involved because they see you or your group as a **living example of positive youth action and change**.
- 4) **Be positive:** A lot of social change work involves researching difficult issues and at times you or those individuals you are sharing with may feel overwhelmed or without hope. Always combine talking about issues with some possibilities for getting involved or taking action. Offer small steps or actions, some of which can be immediate.
- 5) **You do not need to be an expert:** Talk about your own experiences, your own community, and your own ideas. Those around you will be inspired by the things you have learned and are trying to do. This means doing research, and also valuing your own knowledge.

6) **Develop media materials:** Take some time to develop well made posters and information. Also take some time for your group to learn more about the issues you are working on and develop a list of key points as this will help you in your media work. Never stop learning as there is often new information.

7) **Document what you do and learn new media skills:** Interview youth at your school with a tape recorder and make a small radio documentary on youth views or issues important to youth, take photographs of your community and put them on display. Maybe

you can borrow a video camera and talk to teachers and students about the school or community.

8) **Creating memory.** It is also useful to keep a record of events and things that you do so that you begin to create a group history. Documentation can also help for your own group evaluation, to get some funding, to help other youth in their initiatives. This may also help those in your community to identify what resources and skills youth have and need.

9) **Find and discover alternative media sources** such as [www.indy-media.org](http://www.indy-media.org)

### THAT'S NEWS TO ME – How to Connect Your Project with the Media

Here are some ways to gain access to the media.

#### DON'T BE SHY: You Have an Important Message!

- **Know your community:** Don't put someone who is new to town/school in charge of publicity for an event. It should be someone who understands how things work in your community
- **Get to know the media:** Make a complete list of all the media in your community, including the community radio station or other alternate or religious media—find out who is in charge of news or public affairs or community events at each one; check to see if it is convenient to drop in, send a letter or press release or hold a news conference; get to know the deadlines of the various media.
- **Send a news release** (See *instructions page 24*): Write in the style of the media you are addressing. That means answering the five Ws (Who, What, Where, Why, When) and How. Write in the inverted pyramid style: the most important information at the top if the story.
- **Write an article:** If you have a writer in your group, use his or her talents. Follow the suggestions on *Writing a News Release*. Check with the newspaper or magazine ahead of time, as some publications don't want freelance work even if offered for free.
- **Assume nothing:** Chances are the journalists covering your activities will know very little about social or global justice issues. Most journalists are "generalists" who know a little bit about a variety of topics. Be patient. Offer background information. They will appreciate any help you can give to make their job easier.

(Adapted from *Ten Days for Global Justice Education and Action Guide "Closing the Gap"*, Toronto, Ontario, first published 1993, and *People & Planet Media Work Guide*, London, England. 2002).

## WHICH MEDIA SHOULD YOU CONTACT?

Try as many of these as you feel up to—maybe start locally and work up! Think of where you have seen or heard similar stories before.

- **School paper/newsletter:**  
Probably the easiest to start with and the most useful for you as a group. They can help you recruit new members, and let others know about your projects.
- **Local papers and radio:**  
They love stories about young people doing interesting things, and especially photo opportunities, so it's worth contacting them. Don't forget newsletters of local service clubs, churches or other community groups!
- **What's On:** Don't forget the free "What's On" guide in many newspapers and local radio as a way of promoting your event. Some cable television stations will also have public service announcements (short, catchy "ads" for your organization or event).
- **Alternative media groups:**  
Try youth-focused magazines (check the school library for names and addresses of ones that look appropriate), and any other organizations that you think may be interested in your work.
- **National media:** If you think your story is good enough, why not release it to the national media? They hold stories on file, so even if you don't make it in the first time, they may look you up sometime in the future.

## BACKGROUND WORK

To make your media effective, you will need to do a little research.

- **Contact information:** You will need to find the media outlet's name, phone number, fax number, and e-mail.
- **Name of the reporter or editor** who will be the most interested in covering your story (if your story is on a town cleanup project, you may want to contact the reporter who does environmental stories, for example).

Now – give them a **call and introduce yourself**. Explain a little bit about the group, what you do and why. Tell them you're available for an interview (assuming you are) on the issues you work on, and say that you will send them news releases whenever your group does things.

**You could offer to write an article for their paper** (this may seem a little bit like you are doing their work for them, but newspaper employees are very busy, and this may make the difference in getting your story out there!) What you are doing is good news – you want to make sure that you are letting people know about your project in the best, most creative way possible.

