



Save the Children.



Save the Children  
Action Network™

# BRIDGE THE GAP FOR KIDS!



Advocacy Event Toolkit

#InvestInKids

# LET'S BRIDGE THE GAP FOR KIDS!

## WHO ARE WE?

Save the Children Action Network is the political advocacy arm of Save the Children founded in 2014. SCAN ensures lawmakers put children's futures first. As the political voice for kids, we support legislation that helps them thrive- every day and in times of crisis.

Save the Children believes every child deserves a future. Since Save the Children's founding more than 100 years ago, the organization has been advocating for the rights of children worldwide. In the United States and around the world, Save the Children gives children a healthy start in life, the opportunity to learn and protection from harm.

## WHAT'S BRIDGE THE GAP FOR KIDS?

We started this movement to Bridge the Gap between kids who have the tools to thrive, and kids who don't.

How? By mobilizing advocates like you to make a difference. You're joining a united community of students, (grand)parents, teachers, providers and corporations in a shared mission: giving every child a chance to succeed.

Fundraise for a cause you care about, advocate for policy change or facilitate a local community event.

## IN THIS TOOLKIT, YOU'LL FIND:

- Information on three issue areas: early childhood education, child hunger and voter engagement in elections
- Event planning guide and timeline
- Marketing and scheduling tips
- Fundraising crash course



# BRIDGE THE GAP

## FOR CHILD HUNGER

Kids can't thrive on empty stomachs.

But conflict, crisis and climate change can make nutritious food hard to access and afford. Struggling to feed their families, some parents resort to dangerous practices to survive – putting their children's physical and mental health at risk.

### THE SCOOP ON SNAP

Here in the U.S., millions of families rely on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), National School Breakfast Program (SBP) and other forms of nutrition support.

Of the 42 million people who use SNAP nationwide, nearly half are children! Research shows they're more likely to have regular access to food, be in good health and face lower risks of developmental delays.

By hosting a hunger-focused event, you're sending a message to lawmakers: Every child deserves to grow up nourished and safe.





# BRIDGE THE GAP

## FOR KIDS' ISSUES

### HIGH 5 FOR KIDS

High 5 for Kids is a nonpartisan movement to get lawmakers to prioritize kids — from state houses to the White House!

Our local volunteers engage directly with candidates and campaigns, focusing on issues like early childhood education and food security. To connect with the larger community, we organize debate watch parties, attend town halls and local meetings and spearhead Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts.

At the national level, we push to make our priority issues a topic during debates at the Republican and Democratic Party Conventions.

## HOW IT WORKS

Your Bridge the Gap for Kids event can engage legislators in a number of ways!

Here are some ideas:

- Invite your members of Congress to host a town hall at your event
- Survey your community on the issues they care about
- Help event attendees check their voter registration status
- If it's an election year, provide information on key dates related to voting and requesting absentee ballots

Your voice can secure meaningful legislative change. Remember, your member of Congress works for you!





# BRIDGE THE GAP

## FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The earlier a child starts learning, the brighter their future will be!

Believe it or not, early education starts during pregnancy and follows children to their first day of school. It's a critical window of development.

But in communities across rural America, economic barriers, isolation and a lack of resources have created an ever-growing academic achievement gap — leaving more than 12 million kids in poverty at risk of starting school unprepared. Without support, many never catch up to their classmates.

### BRIDGING THE GAP

A child's future should be determined by dreams, not deterrents. That's why SCAN fights to increase funding for early learning programs in the U.S.

With affordable, accessible opportunities, all kids can get a strong start in life.





# GETTING STARTED

## STEPS FOR PLANNING YOUR EVENT

### STEP 1: BUILD A TEAM

Gather a group of friends, family members, co-workers or classmates. Then, assign roles like...

- **Marketing:** Promote the event, encourage sign-ups, attract local sponsors and connect with the media
- **Operations:** Plan logistical aspects, coordinate set-up and develop a run-of-show
- **Fundraising:** Engage community partners and secure donations
- **Volunteering:** Recruit volunteers and assign responsibilities (details on the next page)
- **Kids Zone:** Plan kid-friendly activities and reach out to children's companies for support

### STEP 2: PICK A DATE

Pick a date that works for your team, community and partners. Be sure to track holidays, monitor inclement weather and plan around other local events.

### STEP 3: CHOOSE A LOCATION

Choose an accessible route. If crossing a bridge isn't practical, look to parks with walking paths, school tracks, etc.

- Map a course with a loop so walkers start and finish in the same spot
- Walk the route in advance to check for obstructions and plan for signage
- Limit street crossings for safety
- Check for local permit, insurance and police presence requirements
- Tell attendees how to reach the location via car or public transport

### STEP 4: SET UP AN ONLINE EVENT PAGE

Visit [www.savethechildren.org/fundraise](http://www.savethechildren.org/fundraise) to set up your event page!

