

Stop the War on Children: Postcard-Writing Event Toolkit

On May 16, the global Save the Children movement is launching our Stop the War on Children (SWOC) campaign. Around the world, Save the Children will be organizing local events and actions to raise greater awareness about the need to stop violence against children living in conflict zones.

You can help by organizing a postcard-writing event for other volunteers, students, organizational partners and community members in your town. Your postcard event could be a short program incorporated into another meeting or part of a larger community event – it's up to you!

Please try to plan your postcard-writing event during the last two weeks of May, when attention on our new global campaign will be at its highest.

Postcard-Writing Event Toolkit Contents

In this toolkit, you will find the following resources:

- Background on the new Stop the War on Children campaign
- Background on our advocacy campaign in support of a congressional resolution calling for an end to attacks on schools in conflict zones
- A sample program for a postcard-writing event
- Sample postcard language to share with attendees of your postcard-writing event

About the Stop the War on Children Campaign

SWOC is a new global campaign focusing on protecting children living in conflict zones. SWOC is part of the Save the Children's Every Last Child campaign, which focuses on ensuring that the most marginalized and deprived children can live, learn and be protected from harm.

Today, nearly 1 in 5 children around the world are living in conflict zones. Conflicts are lasting longer and are more likely to be urban and fought among civilian populations. Sometimes, children are deliberately targeted, hundreds of thousands more are dying every year from indirect effects of conflict, such as disease and the breakdown of services.

Through SWOC, we will uphold international standards, hold perpetrators of violence to account and take action to protect children and support their recovery.

You can learn more about this campaign on [our website](#) and by visiting StoptheWaronChildren.org.



Photo: Mohammed Awadhi/Save the Children

Resolution to Protect Children from Attacks on Education in Conflict

Why Congress Must Act

Access to safe and quality education is key to securing children's futures. But, in times of war, children's education is often disrupted leaving them without critical support for learning, growth, and stability.

In conflicts around the world, schools are being deliberately bombed, torched and destroyed. Students and teachers are threatened, killed, raped, kidnapped and recruited by armed groups at and on the way to school.

Attacks on education often have a disproportionate impact on girls. In some areas, school girls have been specifically targeted for sexual violence and by armed groups that oppose female education. The threat of gendered violence contributes to heightened fears and, in turn, limits girls' social mobility, including access to education.

Quality educational opportunities in conflict zones can contribute to peace and security, help prevent future violence, protect children from harm and support mental health. Yet, despite its critical and lifesaving role, education in humanitarian response settings is not receiving the funding or priority it should.

A Resolution to Stop Attacks on Schools

At a time when there are 142 million children living in high-intensity conflict zones, it is critical for Congress to act to condemn attacks on schools and underscore the importance of education for children affected by conflict. A bipartisan resolution led by Representatives Nita Lowey (D-NY) and Steve Chabot (R-OH) calls on the U.S. government to take 12 critical steps, including to:

- Hold perpetrators of attacks on schools, students, and teachers **accountable**.
- Support **policies and programs** to return refugee girls and boys to learning as soon as possible.
- **Monitor attacks** on schools, students and teachers to support coordinated diplomacy and programs.

Call to Action: Urge your member of Congress to cosponsor this critical resolution to ensure children living in conflict zones have access to safe and quality education.

As of this writing, a Senate version of the resolution has not yet been introduced. Your SCAN staff contact will alert you if the Senate version is introduced prior to your event.

By the Numbers: The Education Crisis in Conflict Zones

27 million

of children out of school in 24 conflict-affected countries

1,432

of attacks on schools verified by the United Nations in 2017

4 million

of refugee children out of school

1 in 3

of schools destroyed, damaged, or occupied in Syria and South Sudan

<2%

Less than 2% of all funding for humanitarian responses goes toward xx education



Save the Children
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Sample Postcard-Writing Event Program

You can help build support for the congressional resolution to stop attacks on schools by organizing a postcard writing event. Your handwritten postcards to your member of Congress urging him or her to cosponsor the resolution will have a big impact.

Below is a sample program you can use to organize your postcard-writing event. Remember, this activity could be a part of an existing meeting or event you already have planned. It can be as short or long as you'd like it to be.

Be sure to request postcards from your SCAN staff contact prior to your event.

Sample Program

- **Welcome attendees:** Provide a little bit of background about the Stop the War on Children campaign. Key statistics you can use include:
 - Nearly 1 in 5 children around the world lives in a conflict zone
 - 27 million children are out of school in 24 conflict-affected countries
 - In 2017, there were 1,432 attacks on schools verified by the United Nations
- **Show a video:** To help attendees connect with why school is so critical, [show a video featuring the story of Sirine](#) from Syria who has started to recover from the horrors of war after going back to school in her adopted country of Iraq.
- **Talk about the education resolution:** Briefly describe the resolution in Congress to the attendees. You can use the background on the previous page to guide you.
- **Write a postcard:** Sample postcard language is on the following page, but encourage advocates to write about the reasons they care about this issue. The more personal and from the heart, the better!
- **Thank attendees and take a photo:** At the end of the event, you can ask the attendees to take one final action by writing the word stop on the inside of their hand and posing for a photo to share on social media. Use the hashtag #StoptheWaronChildren when sharing your photos.



One of Save the Children's Child Friendly Spaces in Sana'a, Yemen



Sample Postcard Copy

Below is an example of a brief letter to your member of Congress to use as a guide when writing a postcard. As you write your postcard, remember to:

- Have the address of your member of Congress handy so you can address the postcard during the event. Look up your representative's mailing address at <https://www.house.gov/> and your senators' mailing addresses at <https://www.senate.gov/>.
- Include your return address on the postcard so your member of Congress can confirm you are a constituent
- Coordinate with your SCAN staff contact on whether you will mail the cards or deliver them in person. If you plan to mail the cards, please work with your staff contact to obtain postcard stamps and decide who will mail the cards.

Sample Postcard

<p>Dear Representative/Senator [insert name]:</p> <p>I am deeply concerned about the increasing number of attacks on schools in conflict zones around the world. Since 2017, there have been more than 1,400 attacks on schools. Ensuring children have a safe school to attend helps secure their futures and protects them from harm. I urge you to support the bipartisan House Resolution 277 [<i>Senate number to come</i>] to condemn attacks on education and underscore the importance of safe schools for children living in conflict zones.</p> <p>Sincerely, [your name]</p>	<p>Name Address City, State, Zip</p> <div data-bbox="1289 789 1435 873" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Stamp</div> <p>Member of Congress Address City, State, Zip</p>
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