



# Approaches to Taking Action Information Sheet

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DIRECT SERVICE	
WHAT IS IT?	Personally engaging with and providing hands-on services to those in need (usually in conjunction with an organization).
EXAMPLE GOAL	By the end of the semester, we will repaint the local women's shelter by recruiting 20 volunteers and getting local businesses to donate funds and resources (paint, paint brushes, etc.), and we will increase the shelter's library by gathering donations of 300 books and gently used toys.
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the staff and the shelter clients to create a scope of work and determine a painting plan.</li> <li>• Work with social workers and/or teachers to understand how best to make the library space more educational.</li> <li>• Recruit volunteers and artists from our school/ community to paint the walls with murals, inspirational and literary quotes and other educational tools.</li> <li>• Hold an open house at the shelter to invite the wider community to a speech and presentation about the services offered at the shelter. Ask attendees to bring a gently-used toy or book to build the shelter's library.</li> </ul>
INDIRECT SERVICE	
WHAT IS IT?	Channeling resources to the needs of a community — locally, nationally, or internationally.
EXAMPLE GOAL	We will collect food to ensure 250 local families have enough nutritious food for Thanksgiving and fundraise to ensure 250 children in a developing community have school lunches for a month.
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a Thanksgiving themed food drive in support of the local food bank.</li> <li>• Host a Thanksgiving dinner fundraiser with a silent auction.</li> <li>• Create a social media campaign to educate peers about local hunger.</li> </ul>
ADVOCACY	
WHAT IS IT?	Educating others about an issue to increase visibility and follow-up with an action that focuses on enacting change.
EXAMPLE GOAL	Over the next four months, we will visit the three neighbouring middle schools to educate all sixth graders about child labor issues, and gather 100 letters from students to present to our district superintendent about ensuring child labor-free sports uniforms and equipment in our schools.
ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create multimedia presentation about child labor aimed at middle school students.</li> <li>• Hold a town-hall meeting in our school gym to invite a child labor expert, an international education or development expert, and a fair trade expert to speak on a panel with our district official in attendance — extend invitation to the middle schools.</li> <li>• Circulate a letter template amongst students asking them to personalize a specific section that shares what they have learned about child labor, and present the letters to district officials at the town hall.</li> <li>• Write a letter to the editor about the issue and what students are saying.</li> </ul>



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM MEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

## Tips on Developing Direct Service Action Ideas

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Direct service is about personally engaging with and providing hands-on support and services to those in need. This can be in conjunction with an organization, especially if it is a direct service provider in that it works to meet peoples' needs like food, shelter, health care, etc., or direct involvement with those who would benefit from the service.

While the possibilities are endless, coming up with the right ideas depends on the action plans you and your team create.

Consider the following when developing your own ideas:

- ▶ What area(s) of need are we looking to address?
- ▶ Is the issue or cause best served through direct service, indirect service or an advocacy action?
- ▶ What type(s) of direct service would be most beneficial to the cause (i.e., hands-on support to the beneficiaries or working with a direct service organization)?
- ▶ Will the service be most effective in partnership with an organization or by finding ways ourselves to help directly?
- ▶ How can we make the greatest impact?
- ▶ The following are some tips and ideas to help you and your team think about how to develop a direct service action idea for your projects.

### One-on-one service ideas

Think about the many ways you and your team can contribute by providing direct, one-on-one support to those in need. Here are some ideas to get you brainstorming all the different ways you can get involved through direct service:

- ▶ Shovel driveways or clear leaves for elderly homeowners.
- ▶ Do a service trip overseas.
- ▶ Read to young children as part of a literacy program.
- ▶ Serve meals at a homeless shelter.
- ▶ Cook meals at a soup kitchen.
- ▶ Help build a school in a developing community.
- ▶ Volunteer at an animal shelter.
- ▶ Work for a crisis hotline.
- ▶ Provide trainings and workshops at community centers or in rural developing communities.
- ▶ Teach English to newcomers or to children overseas.
- ▶ Drive the elderly or infirm to medical appointments.
- ▶ Lay the foundations for water wells in communities with little to no access to clean water.
- ▶ Repaint the local women's shelter.



