

**TAKE ACTION**

STAND UP, TAKE ACTION: END POVERTY NOW!

AGE RANGE:

ALL

AIM:

Encourage students to engage with the MDGs and take positive action by becoming part of the global *Stand Up, Take Action* campaign.

BACKGROUND:

Joining a global movement can be an empowering and effective way to make a difference in the world. However, it's essential to be educated about, and believe in, what you're standing for.

The United Nations Millennium Campaign is an initiative that supports citizen's efforts to hold their governments accountable for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Every year, the Millennium Campaign organises *Stand Up, Take Action* – a massive global mobilisation to put pressure on world leaders to take action on poverty and to meet the MDGs.

- In 2006, 23 million people stood up.
- In 2007, 47 million people stood up.
- In 2008 116, 993, 629 people stood up and took action. A world record.
- In 2009 they want to set a new record.

You can be a part of this global movement and show your support for the fight against poverty.

SET UP:

This activity will take several planning sessions. The global *Stand Up, Take Action* mobilization takes place between 16-18 October 2009. Students will need to learn about the MDGs and *Stand Up*, plan their school or class event, and register it on the *Stand Up* website (www.standagainstpoverity.org) before 16 October. The students' activity could involve simply reading the Stand Up pledge at a school assembly; or a public action involving the community and media.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

To sign up, student leaders should contact Edmund Barker at campaigns@cid.org.nz. The Council for International Development (CID) – the umbrella organisation for 96 New Zealand aid and development NGOs – will provide students taking part in *Stand Up, Take Action* with help and support.

Each participating school/ youth group will receive:

- An action pack, jam packed with tips for effective activism
- A media kit with tips on how to promote their school/ youth group's activity
- The chance to attend a 1 day training workshop at the Council for International Development in Wellington

DISCUSSION STATEMENT

Young people under 25 are half the population of the world. Without us, how can the world end poverty by 2015?

GETTING STARTED

After registering with the Council for International Development (campaigns@cid.org.nz), students should consider the goals of *Stand Up, Take Action* and decide what action they want to take.

The two main goals of *Stand Up, Take Action* in richer countries, like New Zealand are:

- To raise public awareness of the MDGs
- To send a clear message to governments that citizens care about world poverty and that we expect our leaders to meet their MDG commitments.

We encourage students to design their own awareness raising activities, if supported and encouraged, they will no doubt design something more meaningful than if they are simply told what to do, or say. Give students a copy of the taking action guide that follows – and support them in their action.



TAKE ACTION GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Taking positive action involves several steps.

1. Become informed, educate yourself. For example, learn about the MDGs and the *Stand Up, Take Action* campaign.
2. Think critically about what you've discovered. For example, consider why poverty exists in the world and what alternatives there might be.
3. Share your thoughts and feelings with others; listen to other perspectives with an open mind.
4. Consider what you personally think is unjust in this world – what needs to be changed? Who is responsible for generating that change?
5. Do something to create that change! This could include:
 - a. Altering your own behaviour – change what you buy, what you eat, or how you travel.
 - b. Encouraging your friends and family to change too – for example by buying fair trade, or joining an organisation like Amnesty International, World Vision or Oxfam.
 - c. Becoming an advocate – use your knowledge to influence politicians or corporations to get behind your cause. Sign petitions for the causes you believe in.

WHY DO IT?

Taking action is about using your power to change the world for the better. It is not about being told what to think or do. Taking action means creating change in our lives, and change for the world we live in.

Sometimes learning about complex global issues, like extreme poverty, inequality or war, can give us a sense of hopelessness – that's why some people would rather turn a blind eye to the tough stuff. But the reality is – the sooner we know what's going on, the sooner we can change things.

WHO DOES IT?

Heard of Anne Frank? She believed that 'Nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world'. You see, young people have a long history of world changing activism.

In the USA in the 1960s, one of the main groups of the Civil Rights movement was the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. They used non-violent direct action (such as sit-ins, freedom rides, and marches) to attack segregation and other forms of racism.

In Aotearoa NZ in the 1960s, young Māori protest groups linked up with anti-apartheid groups, in opposition to the New Zealand Rugby Union's decision to exclude Māori from the 1960 All Black Tour of South Africa. This relationship continued and culminated in the famous protests against the 1981 Springbok Tour.

