

Campus Rep Toolkit

Creating a War Child Canada Campus Chapter

The goal of War Child Canada's campus outreach program is to fundraise for our national and international programs. Students across Canada have been incredibly creative and enthusiastic in helping us with our cause. We need your help now more than ever: 66% of all casualties in war are children; in the last decade, 18 million children worldwide have been forced to flee their homes because of war; and it is estimated that there are 300,000 child soldiers, some as young as eight years old, both boys and girls, involved in armed combat today. We believe that the more Canadian students know about the issues, the more they will care; and the more they will care, the more they will act.

A. How to Get Started...

So you've taken the plunge! What next? Well, you can start by reading through this handy resource, designed to help you establish your War Child Canada Campus Chapter. Here are a few bits of advice to get you rolling:

1. **There is power in numbers.** Your work will be easier and more effective if you team up with other like-minded students. Who do you know who will want to get involved? Where can you promote involvement? How big do you want your chapter to be?
2. **Recruit first year students.** It is vital that once you establish your club, you ensure that it will be around long after you have received your cap and gown. Recruiting young members to your team will ensure that your club's activities continue after you're gone.
3. **What kind of events?** A walk for change? A busk for change? A dance-a-thon? A bike-a-thon? A bowling-a-thon? Take some time to discuss with your chapter how much time you can commit. Be realistic. Take into consideration your course load, jobs and other commitments. Check out the list at the back of this booklet for more ideas.
4. **Only a roadmap can help you get to where you want to go.** It will be helpful to write up a plan so you can organize your ideas and establish a focus for your chapter. Your roadmap or framework may take the form of monthly or semester fundraising targets. Check out the sample roadmap document at the back of this booklet to help you with your strategies and targets. Once you have an idea of where you are headed, please consult our event coordinator guide, where you will find some creative and interesting ideas to discuss with your group.
5. **Make it official.** Remember, every campus policy is different, as well as the procedures and policies you have to adhere to; however, in most cases it only takes filling out a few documents, visiting your student union office, or contacting a representative. Here are a few steps to follow to help you with this process:
 - a) **Research your Student Union or Student Community website.** They usually have specific protocol to follow. Once there, visit the clubs and association page where the

procedure for officially registering for a club can be found as well as a list of all of the other clubs on campus. Like-minded clubs may already exist; you may want to contact their representatives and ask questions.

b) Contact your student union representative. Most student union executives have a specific title for the person who is responsible for on-campus clubs and associations. The titles of these positions differ, but in most cases they are called 'Student Life', 'Campus Events and Activities', or 'Internal' representative. If you are unsure as to which member is responsible for clubs, you can contact the administrative executive or the President. All contact information should be found in the "contact us", "about us" or "council" "executive" sections.

c) Download the application form. There is usually an application form and some small hoops to jump through before you can become an official campus club (remember: most accredited clubs are entitled to an official title and to funding (a.k.a. cash) from your student union which can make coordinating successful events a heck of a lot easier).

Here are some benefits of establishing an official campus chapter:

- You will be granted a budget or can easily apply for funding through their student union.
- You will be registered and included on the student union website.
- You will get photocopying privileges.
- You can promote your chapter at activity/club fairs.
- You will be granted space on campus to meet.
- You will increase your chapter's exposure on campus.

d) Visit your student union. If all else fails, visit your school's student union/council office during regular school hours and ask questions.

6. Once you find the club registration documents, *download and read them so that you are aware of the important dates and signatures you need.*

These are the details you will need to officially register your campus chapter:

- A list of club members.
- An outline about your club, including your club's goals (found in the Campus Rep Handbook, under mandate).
- Your club's mission statement (found in the Campus Rep Handbook).
- A list of fundraising ideas (check out the suggestions made in the Campus Rep Handbook).
- A rough budget for your club (check out the budget template in the Campus Rep Handbook).
- A bank account. This will make transactions and keeping track of funds much easier. The account name must be under the name of your campus group and not War Child Canada.

