

ABOUT FREE THE CHILDREN

Free The Children believes in a world where all young people are free to achieve their fullest potential as agents of change. We are a charity and educational partner that empowers youth to remove barriers that prevent them from being active local and global citizens. Our domestic programs educate, engage and empower hundreds of thousands of youth in North America and the UK. Our international projects, led by our holistic and sustainable Adopt a Village model, have brought over 650 schools and school rooms to youth and provided clean water, health care and sanitation to one million people around the world, freeing children and their families from the cycle of poverty.

Our primary goals are to free children from poverty and exploitation and free young people from the notion that they are powerless to affect positive change in the world. Through domestic empowerment programs and leadership training, Free The Children inspires young people to develop as socially conscious global citizens and become agents of change.

Founded in 1995 by international children's rights activist Craig Kielburger, the organization has grown into the world's largest network of children helping children through education, with more than one million young people involved in our innovative education and development programs in 45 countries.

DOMESTIC PROGRAMMING

Free The Children's domestic programming is focused on youth engagement and inspiring young leaders to pursue positive change at home and abroad. We know that sparking change at a domestic level is just as important as the work we do overseas.

Our local projects include We Day, motivational speaking tours, awareness and fundraising campaigns, curriculum and educational resources, initiatives targeting underserved communities, programs aimed at building awareness about Aboriginal education and much more.

We Day, Free The Children's signature, annual social justice event, is more than just one day of celebration and inspiration. It's a one-of-a-kind event and part of an innovative year-long program created to celebrate the power of young people to create positive change in the world. The event kicks off a year-long program of action, called We Schools in Action. We Day is free of charge and open to any school that wants to be part of the experience. In exchange, each school group that attends is asked to make a commitment to follow the We Schools in Action program, which includes taking local and global action throughout the year. Over 80,000 students participate in We Day itself in various cities across Canada including; Toronto, Vancouver, Waterloo Region, Winnipeg and Montreal. For more information on We Day visit www.weday.com.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In seven countries, we work alongside the men, women and children who every day strive to free themselves from poverty, exploitation, disease and thirst. This effort is not charity, it is sustainability. It is freedom in action. It is Free The Children's Adopt a Village development model. The Adopt a Village model is implemented in rural communities in Haiti, Kenya, rural China, India, Sierra Leone, Ecuador and Sri Lanka.

Designed to meet the basic needs of developing communities and eliminate the obstacles preventing children from accessing education, Adopt a Village is made up of four pillars crucial to sustainable community development: education, health care, clean water and sanitation and alternative income.

TO DATE, FREE THE CHILDREN HAS:

- Built more than 650 schools and school rooms in communities in Asia, Africa and Latin America, providing education to more than 55,000 children every day.
- Shipped \$16 million US in essential medical supplies to 40 countries.
- Provided health care centres and community funding, helping 512,500 people.
- Helped more than 30,000 women become economically self-sufficient with loans and alternative forms of income.
- Supported more than 3,500 Youth in Action groups throughout North America and across the world.

FAQs

1. What makes Free The Children so unique?

Free The Children is unique among charities in that it operates both locally and internationally. We seek to empower young leaders at home to foster positive local and global change. Internationally, the organization pursues a variety of development projects with a particular focus on education, health care, alternative income and clean water. Simply put, we work to achieve a world where all young people are free to achieve their fullest potential as agents of change.

Although ambitious, this dual focus allows Free The Children to better meet its core objective: to create systemic positive change. By working at home and abroad we can both inspire youth to effect change and help young people realize the benefits of change. In our experience, the greatest momentum is created when we engage youth to become involved global citizens, helping to make a difference locally and internationally.

2. What are Free The Children's local projects?

Free The Children is committed to domestic programming because we believe that young people will change the world once they're free from the notion that they're powerless to make a difference. We know that sparking change at a domestic level is just as important as the work we do overseas.

Our programming in North America—which is focused primarily on youth with a strong emphasis on educators, families and the corporate world—is built on three guiding principles: educate, engage, empower. Each of our programs and initiatives work to educate, engage and empower youth and adults alike in unique ways.