In Pakistan in 1992 Iqbal Masih, at the age of ten, began to speak out against child slavery and for freedom and education for all Pakistani children. Sold into child slavery for \$12 when he was four – Iqbal escaped with the help of the Bonded Labour Liberation Front. Honoured by the International Labour Organisation in Sweden in 1994, Iqbal also won the Reebok Human Right Youth in Action Award. In 1995, age 12, Iqbal was murdered.

In Indonesia in 1994, Dita Sari set up the People's Democratic Union aged 21, leading thousands of workers in protest against the Suharto regime. In 1994, Dita faced a jail sentence wearing a headband saying 'Democracy or Death'. Since her release, Dita has continued fighting for worker's rights, rejecting a \$50,000 human rights award from Reebok in protest against their factory conditions. 'Life is not black and white. It is lots of colours.'

In the USA in 1995, 12 year old Craig Kielburger read about the murder of Iqbal Masih in Pakistan and set about educating himself on human rights. He founded Free The Children, an international network that has involved over 100,000 youth in 35 countries to bring about positive social change. 'Knowledge was our key... we knew what we were talking about and had a good response for every questions. We had to be able to defend our views.'

Gerson Perez has dedicated his life to peace in his home country in Colombia since he was ten. Nominated for many awards, including the 1999 Nobel Peace Prize, and the 1999 Global Youth Peace and Tolerance Awards at 16 years old, he has spoken to many world leaders, seeking 'education for peace, not training for war'.

In the USA in 2001, 17 year old Clotilde Dedecker established a coalition of local all-girls schools to build and adopt a school for girls in Afghanistan. When asked what she'd like to say to other kids about getting involved and making a difference Clotilde replied: 'You have a tremendous voice and tremendous power. You should take advantage of that.'

So, what will you do?

**TAKE ACTION**

IN YOUR SCHOOL: TAKING ACTION FOR THE MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN

Take action to end poverty and for the Millennium Development Goals! You have the power to change the world – so *Stand Up and Take Action*.

***Stand Up, Take Action* is happening worldwide between October 16–18, 2009.
This year's theme is *Stand Up, Take Action – End Poverty Now!***

Every year, the United Nations Millennium Campaign organises *Stand Up*, a massive global mobilisation to put pressure on world leaders to take action on poverty and meet the MDGs.

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LAST YEAR IN AOTEAROA NZ

Last year 770 people Stood Up in two events held in Aotearoa New Zealand – 520 at Nayland College in Nelson, and 250 in Wellington, including several MPs. This time we want to achieve ten times that amount!

NAYLAND COLLEGE

Last year, a year 12 Social Studies class at Nayland College was doing a unit on MAKING A DIFFERENCE. They were using the United Nations as an example, and the Millennium Development Goals as a vehicle for encouraging global responsibility and initiating change. They discussed the 0.7% GNI goal for countries to spend on aid, and Aotearoa New Zealand's 0.3% commitment.

They decided to join the *Stand Up* campaign after finding it in a Google search. The students organised an item at the schools' senior assembly where two student representatives presented some statistics about global poverty and then played a DVD clip from the LIVE AID concerts.

The students in the assembly were asked to stand up at any point during the clip when they felt moved to do so. They intended to mark the last minute of the clip for the *Stand Up* count. The rest of the class had spread themselves through the hall as they worried students might be slow to respond individually, or might be embarrassed to stand alone, or be the first.

But they needn't have bothered! The statistics were suitably received with gasps of horror... the video clip was met with total silence and eventually tears from many. The whole school stood in a silent, spontaneous movement. It was awesome! We were blown away by the response.

Mary Greenland, Head of Social Sciences, Nayland College, Nelson

ACT NOW!

This year, *Stand Up* is taking place at a time of major financial crisis. It is a time of great challenge. The current economic climate threatens to undo the big gains that have been made towards achieving the MDGs. There's just six years left to the 2015 deadline and achieving the goals must remain a priority – so now, more than ever it is important that we stand up and take action.

