



PEACE IS POSSIBLE

A Generational Commitment for a Better World

PEACE IS POSSIBLE
ADVOCACY
GUIDE



Turn Your Passion for Peace into Advocacy Actions

To create everlasting world peace we must bring hope to the hopeless, opportunity to the impoverished, empowerment to the oppressed and dignity to the marginalized. Active citizens today are ready to commit to a more peaceful world, but are often unaware of where to start. Advocacy is a great method for turning your dedication for global peace into taking action for peace-related policies, projects and programs.

Peace is the ability to respect differences within our diverse global community, transcending the sovereignty of nations. Peace ensures human dignity and guarantees humanity is preserved for future generations. It is not just the absence of conflict, but also the prevalence of justice. Advocating for this peace through the Peace is Possible campaign and associated actions that address the barriers of peace in your community can make peace more than just a vision – but a possibility.

Advocacy in the 21st Century

Advocacy is the act or process of publicly supporting a specific cause influencing political, economic and social systems. By being an advocate for peace, you are adding your voice to a global movement for change—your actions aim to change what is, into what it should be. Advocacy requires engaging all sectors of society to understand the challenges their communities face and how changes to policies and practices can address those barriers to peace.

The purpose of advocating for peace is to:

- **Educate** others and ourselves about barriers or challenges to peace that need to be addressed.
- **Change attitudes**, specifically misconceptions about peace and barriers that exist to achieving it locally.
- **Influence law-makers** to create or change laws to ensure justice, human dignity and the possibility of peace for all.
- **Address policy-makers** so that their agenda addresses those challenges that prevent achieving an everlasting world peace.
- **Influence the media** to draw more attention to your efforts in making peace possible.
- **Pressure public officials** for better enforcement of laws and policies that make peace possible for all.



- **Develop coalitions and networks** of stakeholders from all sectors of society to achieve a shared goal of peace.
- **Garner support for community projects and programs** that provide solutions to ensuring peace for all.

Advocacy endeavors can take many shapes and serve many purposes. However, all advocacy efforts should unite all sectors of society to understand a need affecting the community, as well as take the necessary actions to address that need through change in policies, laws and practices. By uniting all sectors of society to advocate for this common cause, your community can make peace possible for individuals everywhere.

Become an Advocate

To make peace possible in the 21st century, global citizens from all corners of the world and walks of life must become advocates of peace and the ideas, solutions and projects that make peace possible. For many individuals and organizations, advocacy is a new role that they have little experience in. However, there are key steps an active citizen can take to prepare to be a champion for positive change and an advocate for peace.

COMMIT

An everlasting world peace is the responsibility of all citizens and communities worldwide. When advocating to community stakeholders for peace, you must first demonstrate your own commitment. Make the commitment to Peace is Possible at www.peaceispossible.cc.

BELIEVE

Creating an everlasting world peace requires a new approach to how we talk about peace – one recognizing that peace demands every individual's active involvement to ensure that human life is preserved. Before others will believe peace is possible, you must believe it yourself!

INSPIRE

In order for the Peace is Possible movement to gain popularity, people must be inspired to join. As you become an advocate for peace, inspire others around you to see peace from a new perspective. Peace is about hope, opportunity, justice and prosperity.

CELEBRATE

As you become an advocate you will discover both the challenges preventing peace and the solutions that have been developed to address them around the world. Celebrate and share the positive stories of sustainable peace to demonstrate how peace is possible for all.



SHARE

To become an effective advocate of peace it is important for you to develop and share your own ideals about how peace is possible for your community, country and world. Use the technology and online communication platforms that exist today to develop and share your vision to make peace possible for all.

Advocating for Peace with the Global Goals for Sustainable Development

It is important for all advocates of peace to realize that to achieve peace we must strategically address all barriers that exist within our local communities and countries and their root causes. The Global Goals for Sustainable Development outline key targets for the world to end poverty, combat climate change and fight injustice and inequality. The collective actions of communities worldwide to advance the Global Goals will bring us one step closer to making peace possible.

Your advocacy efforts can use the Global Goals to identify the priority challenges that exist as barriers to peace in your community. It is important to define the challenge you wish to address as narrowly as possible. This will help outline the advocacy plan and determine what other information you need to gather about the challenge, who to target for your advocacy and the best method to advocate.

How to Conduct an Advocacy Effort

Creating lasting change takes time; therefore advocating for your cause will also take time planning, collaborating and taking action. Use the steps below to guide you through your advocacy effort.