Specifically, our local projects include motivational speaking tours, awareness building around poverty and international development, initiatives targeting underserved communities and programs aimed at raising awareness about Aboriginal education.

Free The Children conducts teacher workshops across North America and the UK for dozens of school boards, bringing social justice programming to the classroom. We also offer ministry friendly issue-based educational resources to support educators as they bring social justice education into their classroom. The educational resources are created by our in-house Curriculum Development

team, which also works in collaboration with external educator consultants. Our resources cover a range of local and global issues, including elementary and secondary level curriculum, resource guides, lesson plans, activities and other teaching tools.

In addition, the organization runs programs like Global Voices, in which students explore a recent social justice issue covered in Craig and Marc Kielburger's weekly column in newspapers across Canada including the *Toronto Star* and the *Vancouver Sun*. Program participants also have access to corresponding lesson plans. More than 5,000 educators participate in this program every week.

3. What are Free The Children's international projects?

Free The Children's international projects, carried out through our holistic development model, Adopt a Village, operate in seven countries: India, Sri Lanka, rural China, Sierra Leone, Ecuador, Kenya and Haiti.

Adopt a Village consists of four pillars and aims to help break the cycle of poverty. These include (i) education, (ii) water and sanitation, (iii) health care and (iv) alternative income. As with any international development organization, Free The Children has dedicated staff in Canada who help to manage and implement these projects as well as experts, working directly on the ground. These experts provide services such as medical programs and financial literacy training workshops and help implement small and large-scale construction projects for schools and water systems.

4. What percentage of donations is used for administrative cost and how much reaches children directly?

Free The Children works hard to ensure that donations are used effectively and efficiently. We are very proud of our low administrative rate of 10 per cent, which means that, on average, approximately 90 percent of funds donated go directly to Free The Children's domestic and international programming.

When making a donation, donors can specify where they want the funds they've raised directed. When youth or school groups make a donation towards international projects, the funds are used to support Free The Children's Adopt a Village development model.

5. How does Free The Children keep its administration costs lower than industry standard?

Free The Children is able to keep its administrative rate low through a number of carefully planned and deliberate undertakings. This includes the fact that Free The Children does not employ third-party fundraising organizations to solicit money, employ direct mail campaigns to solicit donors, hire mall or street intercept fundraisers or use telemarketers or costly fundraising consultants. The organization also works hard to establish privileged partnerships that allow it to avoid the costs of advertising, producing commercials or buying media to air programming.

6. What is Me to We and how does it work with Free The Children?

An innovative social enterprise, Me to We provides people with better choices for a better world, including socially conscious and environmentally friendly clothes and accessories, as well as life-changing international volunteer trips, leadership training programs and materials, and books which address issues of positive social change. In addition, half of Me to We's net profit is donated to Free The Children and the other half is reinvested to grow the enterprise.

To learn more about Me to We, please visit www.metowe.com.

7. What is We Day?

We Day is an annual social justice event which is provided free of cost to students and schools. It is held in Toronto, Vancouver, Waterloo, Winnipeg and Montreal. Over 80,000 students have participated in We Day live and over five million Canadians watch the day's highlights broadcasted on CTV. Past speakers include Dr. Jane Goodall, Elie Wiesel, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, former prime minister Paul Martin, Vice President and Nobel Laureate Al Gore, Nobel Laureate Betty Williams, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Mike "Pinball" Clemons, the Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo, as well as performers like Justin Bieber, Jason Mraz, Hedley, Barenaked Ladies and the Jonas Brothers.

The event kicks off a year-long series of actions whereby students and schools choose a local and international issue on which they want to become involved and create positive change. Ongoing support and educational materials pertaining to social justice are provided to educators at no cost.




For more information please visit:
www.freethechildren.com

Social Networking Channels

Free The Children uses a number of social networking sites to raise awareness and keep youth and stakeholders engaged in our ongoing activities. We encourage you to stay connected and follow us on:

 [Youtube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/freethechildrenintl)
[youtube.com/freethechildrenintl](https://www.youtube.com/freethechildrenintl)

 [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/freethechildren)
[facebook.com/freethechildren](https://www.facebook.com/freethechildren)
[facebook.com/craigkielburger](https://www.facebook.com/craigkielburger)
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