Now that you've done the background stuff, **it's time to get the story out there**. You'll usually do this through a press release or by writing an article.

## WRITING A NEWS RELEASE

To be effective, a news release needs a certain format.

- First, on paper with the school logo (if you can), make sure it says **"News Release"** at the top.
- Next, give your **contact details** (or those of whoever is dealing with the media). Preferably this would be a number where someone could reach you during office hours.
- **Date it** and give it a **snappy title** (think newspaper headlines).
- Make it clear **when the story is for**, if there is a deadline for an event, etc. In most cases you can just say "For immediate release".
- Use the **first paragraph to outline the whole story in brief**.
- Expand in the second (and maybe a third) paragraph, with extra layers of information in decreasing order of importance (remember that editors "cut from the bottom").
- **Stick in a quote** from a group spokesperson. The print press will often use this in their story, so make it count – try to keep it short but with lots of impact.
- Round up with a **concluding paragraph**.
- Mark the Release **"ENDS"** so that they know it's over (this sounds obvious, but do it anyway!).
- Repeat the **contact details**.

All of the above **should fit easily onto a letter-sized** (8.5 x 11) side and be in legible size and font. Don't try to get arty, this isn't the time or place. You may include a good quality photograph if you have one. **Check it** and then get someone else to double check it for mistakes. Has it got all of the important information on it? (5 W's and How?) Now **fax or e-mail** it to arrive in time for the news deadline.

To recap – **keep it short, keep it clear**. Make sure the 'who, what, when, where and how' are included.

## Step 9 SHARING THE MESSAGE: Media and Publicity

### FOLLOWING THROUGH

It is not a case of just sitting back and waiting for CBC or Much Music to appear and make you all famous. Once you're happy that your news release has arrived, pick up the phone and check that it arrived safely. This is really just a shallow ploy to say "Hey, read our news release, it's a great story and you'd be foolish to miss it!" While you are on the phone, ask them if they are clear on the detail and if they have any questions. Thank them for their time.

Don't despair if no media publish your story or come to your event. Press release an update afterwards. Keep trying!

### INTERVIEWS

Interviewing can be intimidating, but is a great way to get your message across. With a bit of preparation, you can interview with confidence. Here are a few tips.

- **Think through what you want to say.** Find the three most important bits of information and try to have a fact or 2 to back them up. Don't get adventurous or ambitious. Just get these three points across clearly and ignore anything else. Whatever you say will most likely be cut down to a handful of seconds for a news bulletin, so there's no point in getting into long explanations or arguments. **Keep it short and focused** and rehearse it beforehand.
- **Say your three things and go home happy.** If they ask you other questions that you aren't comfortable answering, you can always refocus the interview back to your three main points.

- Remember – **it's not just what you say, but how you say it.** You need to sound suitably knowledgeable and committed to the project. Don't shout or argue. Short firm sentences will get you a long way! Practice them in advance.
- If you are worried about the interview, **ask to see the questions in advance.** This is very common, and most reporters don't mind.
- **Don't give interviews to media or journalists who are likely to twist what you are saying against you or your group.** In most cases, especially with local media, they will try to paint your project in a positive light. But if you feel uncomfortable at any time, you have a right to refuse to answer a question, or to discontinue the interview.

**Good Luck!**



## Creating Global Community

Think of no one as them

Listen to music you do not understand

Question consumption • Look for fair trade labels

Acquire few needs • Learn people's history

Redefine progress

Understand the global economy in

terms of people, land and water

Refuse to wear corporate logos

Know that no one is silent though many are not heard

*(Syracuse Cultural Workers 2002)*



# Step 10 BUILDING SOLIDARITY

## DECISION MAKING

One of the most important decisions that your group will make is **HOW TO MAKE DECISIONS**. You are most likely aware of some ways of making decisions like voting or by picking a name out of a hat. It is useful to take some time to discover different ways of making decisions and identify their advantages and disadvantages. They all have strengths and weaknesses. You will then need to decide as a group what model you will use. **Process is just as important as product.**

### MODELS OF DECISION MAKING

- 1) Voting with 51% majority.  
That means that 51 percent of your group have to be in favor of a particular decision.
- 2) Voting with 80% majority.  
This means that 80% of your group needs to be in favor of a particular decision.
- 3) Consensus decision making.  
This means in a simplified way that all members of your group need to be in favor of a decision.