1. RESEARCH THE NEED OBSTRUCTING PEACE

Before embarking on your advocacy action, it is important to isolate, define and deeply understand the challenge you aim to address. You must understand what the problem is, how you and other community members are affected and what the possible causes and solutions are. Consider all related aspects such as the laws related to the challenge, attitudes and behaviors toward it and how social practices influence. Question how each sector of society directly impacts or is impacted by the challenge. By the end of this process you should have a well defined one sentence description of the need and the root cause you wish to address.



2. FORM A COALITION OF ADVOCATES

To achieve your goals it is important to have the capacity to support continued engagement and advocacy. Forming a coalition of like-minded stakeholders from all sectors of society is an effective way to maximize your effort, mobilize resources and reach more people with your cause. It is important that members of the coalition are present while establishing the goal addressing the problem previously identified. Across all partners in the coalition, it is important to have consistent messaging and the most up-to-date information about the challenge and the planned actions to address it.

3. DETERMINE SHARED GOALS

Once you have the core group of collaborators addressing the community challenge unite, it is important to define shared goals together. Coalition members can share their experiences, knowledge and resources to identify achievable goals for their advocacy efforts. By defining the goals together, each coalition member has a stake in its success and understands the direction that must be taken to make progress.

4. FRAME THE MESSAGE FOR PEACE

Framing your message requires defining what would engage target stakeholders in order to achieve the goals. Often times there is limited time, text space or opportunities to deliver the message. Therefore, the message must be concise and consistent. There are four components to an effective advocacy message:

Problem Statement – A short and direct description of the problem you want to address.

Relevance – A brief explanation of why and how the problems are relevant for stakeholders and wider society

Proposal – A simple description of your coalitions suggested solutions.

Action – Concise action steps for the target audience to take and how they should take these actions.

5. IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET STAKEHOLDERS

Your advocacy strategy depends on who you want to reach. You must understand and identify stakeholders who have the power, influence and ability to affect the change needed to solve the barriers to peace in the community. As you begin to identify and engage target stakeholders, some will take more convincing to believe in your cause while others will want to become coalition members right away. There are also stakeholders who won't want to support your cause; no matter how much information you share. In these cases, it is important to demonstrate the power of your coalition and the importance of the cause by engaging the public to share their voice as well.



6. OUTLINE ADVOCACY TACTICS AND ACTIONS

Each stakeholder identified as a target for the advocacy effort requires a different approach and advocacy tactic. Advocating to policy-makers could involve letters, phone calls or in-person meetings while advocating to large businesses to implement employee diversity policies could require engaging the public through media marketing, marches and social media. It is important to evaluate the target stakeholders, their connection and response to the challenge you wish to address and the behaviors that influence their actions. Using an appropriate advocacy tactic for the target stakeholder will ensure greater results.

7. ACTIVATE THE COMMUNITY

Most challenges that act as barriers to peace affect a large group of a community's population. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness to the broader public about the need that exists, how it is affecting the community and a call to action for what regular citizens can do within their daily lives to solve the problem. Citizens could potentially connect the public with their advocacy effort by collecting signatures for a petition, posting on social media, or participating in a community-wide event. Activating the community in support of your cause will not only help reach your advocacy goals, but also will unite the community in the understanding that peace is possible.

8. MEDIA MARKETING

Journalists and news outlets are in constant need of information and ideas for stories with importance to the local community. Advocates can think of themselves as sources for these stories. To be a good source and support to your advocacy campaign, it is necessary to have expertise, credibility, reliability and timely information as well as a broad knowledge on the challenge. Engaging the media can help your advocacy effort by changing or forming people's behavior and opinions about a challenge, as well as building a healthier community.

By following these steps, you are embarking on an advocacy effort that consists of building an advocacy strategy with a coalition of like-minded advocates. Advocacy efforts vary in scope; therefore these steps are only meant to serve as a guide in developing your advocacy strategy.



Actions to Advocate for Peace

The advocacy coalition must work hard to identify and understand the need being addressed and its solution. The advocacy strategy outlines that solution or goal and the actions to achieve it. There are a variety of action steps, also known as advocacy tactics, to advocate to community stakeholders:

DIRECT ENGAGEMENT TO DECISION MAKERS

Directly engaging with policy-makers and government representatives allows you to introduce your cause and influence their opinion. During these meetings, phone calls and direct interactions, you must demonstrate why the cause is relevant to the decision-maker and the broader society. This tactic is a great method to evaluate the capacity and willingness of the policy-maker to support your cause.

