

Checklist for the CDF Freedom Schools® National Day of Social Action

Get Out the Vote for Me!

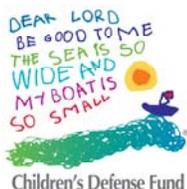
**Kid Candidates Support a Strong Start for America's Children
July 23rd National Day of Social Action**

Below are steps to help you in planning your *CDF Freedom Schools* National Day of Social Action.

1. Participate in a conference call on Wednesday, June 25th, with CDF Communications, Field and Policy Team members who will answer questions about logistics and planning your event. We will also introduce sample 'Kid Candidate' videos and go over in detail how to upload your own kid candidate videos.
2. Participate in a second conference call on Tuesday, July 8th, with CDF Communications, Field and Policy Team members for latest information on the Strong Start legislation and talking points for your National Day of Social Action.
3. Prepare a guest list for the July 23rd celebration of *CDF Freedom Schools* program and "Get Out and Vote for Me!" campaign literature and send invitations. Plan to invite parents, community leaders and federal, state and/or local policymakers. You will want to include local press. (See media toolkit.)
 - ✓ Get the addresses of community leaders and policymakers you want to invite.
 - ✓ Prepare invitations for parents, teachers, local people who run early childhood programs like Head Start and others you are inviting. (A sample invitation is in this tool kit.)
 - ✓ Mail the invitations to community leaders and policymakers no later than July 7th.
 - ✓ Send the invitations home to parents on July 1st.

Prepare an agenda and program for the Celebration of *CDF Freedom Schools* program and 'Election Day' on July 23rd.

- ✓ Plan the program. Build on the sample agenda in the toolkit to fit your local needs.
 - Choose a moderator who will keep the program on schedule. It might be the Freedom Schools director or a servant leader. The moderator should be prepared to "educate" the event participants to the *CDF Freedom Schools* way. (Use talking points from the toolkit.)
 - Plan a special Harambee! Invite a special guest – one of your city council members or legislators or a local TV anchor to read-aloud. Prepare the children to sing a song or act out the short book by Daenize Lauture, *Running the Road to ABC*; wind it up with all the children singing "Something Inside So Strong".
 - Have children make signs before the event about how federal budget cuts will hurt children like themselves. The children can hold these signs during the budget discussion. They will be the backdrop for your "press conference". For example: "Get Out the Vote for Me!" "All Children Deserve a STRONG START!"



- Have your servant leaders begin collecting stories. Be prepared to record and upload the stories as early as June 25th. You can upload individual stories from children or from your site as a whole. Stories should focus on two main themes 1) why voting is important; and 2) why a strong start for every child, or high-quality early development and learning, is important.
- Be creative in shaping your “press conference” around ‘Election Day’. Have a select ‘Kid Candidate’ be prepared to give a stump speech based on the talking points provided by CDF on June 25th. Select one child, a servant leader, and a parent or Head Start program director to present stories about the importance of universal pre-kindergarten and early childhood development and learning. Allow time for questions after the presentations. (Use the talking points from the toolkit.)
- ✓ Develop and print an agenda. Amend the sample agenda in the tool kit to fit your local needs; type it and make copies to distribute on July 23rd.
- ✓ Prepare a media alert and press release for the event. (Adapt the sample media alert and sample press release in the media toolkit.)
- ✓ Prepare for the mock election.
 - Assemble materials for children to use when registering to vote and asking their parents to pledge to vote – paper and crayons for younger children; writing paper and pens for other children, registration tables, registration cards, sample ballots and campaign materials.
 - Encourage parents to pledge to vote in the Congressional Election in November. Circulate ‘pledge cards’ that can be returned and followed up on.
 - Prepare soap boxes for children to take turns giving short speeches to small groups in their level ‘If I Were President’... Children are encouraged to dream big and believe in themselves.
 - Have tables and chairs available for children and parents to use both when registering and when listening to the invited guests.
 - Have ballot boxes prepared in advance and an orderly process for children and parents to record and cast their ballots.
 - Prepare sign-in sheets for all participants who come to your event. (A sample is in the toolkit.)
 - Prepare for recording the event and collecting stories and ‘Kid Candidate’ speeches during the event.
 - Prepare for collecting and packaging pledge forms, sign-in sheets, story bank videos and forms, and media release forms for each story in the story bank form to send to the *CDF Freedom Schools* team in Washington, D.C.

4. Before the Event

- ✓ Plan a stage area and chairs for the guests.
- ✓ Have a table for guests to sign in and have available copies of fliers about your *CDF Freedom Schools* program and the fact sheet on the Strong Start for America’s Children Act (From the toolkit.)
- ✓ Have name tags for everyone.

- ✓ Start the program on time. Have everyone lined up who will be presenting.
 - ✓ Have the materials and table set up for registering to vote, pledge form completion, and voting.
5. Following up on your event.
- ✓ Send a thank you note home to parents, community leaders and policymakers who attended the event. Encourage them to continue to support the Strong Start for America's Children Act and to vote for children in November and beyond.
 - ✓ Collect pledge forms, sign-in sheets, story bank form and media releases; then send to the *CDF Freedom Schools* office in Washington, D.C.
 - ✓ Urge the college-aged, servant leaders to continue to collect stories throughout the summer session, and then send the story bank with contact information for each story to CDF's office in Washington, D.C. Continue to follow the Strong Start and Kid Candidate campaigns by checking on CDF's Web site. Stay engaged through CDF action alerts, newsletters, and Facebook.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring EVERY child a *Strong Start* in life.