Whatever model you use it is important to spend time on group process and here is a checklist to help you do that.

- Have all perspectives been heard
- Have all voices been listened to in the decision making process
- Have some individuals been dominant and exerted pressure on others
- Will the decision bring harm to the group or some of its members
- Are all members respected and equally valued in the decision making process

- Does the group have enough information to make the decision
- Do some members in your group have more power than others, if so how can this be transformed
- Think about which individuals or groups in society have more decision making power. Why do they have more power?

We are including more information on Consensus decision making because it is the model that individuals often have the least information about. It is also a model that really aims to be inclusive and value many perspectives and ideas over a small majority. It requires more commitment and work and allows those who use it, to develop many other skills.

## CREATING A STRONG, INCLUSIVE GROUP

"We live in a world of inequalities and injustices. As a youth organizer, not only will you join the struggle to battle these injustices, but you will find yourself influenced by them as they affect the way you relate to others, how your group works, and the way you approach different issues. Remember that your struggle is never isolated from the other injustices of the world- They are all embedded within one another, and fighting for one cause means fighting for other causes as well."

*(Fire it Up; [www.takingitglobal.org/voices/resources.html](http://www.takingitglobal.org/voices/resources.html))*

In order to achieve the goals that you have set out for your group, it is important to take some time to get to know one another personally, build community, and create room for many people to get involved.

### Here are some pointers to assist your group:

- Have introductions and "get to know" your activities at the beginning of every meeting or event
- Try to avoid making generalizations
- Learn about stress management and time management and how to say no as well. Try not to take on too much.
- Break down stereotypes, question your assumptions
- Find out more information about race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ability, colonialism, privilege, poverty, power. Remember that we are all a part of the problem and the solution. Do not feel guilty, get involved.
- Be aware of how much you are talking in a group discussion, create room for other voices
- Speak for yourself and not others
- Promote your events ahead of time, share skills and opinions
- Share roles and ensure that everyone has the chance to learn the skills and responsibilities related to each role that your group has
- Be accountable and ensure that everyone has information and knows their responsibilities
- Make room for feedback and support
- Try to be as organized as possible

# Step 10 BUILDING SOLIDARITY

## CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

Compiled by the Simon Fraser University  
Public Interest Research Group (SPIRG)

### HISTORY

Quakers have been using consensus since the 1600s. Although they developed the formal process we use today, Indigenous peoples all over the world have used it in less formal ways for centuries. Feminist organizations began to use it in the 60's in order to counter the hierarchical structures they saw both in society and within the 'social change' movements of the day. Many feminist and activist organizations use it today as a practical way to counter-act ingrained power structures. Consensus has been used successfully with groups of several hundred people, both for meetings of large formal/informal networks and for one-off groupings.

### Majority Rule

- Assumption of competition: some must lose and some must win. This always produces a silent and forgotten minority. What happens to these people? Eventually, they leave.
- Little real listening & learning going on, just trying to prove your own points.
- Often has a hierarchy which dominates the discussion and influences everyone else.
- Shy people, people with different cultures or languages, women, children, etc, are often ignored if they don't participate in normally assertive fashions.
- Often, quick decisions are made that may not be the best ones. People often feel the "debate" is focussed only on a 'yes' or a 'no' vote to the original proposal rather than brainstorming alternatives.
- Concerns about process & group dynamics are often left unaddressed, seen as secondary to "getting things done."

### Consensus

- Stresses the co-operative development of a decision and the active search for common ground rather than differences.
- Everyone's support is needed to finalize the decision, so softer or culturally undervalued voices are actually encouraged and attended to.
- The decision will usually garner greater commitment to follow through & carrying it out, because everyone was involved in making it.
- Both feelings and logical arguments are considered important.
- When a decision is not favourable to the whole group, time is often taken to find creative and often better solutions.
- Attention is paid to the process of making the decision, not just the product.