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## Tips on Developing Direct Service Action Ideas

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### Working with a direct service organization

There are many organizations that address some of the most immediate and basic needs of people who require various services and resources on a short- or long-term basis. Some support local beneficiaries — i.e., people living in your own communities — and some work to provide support to people living in areas of the world that suffer from extreme poverty and lack of access to basic needs. And then there are organizations that work for the overall betterment of people and society as a whole. Here are some ideas to get you brainstorming:

- ▶ Sort clothing and other donations at a Goodwill.
- ▶ Stack shelves at the local food bank.
- ▶ Create an inventory system for the women's shelter to solicit donations based on actual needs.
- ▶ Volunteer with a climate change organization that works with companies to reduce their carbon footprints.
- ▶ Develop a workshop to deliver through an organization that teaches basic hygiene to prevent waterborne diseases.

- ▶ Create a play-based module for an organization that teaches children about the importance of conflict-resolution and peace.
- ▶ Learn anti-bullying tips from an expert organization and then teach those tips in your school community.
- ▶ Organize and play games and activities with children at a youth center.
- ▶ Work with a Community Garden organization to plant one yourself, and organize a program to sustain and manage it.
- ▶ Host an arts and crafts session at a seniors' home.
- ▶ Help build schools and water projects in developing communities.
- ▶ Organize community-wide park and river cleanups.

### Direct Service WE Campaigns

Visit [WE.org/campaigns](https://www.we.org/campaigns) to access resources on the WE Volunteer Now campaign and build on ideas around volunteerism for your direct service action.



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## Tips on Developing Indirect Service Action Ideas

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Indirect service is about channeling resources to the needs of a community — locally, nationally, or globally. This can be in the form of funds raised to support an organization's work in the area of the issue that students are addressing, and/or collecting required resources to donate to an organization.

While the possibilities are endless, coming up with the right ideas depends on the action plans you and your team create.

Consider the following when developing your own ideas:

- ▶ What area(s) of need are we looking to address?
- ▶ Is the issue or cause best served through direct service, indirect service or an advocacy action?
- ▶ What type(s) of indirect service would be most beneficial to the cause (i.e., fundraising, collecting goods and other resources, etc.)?
- ▶ Will the service be most effective in partnership with an organization or by finding ways ourselves to help?
- ▶ How can we make the greatest impact?

When collecting resources other than money, it is important to connect with an organization to ensure that what you collect is indeed what is needed. This is especially true for non-monetary donations that you may want to send overseas. With these kinds of donations, there are logistics, shipping, etc., that have to be planned out, and so it is important to work with an organization. Many organizations don't take non-monetary donations for this reason. The best-intentioned donations can end up costing a lot more for an organization to process than if you work with them from the start.

The following are some tips and ideas to help you and your team think about how to develop an indirect service action idea for your projects.

### Fundraising ideas:

- ▶ Walk-a-thon, Triathlon, Water walks, Barefoot walks, Relay races
- ▶ Sing-a-thons, Dance-a-thons, Read-a-thons
- ▶ Silent auctions, Raffles
- ▶ Candy-grams, Quote-of-the-day-grams
- ▶ Dance lessons — Salsa, Tango, Bollywood, etc.
- ▶ Cooking classes, Bake-offs, Cook-offs, Barbecue contests
- ▶ Bake sales, Pancake breakfasts, All-you-can-eat lunches
- ▶ Garage sale, Scavenger hunt
- ▶ Games tournament — Board games, Hoops, etc.
- ▶ Movie night, Documentary screening, "Red Carpet" film premieres
- ▶ Car washes, Car detailing, Chauffer for a day
- ▶ Coffee house, Poetry readings, Farmers' market

### Collecting resources:

- ▶ Funds to support programs for any organization
- ▶ Imperishable foods and fresh produce for a food bank
- ▶ New or gently-used clothing and household goods
- ▶ Books for local literacy programs
- ▶ Business wear for local homeless shelters to support shelter clients in job interviews
- ▶ Personal hygiene products
- ▶ Old laptops, tablets, desktops, batteries, and other electronics
- ▶ Toys, sports equipment

### Indirect Service through WE Campaigns

Visit [WE.org/campaigns](https://www.we.org/campaigns) to access resources on the following campaigns to connect with existing indirect service action ideas that you can take on and/or expand on:

- ▶ WE take charge campaign
- ▶ WE scare hunger campaign
- ▶ WE are Rafikis campaign
- ▶ WE create change campaign



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## Tips on Developing Advocacy Action Ideas

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Advocacy-related actions have two key interconnected goals:

- ▶ Educate others about an issue to increase awareness.
- ▶ Follow up with an action that focuses on enacting change.