PETITION FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Petitions are a beneficial way to demonstrate how many people support your vision and solution for peace. Petitions give the coalition the opportunity to engage diverse audiences within the community for the cause. These voices are especially effective in influencing legislative action and policy change. When creating and collecting names for a petition, remember to collect signatories' contact information, such as email, phone number or email, to prove the petition signers exist.

LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN

Letter writing is similar to petitioning; however it requires a little more effort but often yields greater results. Handwritten letters by a citizen to a government representative explaining the importance of the cause can be a very effective engagement tool. Your coalition can organize letter writing events and campaigns to engage large numbers of individuals in understanding and taking action for the cause.

RESEARCH AND DATA ADVOCACY

Research conducted with the intention of providing evidence and arguments to support a particular cause can also be used to advocate for policy, law and practice change. Often this research measures social problems in a way that is understandable to the masses, heightens public awareness of them and catalyzes policy proposals and legislative action. Research advocacy is an especially useful tool to advocate for changes in healthcare systems and environmental regulation.

PUBLIC MEETINGS AND FORUMS

Public meetings are a great opportunity to share ideas and encourage discussions. They promote participation and diversity of opinion. Often the biggest challenge to an advocacy campaign is creating public awareness. Public meetings are a great platform to educate individuals about community challenges and the advocacy coalition's solutions to address those challenges. It is important to remember that your public meeting should have an end goal, which is usually getting the public to understand and support your coalition's solution for peace.



PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS

Public demonstrations such as rallies and marches are significant events that unite large numbers of people to express a united supportive or objecting voice in order to prompt change. These events never happen spontaneously and take months of planning, promoting in order to be successful. With creativity, widespread support and a clear message, the public display of sentiment shows both policy-makers and the public that there is grassroots support for the cause.

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

In the 21st century, the Internet is a great platform for advocacy efforts including online petitions and email blasts. Social media is a great platform to engage large numbers of people with your campaign effort. It provides opportunities to directly reach target stakeholders, mobilize supporters and enable discussions around the issue. The most important thing to remember when using social media for advocacy is to be social. Share and comment on other individuals and organizations posts to start new conversations and engage them with your effort. The more you engage with your followers, the more they will understand and support your efforts.

These are a sample of tactics that form the advocacy strategy. Determine which method will work the best is by analyzing your target stakeholders and evaluate which method will best engage them, share the message and achieve results.

Tips for Effective Advocacy

KNOW THE FACTS

To build and maintain credibility for your effort it is necessary to have all the facts and understand both sides of any issue. Having this information will help you in conversations with your coalition, other advocates, government officials, the media and the general public.

USE THE FACTS

Any position you take or discussion you have should be backed up by the facts. It is often helpful to put the facts that support your advocacy effort in a one-pager that you can distribute when interacting with different stakeholders.

HAVE A CLEAR AND CONCISE MESSAGE

The people that you meet and share your message with, like government officials, the press and the public, will not have time for long documents and explanations. You must make your point quickly and concisely.

STAY INFORMED

As you continue to implement your advocacy tactics and work toward your goals, it is important to stay informed of current events and affairs that will impact your cause. Changes may occur that will cause you to change your tactics and approach while engaging stakeholders.



NURTURE RELATIONSHIPS AND WORK COLLABORATIVELY

Advocacy consists of continual engagement with stakeholders from all sectors, backgrounds and beliefs. It is important to continue to nurture relationships and foster collaborations with stakeholders of all types. Whether they support the campaign or not, building those relationships and perspectives surrounding your effort can ultimately ensure more sustainable outcomes.

ENGAGE THE PUBLIC

Numbers speak loudly to elected officials who make decisions for large numbers of people. Use media outlets, social media, letters, emails, advertisements and other grassroots strategies to engage as many citizens as possible. They should not only be aware of your advocacy campaign but also understand the barriers to peace that you are trying to address, and the mass of people who support the campaign.

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

Advocacy requires going into the community and networking with as many people as possible. Make sure to spread the word and use your own voice in advocating for the cause. Even at social events and parties that are outside of your advocacy campaign, you can share your cause and find supporters.

SAY THANK YOU

Remember that all stakeholders are busy and time is valuable to them. Try and keep meetings short and always say thank you afterward. When your advocacy efforts achieve your desired goals, remember to thank everyone that provided insight and helped you make peace possible for your community.

MOST IMPORTANT TIP

Remember the purpose of the Peace is Possible campaign. The goal is to achieve peace for those people at the center of your advocacy effort. Lack of access to services, development opportunities and human dignity prevents peace from being possible for billions of individuals around the world. Empowering citizens with programs that enhance health and wellness, providing educational and economic development and ensuring prosperity and sustainability can lead to a more peaceful world.



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