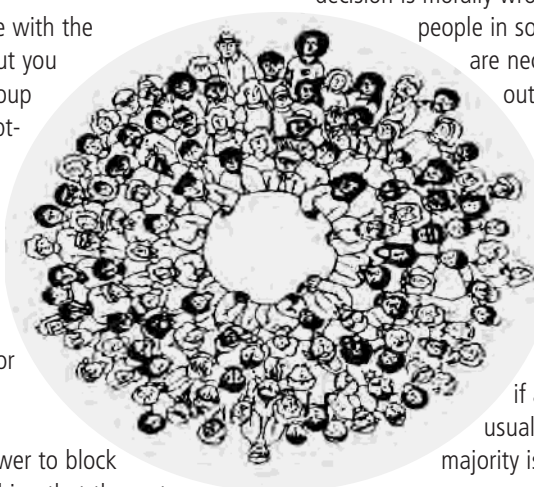
### Rules of Consensus

Consensus does not mean that everyone agrees with the decision, but that everyone is willing to live with it.

**STANDING ASIDE** - If you do not agree with the direction that the group is heading in, but you are not willing to stop the rest of the group from going ahead with a generally accepted idea, you can choose to stand aside. This should only be done after you have clearly articulated your concerns and there has been discussion from the group about them. If there are more than one or two people standing aside, it would be wise to continue to search for other ideas and compromises.

**BLOCKING** - One individual has the power to block a decision, even if it goes against something that the rest

of the group agrees to. Again, this should only be done after lengthy discussion, and only in situations where you feel that the decision is morally wrong and would harm the group or other people in some way. Good conflict management skills are necessary in these situations to try and work out solutions.



**MODIFIED CONSENSUS** - Some groups, especially larger ones, use a modified form of consensus that allows for a fall back to voting if consensus is not working or if someone is blocking a decision that the group feels strongly about. A vote must be taken to determine if a vote will take place. Both votes must usually garner 2/3 or 75% approval. A simple majority is not acceptable.

# CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

## ATTITUDES THAT PROMOTE AND HINDER CONSENSUS

### Attitudes that Support Consensus.....

#### COOPERATION

- share information freely
- acknowledgement and acceptance of difference
- recognition that there is no one "right" answer

#### ACTIVE LISTENING

- not thinking on your own ideas while other members are speaking
- allow somebody's new or controversial idea to percolate in your mind before you respond

#### COMMON OWNERSHIP OF IDEAS

- "we all hold a piece of the truth"
- someone's "great idea" is often the result of some of the previous suggestions made by others.
- whole group takes responsibility for failures, tries not to blame individuals

#### MUTUAL TRUST

- willingness to be vulnerable
- willingness to compromise

#### VALUE FEELINGS

- the greater the acceptance of the whole person, the more efficient, open and trusting the group dynamics will be

#### VALUE CONFLICT

- conflict is natural and only signifies that there is disagreement and diversity in the group
- if handled cooperatively, conflict could lead to more options and possibly better decisions

#### EQUALIZE POWER

- if some members possess more information, communication skills, experience, privilege, etc; special attention should be paid to how this power is used and attempts made to share it

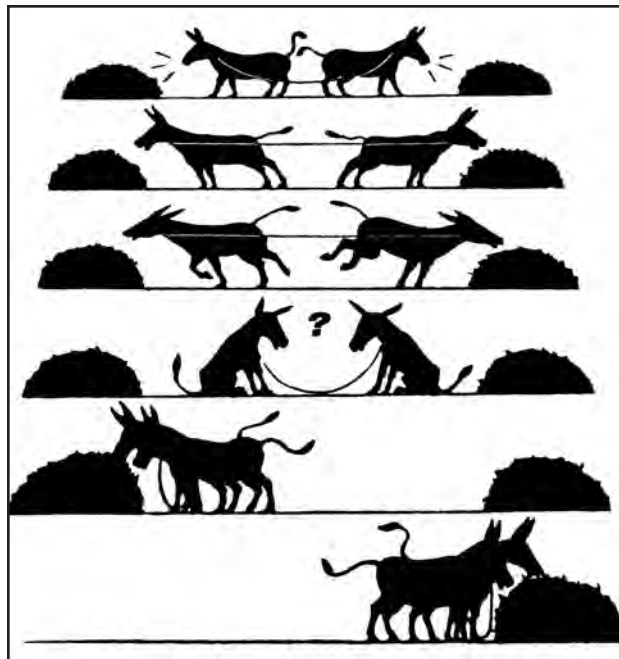
### Attitudes Which May Impede Consensus.....

#### COMPETITION

- achieving your own goals at the expense of others - withholding information, manipulation, focus on other's weaknesses, etc.
- belief that there is only "one way" to do things.

