

# Advocacy Day (March)

## Introduction to Advocacy Day

Save the Children provides assistance to children and their communities in over 50 countries and the United States. However, they need your help to bring about change in policies that affect the lives of children. Each year Advocacy Day focuses on specific issues such as the following:

- 1) Pressing for American Leadership to enact legislation that would permit greater investment in low-cost, highly effective, lifesaving interventions, such as vitamins, antibiotics and vaccines to save millions of children from preventable diseases.
- 2) Informing legislators on the importance of early childhood development programs and asking them to support legislation to improve access to these programs through grant funding.

In addition to these formal campaigns, students across the world can step up to advocate for child health issues in a variety of ways.

## What Is Advocacy?

Save the Children is an organization that *advocates* for children, especially in efforts to improve the health of newborns and children at home and abroad. *Advocacy* is supporting a cause to produce a desired change. We advocate because we feel strongly about a particular issue.

Young people are capable of advocacy in different forms. Advocacy may involve writing a letter to a legislator about an important issue. It may involve writing a letter to a newspaper, speaking at a community meeting, or raising awareness about an issue at a school event. Having a dialogue about an issue, wearing a T-shirt, or voting are different forms of advocacy. When a young person advocates for a cause, he or she acts as a philanthropist sharing time and talent for the common good.

## Social Media as Advocacy:

Youth may impact change quickly using social media to spread the word about issues they care about. An easy way to do this is to join the GoodGoes Facebook cause or subscribe to the GoodGoes YouTube channel to see the latest news from the field and share it with your friends. [Read more.](#)



## Advocacy Techniques with your Legislator:

- Identify yourself: State your name and identify yourself as a constituent. Share other information about who you are if it is relevant to the issue.
- Be Specific: Include the name and number of the relevant bill. Clearly describe the issue and state your goals.
- Make it Personal: The best thing you can do as a citizen advocate is give the issue your individual voice. Use personal examples and speak in your own words.
- Be Confident: Your official's job is to represent you. You may also know more about the issue than your elected official. That is why it is a good idea to offer yourself as a source of information.
- Be Polite: Always work on the basis that the government and your opponents are open to reason and discussion. If you are rude, your message may not be effective.
- Be Brief: Communication that focuses strongly on one argument is the most effective. Keep it to one issue. Limit written documents to one page.
- Be Timely: Your message is more likely to be considered if it is immediately relevant.
- Be Factual: Use facts and statistics. Make sure the information you provide is accurate.
- [E-mail your elected officials NOW!](#) This link provides specific legislation to target.

## Fundraising as Advocacy:

Students all over the world make a difference in the lives of children simply by participating in one of the following fundraisers and sending the proceeds to Save the Children. Download the [School Fundraising Toolkit](#) to find out how.

- Hat Day: Many schools have a "no-hat" policy; students may ask school administrators to select a day where students can give a donation to be able to wear a hat to school. Variation: Have a school-wide dress down day on which students and faculty can dress down for a fee.
- "Change for Children" week or month: Ask students and staff to bring in loose change to donate to Save the Children's Newborn and Child Survival Campaign. Students decorate empty jugs or containers to collect the change over a week or month. Students may advocate for the cause to get local organizations to match the donations. Homeroom classes may compete to see which class can raise the most money.
- Ice Cream Social: Host an ice cream dessert party with all the toppings and ask for donations to support Save the Children's Newborn and Child Survival Campaign.



- Collect bottles and cans that have a redemption value and donate the money redeemed.
- Host an “A-Thon” where students raise money for running, walking, reading, dancing, knitting, or other activity for an extended period of time or distance.
- Chores: Have students sign up to do little jobs to raise money.
- Challenge Another School: Challenge other schools to match or beat the donations your school raises.
- Borrow Rather than Buy: Put a donation box in your school’s library and encourage students to borrow from the library rather than buy from a bookstore. Then donate the savings! Discuss the concept of *opportunity cost*.
- Social Event: Ask for donations to Save the Children at a school dance or sporting event in lieu of admission.
- Donor Dinner: Host a pancake or spaghetti dinner for family and faculty. Ask for donations to support Save the Children’s Newborn and Child Survival Campaign.

### Learn How Other Kids Are Helping:

These personal stories will inspire and amaze you:

[Rock 'n' Roll Raises Money for Reading, Writing and Arithmetic](#)

[Students Save Pennies to Save Newborns](#)

Real change is possible, and young people are capable of making a real difference. Save the Children’s supporters are critical in efforts to make a difference in the life of a child. Save the Children puts its resources and expertise to work in more than 50 countries including the United States. They serve 48 million children and many others. As part of their efforts to create lasting change, Save the Children asks students to become involved with issues that affect children in need around the world.

### Advocacy Day in Washington DC

Advocacy Day is a great opportunity to give voice to our common goals for children. Join policy makers, Save the Children leadership, staff, and supporters from across the country and around the world in Washington DC for Save the Children’s Annual Advocacy Day each spring. This event includes workshops and meetings with key Members of Congress and their staff.

Reserve your space by searching "Save the Children Advocacy Day" and registering for the current event. A fee of \$50 includes some meals and training-related materials. The registration fee for students is

\$20. [http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGlpI4E/b.8361303/k.D87E/Save\\_the\\_Children8217s\\_Annual\\_Advocacy\\_Summit.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGlpI4E/b.8361303/k.D87E/Save_the_Children8217s_Annual_Advocacy_Summit.htm)



**Note:**

If your school can't make it to Washington DC for this year's Advocacy Day, you can still participate in very important advocacy efforts in your own community. Contact Save the Children for ideas.