By joining *Stand Up, Take Action* you can raise awareness in your school or local community. You can send a message, loud and clear to our government – that you want to see politicians take action on poverty, and New Zealand doing our bit to reach the MDGs by 2015. What's more, getting media coverage of your event is great way to get your message across to thousands, or even millions of people.

It's up to you what action you want to take. Check out the list below for a few ideas to get you started.

GETTING STARTED

To take part in *Stand Up, Take Action* email campaigns@cid.org.nz for your free action pack, media kit and invitation to a specially designed activism workshop in Wellington. You'll then need to register your event at www.standagainstopoverty.org before 16 October.

QUESTIONS:

1. When is the *Stand Up* Campaign taking place this year? What's this year's theme?
2. How many people participated in *Stand Up* in Aotearoa last year? Worldwide? What percentage of NZ Stood Up? What percentage of the world's population stood up and took action last year?
3. What is the point of standing up? Is it something you would do? Why/why not?
4. Who decides what actions people taking part in *Stand Up, Take Action* should take? Brainstorm the ways you could take action.
5. In March this year, Prime Minister John Key said that he was committed to helping Pacific Island countries meet the MDGs. What are some ways you could get a message to John Key, saying that you hope that he keeps his promise?

Ideas to inspire you: There are a number of actions you could take. The only limit is your imagination! Here are a few ideas to get you started.

- Make Some Noise for the MDGs! Put on a free concert – invite friends, classmates and local media
- Write, email or text John Key, reminding him of the promise he made to help meet the MDGs in the Pacific. Tell him you want to see action – NOW!
- Write to your local MP, or pay them a visit, asking them to help solve world poverty
- Make a photo petition and send it to the Prime Minister, or the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Make a short film and post it on YouTube
- Organise a walk out, a sit-in, or a teach-in on the MDGs
- Organise a free lunch to raise awareness of world hunger – invite friends, family, teachers and your local MP
- Make posters about the MDGs and put them on public display
- Design T shirts with MDG messages, then put on a fashion show – invite local journalists along
- Organise a march or parade, with speeches and banners educating the public
- Host an MDG quiz, debates, poster or essay competition
- Street theatre or drama
- Research and write letters to the editor of your local paper
- Dance for the MDGs! Pick a goal to highlight and get your message across through dance.
- Plant trees for MDG7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

FURTHER INFORMATION:

www.endpoverty2015.org

www.standagainstopoverty.org

www.asiapacific.endpoverty2015.org

www.standup.org.nz

Check out *Stand Up, Take Action* New Zealand on Facebook!

QUOTES FOR DISCUSSION

'The world's leaders won't act unless they hear enough people telling them. And every day they fail to act, thousands of people die because they can't afford the basics of survival.'

– Bono

Global Partnership:
"We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights."

– Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations.

'Our impact on this planet has been huge and it's not going to get any easier, I'm not knitting my own undies... but I'm conscious all the time.'

– Robyn Malcolm, Aotearoa NZ actress and star of *Outrageous Fortune*

'OF ALL THE FORMS OF INEQUALITY, INJUSTICE IN HEALTH IS THE MOST SHOCKING AND MOST INHUMANE.'

– MARTIN LUTHER KING

'Why are the Millennium Development Goals different?

First: They are people-centred, time bound and measurable.

Second: They are based on global partnership, stressing the responsibility of developing countries for getting their house in order, and of developed countries for supporting their efforts.

Third: They have unprecedented political support, embraced at the highest levels by developed and developing countries, civil society and major development institutions alike.

Fourth: they are achievable.'

– Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the UN, 2005

'To suggest that the only things that maintain our humanity are those that serve our biological needs, our basic needs, seems to me palpably incorrect. We are not just what we eat, we are also what we feel, what we fear, what we love and what we hate.'

– Danny Boyle, director of *Slumdog Millionaire*

'EDUCATION IS A HUMAN RIGHT WITH IMMENSE POWER TO TRANSFORM. ON ITS FOUNDATION REST THE CORNERSTONES OF FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.'

KOFI ANNAN, FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

"EHARA TAKU TOA I TE TOA TAKITAHU, E NGARI HE TOA TAKITINI"

MY STRENGTH IS NOT MINE ALONE, BUT THAT OF THE MULTITUDE

– MĀORI PROVERB

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

– Margaret Mead, anthropologist