#### LACK OF INTEREST IN OTHERS

- putting your personal needs ahead of others'
- focussing on your own ideas and contributions
- not listening to other's input



#### OWNERSHIP OF IDEAS

- your ideas are "your property" and you expect personal credit for them
- not open to suggestions or compromise, or to other members taking your ideas and changing them

#### SUPPRESSION OF FEELINGS AND CONFLICT

- logic valued above feelings
- idea that conflict is "wrong"

#### RELiance ON AUTHORITY

- depending on others to give "answers"
- not valuing your perspectives, potential contributions & ideas as much as the others'

#### LACK OF PARTICIPATION

- not actively participating in the process, either through active listening and/or contribution of ideas and opinions

#### UNACKNOWLEDGED BIASES

- unspoken judgements, racism, unresolved conflicts, unpleasant past dealings, sexism and other prejudices affect the way you listen to others



## Step

# 11

## REFLECTION AND EVALUATION

Evaluation is a step not to be forgotten about. By evaluating we can make our events better and our efforts stronger. We can also develop knowledge about what skills we personally have or need to learn.

Evaluation is not only about whether or not something was good or bad. For example, it can also be about how many people were involved, what was learned in the process, if everyone was heard and respected in the process, or how many people expressed interest in getting involved in the next event.

Remember in order to do an evaluation it is necessary to return to your **original goals or objectives** so you can decide if they were met. Do an **internal** evaluation by organizers and an **external** evaluation by those who

went to the event, saw the film, bought the t-shirt etc.

Be creative when you are designing your evaluations, learn about different ways of doing evaluations such as:

- Written questionnaire
- Cherries and lemons. Get everyone involved to think about one positive (cherry) and one negative (lemon)
- Every one writes down one thing they learned from the experience
- Make a list of resources that you need to sustain your efforts in the next action or event
- What was the result of the action I or my group took?
- Keeping a suggestion box in a place where other students or community members can access it.

**“Freedom is not worth having if it does not include the freedom to make mistakes.”**

– Gandhi

**DO NOT FORGET TO CELEBRATE YOUR PERSEVERANCE, TALENTS AND THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY HAD ONE OF THE GREATEST SUCCESSES, AND THAT IS GETTING INVOLVED!!**

**There is a lot to learn from both your positive and negative experiences. Do not give up – reach out!!**

## Step

# 12

## CELEBRATING SUCCESSES AND CARING FOR GROUP MEMBERS

In order to sustain our energy, passion and ability to do social change work we must take care of ourselves. Here are some pointers on how to do that.

- Start small and do not try to do too much.

### Show Your Group You Care – Volunteer and Member Appreciation

After you have found people who are interested in helping with your project, here are some ways to keep them around, and to keep it fun!

- After recruiting volunteers, find or make opportunities for them to get involved right away.
- Have clear goals and expectations of what volunteers will do.

- BE FLEXIBLE – try to include everyone—even those who can’t commit as much time to the project as others can.
- Make sure volunteers or group members understand the importance of the task they are doing, and how it fits into the rest of the project. Most people don’t mind doing menial work if they know that it means something to someone.
- Never allow people to feel that you wasted their time or that they weren’t really needed.
- Provide food & beverages after projects or meetings.
- Give honest praise. Say thank you; make people glad they came out to participate.

- Celebrate birthdays of group members!
- Try to have training sessions or other opportunities for group members to develop skills. Ask a guest presenter to come and teach a skill that members would like to learn—e.g. public speaking, website design, etc.
- Recognize volunteers in speeches, media, meetings, etc.
- Give out little presents—t-shirts, pins, book bags, etc.
- Have parties, retreats, picnics, movie nights, potlucks, skating parties and other events that are just for fun.



Associated Press/Eduardo Verdugo

Subcomandante Marcos stands amid Zapatista women and their children in Chiapas, Mexico.