B. Recruiting Club Members

There are many ways to get other students interested in your newly formed WCC Chapter. Here are a few ways to go about getting the word out:

1. **Clubs Day:** Most universities have a 'Clubs Day' at the start each new school year so that the student body can get a sense of what their extra-curricular options are. Each school is different; refer to your student union for instruction.
2. **Classroom visits:** You may want to visit classrooms where like-minded students will be found. Be sure to contact the professor in advance, and ask her or him if it would be OK if you made a brief announcement at the beginning of class. If the professor doesn't like the idea of making an announcement, ask if you can put a note on the blackboard about your club and its upcoming meeting.
3. **Emails to other clubs:** You may want to send emails to like-minded clubs, such as Students for Political Action, Social Justice Club, AIDS Awareness Club, etc. Let them know about the launch of the War Child Canada club, and that their members are welcome to attend meetings, contribute to events, or attend fundraisers.
4. **Online Networking:** It's always beneficial to have a *Myspace* or *Facebook* site for your club. It's a great way to let people know about upcoming events.
5. **Posters:** Put up posters in student lobbies, especially in relevant department lobbies (like political science, peace and conflict studies, international relations, international development, etc.). You can also ask to put up a few posters in main student centers where student traffic is heavy.
6. **Campus papers:** Campus newspapers and publications often have sections to post information about your club, or events that your club is hosting. Exploiting all campus media for as much exposure as possible will attract more involvement and interest in your cause.
7. **Approach like-minded students:** Take a look on your school's student union website and look for existing clubs that are socially minded and engaged in humanitarian issues. You may want to contact their executive and inquire about collaborating with them for future events or discussing their club's mission and campus involvement.

C. Creating Awareness about War Child Canada:

1. **Blog to raise awareness.** Blogs are a great and easy way to get your work and our message out there. Assign a few members to maintain your blog, or have rotating responsibility. *The key with blogs is that in order to maintain their appeal, they should be updated regularly and be mildly appealing to the eye.* Blogspot.com is a great place to start as it offers easy-to-follow templates. There are loads of free blogging sites out there, like www.blogger.com. There are a whole bunch of things you can post on your blog such as:
 - Up-coming events.
 - The club's own event coordination and activities.
 - Your own reflections.

- Discussions on different issues such as humanitarian aid and human rights.
 - Articles on War Child Canada programs.
 - Photos of your club events.
2. **Information tables:** Hold information tables in busy student areas, like lobbies, cafes, or at student events. Be sure to offer information, a War Child Canada petition, a sign-up sheet for our newsletter, and a donation jar. Have a few people attending the table at all times.
 3. **Editorials:** Always be in touch with campus publications. Offer to write features on international development issues, letters-to-the-editor, your event's success story, etc. When writing to local or national dailies, remember there is strength in numbers; be sure that the whole team sends in a letter.
 4. **Point 7 Challenge:** War Child Canada has taken on the Point 7 campaign where we are encouraging the federal government to assign point 7 of the Gross National Income (GNI) to Overseas Development Assistance (ODA), as they agreed to do over thirty years ago. You can write letters to your local MP encouraging them to support this initiative and you can encourage students staff and faculty to give point seven of their income to ODA (its really not that much at all).

D. Staying Informed

If you are going to be liaising with the public, it's a good thing to know the issues. Here are a few places to start:

1. **War Child Canada's Annual Report.** Read it through to learn about our international programs and partners, as well as our domestic projects. You can download the Annual Report from the War Child Canada website, here:
<http://www.warchild.ca/financials>
2. **Sign up for our newsletter.** Sign up yourself, and ask others as well, on the front page of our website here:
<http://www.warchild.ca>
3. **Become a member of our War Child Canada Student Outreach group on Facebook.** Please send an email campusreps@warchild.ca to let us know you're interested in spreading the word as a Student Outreach Team leader.
4. **Communicate with us and tell us what you're up to.** We will try our best to keep all War Child Canada campus reps and groups informed via email regarding all important events and initiatives. It is a good idea to check our website often and contact our Campus Outreach Assistant if you ever have questions or need clarification.
5. **Get informed.** Keep up to date on current events by reading the news. A few places to start are: CBC news, The Globe and Mail, Relief Web, BBC news, and alertnet.org.