

Send All my friends to school

Summer 2014 Action Guide



Difasi, aged eight, lives in Uganda. He has been blind since birth. He doesn't go to school because there are no teaching materials for him.

Photo: Georgina Cranston/SightSavers

INTRODUCTION

In 2000 over 180 countries agreed Millennium Development Goal 2 to 'ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, girls and boys alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling'.

In 2000 there were around 114 million children out of school. Initial progress towards the goal was rapid and many millions of children enrolled in school for the first time. However, recently progress has stalled. There are currently 57 million children out of school and it is likely that at least 48 million children will still be out of school in 2015.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

More than a third of the 57 million children missing out on school have disabilities. That's 24 million children! Providing a quality education for children with disabilities requires both extra resources and a shift in cultural attitudes towards disability. Both these changes have been slow to develop. An extra effort is required to make sure all our friends go to school.

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE?

Challenges like large class sizes and too few teachers affect all children, including the children with disabilities. However, children with disabilities face additional challenges. These include low budgets for special needs education, a shortage of trained special needs teachers and negative attitudes towards children with special needs—and their teachers. All these things need to change if every child is to go to school.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- 1. Create 'buddy' messages in your school and send them to your MP.** Go to page 2.
- 2. Plan a campaign in your school community and inform the press.** Go to page 3.
- 3. Organise an event and meet your MP.** Go to page 4.



Young Ambassadors Maisie and Rebecca meet students at an inclusive school for visually impaired and sighted children in Uganda.

Photo: Graeme Robertson/GCE UK

For support with taking action, get in touch with Oxfam's Education & Youth Team:

education@oxfam.org.uk

Sign up for 'Send All My Friends to School' at www.sendmyfriend.org

All participating schools receive a free resource pack and DVD.



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A 'paper buddy' with a powerful message.

Photo: Camille Shah/GCE UK

Why take action?

Showing that young people feel strongly about this issue helps to persuade MPs in the UK to take it seriously. It's an important part of a global movement to make sure that world leaders stick to their promises.

The learning, communication, time-management and planning skills this campaign will help you to develop are valuable in other areas of your school and personal life. So you'll not only be helping to send all our friends to school, you'll also be learning useful new skills.

What to do

STEP ONE

Ask your teacher to register for Send All My Friends to School at www.sendmyfriend.org.

This website has lots of exciting resources and ideas to develop your understanding of global education and help you learn about campaigning.

Then think about designing your 'paper buddies'. There are templates in the free resource pack you'll be sent when you register, but feel free to be creative and design your own.

STEP THREE

Learn about the issues to help you write well informed messages. There are lots of resources at www.sendmyfriend.org and the video of Young Ambassadors Maisie and Rebecca's trip to Uganda is at <http://vimeo.com/89398998>

STEP TWO

Think about how your teacher can help you to collect as many 'ideal teacher' messages as possible. You could write messages in your class and ask other classes to join in too.

The campaign video at <http://vimeo.com/84134392> explains the issues and how to get organised. Set yourself a target number of 'ideal teacher' messages and get started!

STEP FOUR

Join your 'buddies' together and send them with a letter to your MP. MPs' contact details are at www.theyworkforyou.com.

In your letter summarise the core issue and what you want your MP to do. Try to write this in a really brief, persuasive and inspiring way. There's advice at <http://bit.ly/1iGYbl2>

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Plan a bigger campaign in your school community and inform the press

Aim to plan a bigger campaign in your school community. The purpose is still to send 'Buddy Messages' to your MP, but this time you need to think more carefully about how to inspire lots of other young people to get involved.

- Could you design and present assemblies or lessons?
- Could you organise an exhibition, event or film screening?
- Could you visit other local schools and inspire young people there to be involved?
- Could you make a film or write a press release and get a story in your local paper?

Ideas

Emma Woods has been leading Send My Friend campaigns for four years now. Read her campaign tips at <http://bit.ly/1jbZvLk>

There are ideas to help you get planning at <http://bit.ly/1gCWfoL>

Check out Kingsbury High School's very creative film at <http://vimeo.com/70406735>

Finally see how Ringwood School students involved local primary schools at <http://vimeo.com/84594541>

Make sure *your* plan is realistic and do-able. The 'Bricks and Hammers' activity will help to identify barriers and solutions. See <http://bit.ly/N2rHpj> pg 42. If your plan won't work change it!

Young campaigner Emma Woods speaks at an MP meeting in Parliament.

Photo: Mark Chilvers/ GCE UK

What to do

STEP ONE

Ask your teacher to register for Send All My Friends to School at www.sendmyfriend.org

There are 'Do It Yourself' resources for you to design your own materials at <http://bit.ly/1dg8oFI>

Get thinking with others about what you'd like to do.

STEP THREE

Next try to get a story about your campaign in your local paper. The press pack for Send All My Friends to School at <http://bit.ly/NxtfHW> contains step by step advice.

STEP TWO

Set some targets for your campaign and plan how you'll work with others to achieve them. This will involve some careful project planning. Make sure you are realistic and set targets you can achieve.

Get Global has some great ideas and practical examples to help you design your own campaign - <http://bit.ly/1eQrAn4>. Or ask Oxfam for support.

STEP FOUR

Finally send your 'Buddy Messages' messages to your MP with a covering letter—see page 2 for more information.

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Millie Wells and Sam Whittingham, the Young Ambassadors for 2013, meet their MP Desmond Swayne in Parliament.

Photo: John McLaverty/Oxfam

Organise a meeting with your MP

Your MP is able to take your 'Buddy Messages' messages to Parliament and share them with other MPs, the Prime Minister and the Department for International Development (DFID).

Every year around 100 MPs meet young campaigners for Send My Friend to School and participate in events organised by young people.

Organising an MP event provides you and your friends with a great opportunity to develop project management and campaigning skills.

Make sure you ask your MP to take a specific action—for example, to write to the relevant Minister—and ask her or him to feed back the results of their actions to you.

Finally don't forget to tell us about how you got on. We'd love to hear about your successes!

Email education@oxfam.org.uk

WHAT TO DO

STEP ONE

Ask your teacher to register for Send All My Friends to School at www.sendmyfriend.org

Organise collecting 'Buddy Messages' as outlined on Pages 2 and 3. Try to collect as many thoughtful and passionate messages as possible.

STEP THREE

Invite your MP to a meeting. You'll find contact details at <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/> Virtually all MPs also have their own websites which include their contact details.

Our MP toolkit at <http://bit.ly/1mjbj2Y> provides lots of advice about the best ways to engage your MP.

STEP TWO

Plan the type of event you'd like to invite your MP to. For example, it could be a large assembly or a smaller meeting. Or you could visit your MP in Parliament or their constituency office.

Make sure your meeting is well organised, tightly scripted and creative. Rehearse with a teacher playing the role of your MP so you can iron out any glitches before your big day.

STEP FOUR

Have a great event!

Remember to ask your MP to do something specific. The MP toolkit has suggestions. Take lots of photos, ask your local paper to write a story and tell us how it went.

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