# Prayers for a Dignified Life

## A Letter to Schoolchildren About the Zapatista Uprising

BY SUBCOMANDANTE MARCOS

*The Zapatista uprising in Mexico began on New Year's Day 1994, the day that NAFTA — the North American Free Trade Agreement — took effect. The rebels of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) came out of the Lacandón Forest in the south-eastern state of Chiapas, demanding an end to the exploitation and repression of the largely indigenous peasantry of the region.*

*Chiapas is home to almost a million Indians — Ch'ol, Lacandón, Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Tojolabal, and Zoque. At the time the rebellion began, according to government statistics, 35% of the dwellings of the region had no electricity, and 51% had dirt floors. Four out of every 10 workers made less than the official minimum wage of about \$3 a day. But conditions for most indigenous*

*people of Chiapas and Mexico were much worse.*

*The region itself is not poor. For example, more than half of all of Mexico's hydroelectricity comes from dams in Chiapas. But, as Zapatista leader Subcomandante Marcos wrote in 1992, before the rebellion began: "Chiapas is bled through thousands of veins: through oil ducts and gas ducts, over electric wires, by railroad cars, through bank accounts, by trucks and vans, by ships and planes, over clandestine paths, third-rate roads, and mountain passes."*

*Soon after the rebellion began, Marcos wrote the following letter to schoolchildren in Guadalajara, in response to a letter they had written.*

—The editors

**To the Solidarity Committee of Elementary Boarding School #4, "Beatriz Hernández," Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.**

**Boys and girls,**

We received your letter of February 19, 1994, and the poem "Prayer for Peace" that came with it. It makes us very happy to know that boys and girls who live so far away from our mountains and our misery are concerned that peace should come to Chiapan lands. We thank you very much for your brief letter.

We would like you (and your noble teachers) to know that we did not take up arms for the pleasure of fighting and dying; it is not because we don't want peace that we look for war. We were living without peace already. Our boys and girls are like you, but infinitely poorer. For our children there are no schools or medicines, no clothes or food, not even a dignified roof under which we can store our poverty. For our boys and girls there is only work, ignorance, and death. The land that we have is worthless, and in order to get something for our children we have to leave home and look for work on land that belongs to others, powerful people, who pay us very little for our labor. Our children have to begin working at a very young age in order to be able to get food, clothing, and medicine. Our children's toys are the machete, the ax, and the hoe; from the time they are barely able to walk, playing and suffering they go out looking for wood, cleaning brush, and planting. They eat the same as we do: corn, beans, and chile. They cannot go to school to learn Spanish because work kills the days and sickness kills the nights. This is how our children have lived and died for 501 years.

We, their fathers, mothers, sisters, and brothers, no longer want to carry the guilt of not doing anything to help our children. We look for peaceful roads to justice and we find only mockery, imprisonment, blows, and death; we always find pain and sorrow. We couldn't take it anymore, boys and girls of Jalisco, it was too much

pain and sorrow. And then we were forced to take the road to war, because our voices had not been heard.

Boys and girls of Jalisco, we do not ask for handouts or charity, we ask for justice: a fair wage, a piece of good land, a decent house, an honest school, medicine that cures, bread on our tables, respect for what is ours, the liberty to say what is on our minds and to open our mouths so that our words can unite with others in peace and without death. This is what we have always asked for, boys and girls of Jalisco, and they didn't listen. And it was then that we took a weapon in our hands, it was then that we made our work tools into tools of struggle. We then turned the war that they had made on us, the war that was killing us — without you, boys and girls of Jalisco, knowing anything about it — we turned that war against them, the rich and the powerful, those who have everything and deserve nothing.

That is why, boys and girls of Jalisco, we began our war. That is why the peace that we want is not the peace that we had before, because that wasn't peace, it was death and contempt, it was pain and suffering, it was disgrace. That is why we are telling you, with respect and love, boys and girls of Jalisco, to raise high the dignified flag of peace, to write poems that are "Prayers for a Dignified Life," and to search, above all, for equal justice for everyone.

*Salud*, boys and girls of Jalisco.

**From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast  
CCRI-CG of the EZLN  
Mexico, February 1994  
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos**

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*Excerpted from Shadows of Tender Fury: The Letters and Communiqués of Subcomandante Marcos and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, translated by Frank Bardacke, Leslie López, and the Watsonville, California Human Rights Committee, New York: Monthly Review Press, 1995.*

# R

## RESOURCES – Websites

Alberta Council for Global Cooperation  
[www.web.net/acgc](http://www.web.net/acgc)

Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre  
[www.aclrc.com](http://www.aclrc.com)

Activist Network  
[www.activist.ca](http://www.activist.ca)

Alternatives for a Different World  
[www.alternatives.ca](http://www.alternatives.ca)

Alberta Environment Network  
[www.web.net/~aen](http://www.web.net/~aen)