- Create a unique URL
- Set a fundraising goal
- Share the link to recruit walkers and fundraisers

# TIPS AND TRICKS

## VOLUNTEER ROLES

- **Set-Up Crew**
  - Responsible for setting up event equipment, tables and booths
- **Registration Table**
  - Check in and greet participants, capturing all contact information
- **Donation Table**
  - Work alongside the registration team to secure last-minute donations
- **Mission Village Coordinators**
  - Connect with community partners and allocate booths to provide attendees with local resources, opportunities and networks
- **Walking Guides**
  - Direct participants to the route, lead a gentle warm-up and ensure everyone's safety
- **First Aid Station**
  - Accidents happen, so be sure to have a first aid kit and someone who can provide medical assistance
- **Music/DJ**
  - Recruit your grooviest friend and create a playlist to set the tone
- **Food and Water Stations**
  - Provide water and light snacks to ensure everyone stays hydrated and healthy
- **Kids Zone**
  - Ensure children remain with their parents and play safely
- **Photographer/Videographer**
  - Capture content and share with SCAN so we can celebrate your hard work!
- **Clean-Up Crew**
  - Pack up all equipment, signage and trash



# TIPS AND TRICKS (CONT.)

## MARKETING 101

- Create and distribute event flyers, posters and postcards
- Contact local media, newspapers and radio stations to spread the word
- Promote your event at community centers, libraries and schools
- Amplify your event online
  - Create a Facebook event
  - Post details on Twitter and Instagram
  - Follow us on social media so we can promote it, too!
    - **Facebook:** @SavetheChildrenActionNetwork
    - **Twitter:** @SCActionNetwork
    - **Instagram:** @TheFutureTomorrow

## SAMPLE EVENT SCHEDULE

- 7:00-8:30am: Set-Up
- 8:30-9:30am: Check-In
- 9:30-10:00am: Opening Remarks and Warm-Up
- 10:00-11:00am: Bridge the Gap for Kids Walk
- 11:00-1:00pm: Mission Village. Community Building, Brown Bag Lunch
- 1:00-1:30pm: Closing Remarks
- 1:30-2:30pm: Clean-Up



# EVENT PLANNING TIMELINE

## FOUR MONTHS OUT

- Email [getinvolved@savechildren.org](mailto:getinvolved@savechildren.org) to get started
- Recruit your team
- Set event date, time and location
- Secure permits and necessary approvals
- Set a fundraising goal
- Set up your online event page at [www.savethechildren.org/btg](http://www.savethechildren.org/btg)
- Send out Save the Dates

## THREE MONTHS OUT

- Promote registration and share marketing materials
- Plan event day logistics
- Recruit additional volunteers
- Secure partners for Mission Village booths

## TWO MONTHS OUT

- Continue to promote registration
- Develop a run-of-show
- Meet with city/town council to confirm permit details, if applicable
- Secure local donations for food, beverages, DJ, kids' activities, etc.
- Create supply checklists

## ONE MONTH OUT

- Finalize run-of-show
- Distribute schedule to volunteers

# EVENT PLANNING TIMELINE (CONT.)

## TWO WEEKS OUT

- Send a reminder to all registrants
- Promote fundraising with your unique URL

## ONE WEEK OUT

- Re-energize participants, reminding them why they signed up
- Communicate volunteer roles
- Review run-of-show
- Confirm all supplies (tables, chairs, signs, water, trash cans, etc.)

## EVENT DAY

- Arrive early for set up — or, if possible, start the day before
- Prepare your check-in and donation tables
- Set up water stations and Mission Village
- Review volunteer responsibilities
- Hold opening or closing ceremony to thank participants and recognize top fundraisers
- Take photos and videos to post on social media with #InvestInKids
- Clean up event space, removing all trash and signage

## POST-EVENT

- Schedule a team debrief
- Send personal emails thanking all volunteers, participants, sponsors and donors
- Feature your fundraising total, number of attendees and other event highlights
- Circulate a survey for feedback
- Share photos and videos on social media — don't forget to tag us!
- Mail donations to the address below. Please convert cash to checks or money orders. Be sure to include Bridge the Gap, your name as the organizer and any highlights you'd like to share from your event! We'd love to hear it!

*Save the Children*  
*Attn: Gift Processing*  
*501 Kings Highway East, Suite 400*  
*Fairfield, CT 06825*

# FUNDRAISE LIKE A PRO: HOW TO RAISE \$250 IN 7 DAYS

## DAY 1: CHIP IN \$25

Be your first donor! Just \$25 can provide early learning materials to help kids prepare for kindergarten.

\$25

## DAY 2: SOCIAL MEDIA

Share your fundraising link and challenge at least two followers to match your \$25 donation.

\$75

## DAY 3: FAMILY

Ask three family members to donate \$15 or more to help enhance a child's education.

\$120

## DAY 4: FRIENDS

Get three of your best friends to donate \$10 or more, which can nourish an out-of-school child for an entire day!

\$160

## DAY 5: WORK

Ask your company for a \$50 contribution, which can serve 10 hungry children a nutritious breakfast and lunch. Check to see if they'll match your fundraising total, too!

\$210

## DAY 6: OUT AND ABOUT

Get 5 people from your book club, yoga class, bowling league or other hobbies to chip in \$5 each, which can provide breakfast and lunch to a child who relies on school meals.

\$235

## DAY 7: LOCAL BUSINESSES

Encourage your local nail salon, restaurant or doctor's office to contribute \$25 each. To take it a step further, ask to put a donation box there.

\$250

## CONGRATULATIONS — YOU JUST RAISED \$250!

Your impact could look like...

- Providing a day's breakfast, lunch and dinner to 10 hungry children
- Filling a bookshelf for a child in rural America, where many don't own a single book
- Supply a teacher with early educational essentials like books, games and toys

**But don't stop now!** The more money you raise, the more we can continue supporting children.

Email [getinvolved@savechildren.org](mailto:getinvolved@savechildren.org) for more fundraising tips.