Actions around advocacy often look like raising awareness, but without a strong corresponding call to action, educating others on its own is not considered service in and of itself. The call to action ensures that others become involved in your campaign or project to add their own voices to the issue so as to create momentum that gets shared in an organized manner with those in the position to hear the collective of voices and enact change.

While the possibilities are endless, coming up with the right ideas depends on the action plans you and your team create.

- ▶ Consider the following when developing your own advocacy campaigns:
- ▶ Is the issue or cause best served through direct service, indirect service or an advocacy action?
- ▶ What policies or current actions that are happening in our school, organization(s), business(es), community, nation, or the world do we want to change?
- ▶ How would this change come about (i.e., is it a change in current practices, policies, decision-making processes, funding, etc.)
- ▶ How would we educate others about the issue and the change that is needed?
- ▶ Through which medium can we have the greatest reach?
- ▶ What is our call to action that will rally others to have the greatest impact?

### Educating Others

Effective education or awareness activities consider a balanced mix of the following:

- ▶ What are the facts and stats we want to share?
- ▶ How do we put a human face to the issue?
- ▶ Provides the answer to: "Why should I care?"
- ▶ What would change mean or look like?

Here are some examples of how to educate others (please remember this is not an exhaustive list):

- ▶ Writing letters to legislators or newspaper and magazine editors
- ▶ Creating and displaying posters
- ▶ Scripting and performing a play
- ▶ Developing a website
- ▶ Producing brochures or pamphlets
- ▶ Designing infographics
- ▶ Filming a PSA, short film, or documentary



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## Tips on Developing Advocacy Action Ideas

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### Developing Strong Calls to Action

The tenets of an effective call to action include:

- ▶ A clear and compelling message
- ▶ Active words and tone
- ▶ Clarity in what you are asking people to do and how they can do it

Calls to action can have many different approaches, each one asking people to do something in response to what they have seen, heard or learned through the advocacy campaign. Here are a handful of examples of how an advocacy campaign can ask people to act (please remember that this is not an exhaustive list):

- ▶ Write letters to a specific person or group of people (such as school administration, local business(es), or leaders, state governors, federal politicians, national and international bodies such as the United Nations, etc.) asking for action or change.
- ▶ Sign a petition — whether in person or online.
- ▶ Make a pledge — either monetary or a personal promise to do something (e.g., reduce environmental footprint, teach five more people about the issue, etc.).
- ▶ Share facts, stats, visuals, or other materials from the campaign through social media.
- ▶ Post a message or image of yourself showing you in action as a response to the advocacy campaign.
- ▶ Text a word or message to a specific number, which could include an automatic donation, an action supported by partners or sponsors (e.g., send a text and X business or organization will do Y), etc.

Some examples of clear calls to action include:

- ▶ Sign this petition addressed to our local sports team to end the use of uniforms and sports equipment made through child labor.
- ▶ Write to your city councillor to implement a city-wide composting program by introducing weekly green bin pickups.
- ▶ Track your water usage and consumption every day for a week, and pledge to cut that usage by 30 %.
- ▶ Commit to sending five tweets with different facts and statistics about a girl's right to education, and ensure you get at least 20 shares on each.

### Advocacy Actions through WE Campaigns

Visit [WE.org/campaigns](https://www.wearewithweservice.org/campaigns) to access resources on the following campaigns to connect with existing advocacy action ideas that you can take on and/or expand on:

- ▶ WE are silent campaign
- ▶ WE won't rest campaign
- ▶ WE step up campaign