Aga Khan Foundation Canada  
[www.partnershipwalk.com](http://www.partnershipwalk.com)

Alberta Human Rights Education Council  
[www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca](http://www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca)

Alberta Public Interest Research Group  
[www.apirg.org](http://www.apirg.org)

Arusha International Development  
 Research Centre  
[www.arusha.org](http://www.arusha.org)

Amnesty International  
[www.amnesty.ca](http://www.amnesty.ca)  
 In Alberta: [www.amnesty.ab.ca](http://www.amnesty.ab.ca)

Alberta Native Friendship Centre  
 Association  
[www.albertafriendshipcentres.ca](http://www.albertafriendshipcentres.ca)

Association for Progressive  
 Communications  
[www.apc.org](http://www.apc.org) | [www.web.net](http://www.web.net)

Alberta Wilderness Association  
[www.albertawilderness.ca](http://www.albertawilderness.ca)

Campaign 2000  
[www.campaign2000.ca](http://www.campaign2000.ca)

CANESI: Canadian Network to End  
 Sanctions on Iraq  
[www.canesi.org](http://www.canesi.org)

CAUSE Canada  
[www.cause.ca](http://www.cause.ca)

Council of Canadians  
[www.canadians.org](http://www.canadians.org)

Change for Children Association  
[www.changeforchildren.org](http://www.changeforchildren.org)

Canadian Crossroads International  
[www.cciorg.ca](http://www.cciorg.ca)

Canadian Council for International  
 Cooperation  
[www.ccic.ca](http://www.ccic.ca)

Canadian Catholic Organization for  
 Development and Peace [www.devp.org](http://www.devp.org)  
 Canadian Council on Social Development  
[www.ccsd.ca](http://www.ccsd.ca)

Canadian Foodgrains Bank  
[www.foodgrainsbank.ca](http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca)

Child and Family Canada  
[www.cfc-efc.ca](http://www.cfc-efc.ca)

Canadian Hunger Foundation: Partners in  
 Rural Development  
[www.partners.ca](http://www.partners.ca)

Canada's Human Security Program  
[www.humansecurity.gc.ca](http://www.humansecurity.gc.ca)

CivilRights.Org  
[www.civilrights.org](http://www.civilrights.org)

Canadian Kindness Movement  
[www.kindness.ca](http://www.kindness.ca)

Canadian Organization for Development  
 Through Education  
[www.codecan.org](http://www.codecan.org)

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society  
 (CPAWS)  
[www.cpaws.org](http://www.cpaws.org)

Canadian Red Cross Society  
[www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

Centre for Social Justice  
[www.socialjustice.org](http://www.socialjustice.org)

CUSO  
[www.cuso.org](http://www.cuso.org)

Canadian Women for Women in  
 Afghanistan  
[www.w4wafghan.ca](http://www.w4wafghan.ca)

Canada World Youth  
[www.canadaworldyouth.org](http://www.canadaworldyouth.org)

EcoCity Society  
[www.ecocity.ab.ca](http://www.ecocity.ab.ca)

Edmonton Multicultural Society  
[www.edmontonmulticultural.com](http://www.edmontonmulticultural.com)

ETC Group: Action Group on Erosion,  
 Technology and Concentration  
[www.etcgroup.org](http://www.etcgroup.org)

FEESA: An Environmental Education  
 Society  
[www.feesa.ab.ca](http://www.feesa.ab.ca)

Free the Children  
[www.freethechildren.org](http://www.freethechildren.org)

Global Exchange  
[www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org)

Greenpeace Canada  
[www.greenpeace.ca](http://www.greenpeace.ca)

Habitat for Humanity Canada  
[www.habitat.ca](http://www.habitat.ca)

International Development Studies  
 Network  
[www.idsnet.org](http://www.idsnet.org)

International Institute for Sustainable  
 Development  
[www.iisd.org](http://www.iisd.org)

IMPACS: Institute for Media, Policy and  
 Civil Society  
[www.impacs.org](http://www.impacs.org)

Justice 4 Youth  
[www.justice4youth.com](http://www.justice4youth.com)

KAIROS [info@kairoscanada.org](mailto:info@kairoscanada.org)  
[www.kairoscanada.org](http://www.kairoscanada.org)

Learning for a Sustainable Future  
 (UNESCO)  
[www.unesco.org/education/tlsf](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf)

Maquila Solidarity Network  
[www.maquilasolidarity.org](http://www.maquilasolidarity.org)

The Mustard Seed  
[www.theseed.ab.ca](http://www.theseed.ab.ca)

Oxfam Canada  
[www.oxfam.ca](http://www.oxfam.ca)

Parkland Institute  
[www.ualberta.ca/parkland](http://www.ualberta.ca/parkland)

Pembina Institute for Appropriate  
 Development  
[www.pembina.org](http://www.pembina.org)

Random Acts of Kindness Foundation  
[www.actsofkindness.org](http://www.actsofkindness.org)

Ryan's Well Foundation  
[www.ryanswell.ca](http://www.ryanswell.ca)

Sierra Club – Prairie Chapter  
[www.prairie.sierraclub.ca](http://www.prairie.sierraclub.ca)

Street Kids International  
[www.streetkids.org](http://www.streetkids.org)

Sierra Youth Coalition  
[www.sierrayouthcoalition.org](http://www.sierrayouthcoalition.org)

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

University of Alberta International Centre  
[www.international.ualberta.ca/intlcent](http://www.international.ualberta.ca/intlcent)

UNICEF  
[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)  
 Canada Specific [www.unicef.ca](http://www.unicef.ca)

USC Canada  
[www.usc-canada.org](http://www.usc-canada.org)

Woodlot Association of Alberta  
[www.woodlot.org](http://www.woodlot.org)

War Child Canada  
[www.warchild.ca](http://www.warchild.ca)

World Resources Institute  
[www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org)

# R

## ESOURCES – Books and Magazines

### BOOKS:

**Ada, Alma Flor. 1993. *My Name is Maria Isabel*. Atheneum. New York, NY.**

A fiction book about a young girl who is new to a school. Her teacher doesn't call her by her real name. Maria Isabel must find a way to convince her teacher and classmates that if she loses her name, she has lost an important part of herself.

**Bigelow, Bill & Bob Peterson, eds. 2002. *Rethinking Globalization: Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World*. Rethinking Schools. Milwaukee, Wisconsin.**

This book offers an extensive collection of readings and source material on critical global issues, plus teaching ideas, lesson plans, and rich collections of resources for classroom teachers. Great resources for websites, books, music and videos.

**Klein, Naomi. 2000. *No Logo – Taking aim at the brand bullies*. Vintage Canada. Toronto.**

Written by one of Canada's most high profile young activists, this critique on the world of corporate manufacturing and globalization resonates especially with younger people.

**Suzuki, David and Holly Dressel. 2002. *Good News for a Change—How everyday people are helping the planet*. Greystone Books. Vancouver.**

Stories about people who are making positive environmental and social contributions to the world.

### MAGAZINES

**Yes Magazine** – especially for youth, it looks at important issues from a high school perspective. This magazine focuses on the positive efforts of youth, instead of dwelling on depressing stories and statistics.

**Tunza Magazine** – The United Nations Environment Program magazine. Great articles written by youth from around the world. Check it out at [www.ourplanet.com](http://www.ourplanet.com). Click on TUNZA.

**New Internationalist Magazine** – A great magazine that focuses on one issue every month—e.g. poverty, environment, etc. You can read an easier version in the "Teaching Global Issues" section of their website—[www.newint.org](http://www.newint.org).

# C

## ONCLUSION

We hope that you find this guide useful, that you use it but also think about how it can be improved. Please let us know at Change for Children, what can be improved by sending an email to [cfca@change4children.org](mailto:cfca@change4children.org), or calling us at 780-448-1505.

In addition to this we are really hoping to hear about the activities that you are doing in your school and community so let us know, and also let us know if we can provide any additional support to you.

### Some final thoughts on youth engagement:

This project is based upon the belief that if the opportunity is there, youth will act. That if the resources and support are in place, youth will continue to act. We think that youth do not need to be empowered – that youth are passionate, interested and opinionated, and that what they need is the opportunity and space to express that.

We hope that this gives you some of the resources, information and ideas for those of you whom are interested.

**We don't want to empower you – we know you have power. We want you to use it.**

**Understanding means looking deeper, putting ourselves in the picture, finding the connections that aren't immediately obvious. Understanding is more personal, it requires effort, it means stepping outside our comfort zones and accommodating new ways of knowing to our old ways of thinking. Understanding is active, it is an act.**

