



An initiative by



President Gorbachev, Shaq, Hedley and world renowned leaders join 18,000 students in movement for global change at We Day

– Access event photos at weday.com/press or watch the live webcast at Muchmusic.com/weday –
– Connect to the We Day movement #weday, @freethechildren @craigkielburger, www.facebook.com/weday –

Vancouver, BC (October 13, 2011) – Today, an epic line-up of iconic social activists and inspiring entertainers will take centre stage at Rogers Arena for the world's largest youth empowerment event of its kind – **We Day**. An annual initiative of international children's charity and educational partner, Free The Children, today's event will empower and show thousands of passionate youth from 675 schools across North America they are not alone in their journey to make a difference and further ignite a youth-driven movement for global change. Hundreds of thousands more from around the world will join the **We Day** movement through watching the live stream of the event at www.muchmusic.com/weday starting at 9:15 a.m. PST.

Leading the electrified crowd are hosts television personality **Jessi Cruickshank** and MuchMusic VJ **Jesse Giddings**. To help them tackle some of the most pressing issues of today, youth and educators will have the opportunity to hear from world-renowned speakers like **Mikhail Gorbachev**, Former Soviet President and Nobel Peace Laureate, **Mia Farrow**, award winning actress and activist, **Craig** and **Marc Kielburger**, international children's rights activists and co-founders of Free The Children and other iconic figures like NBA All-Star **Shaquille O'Neal** and **Holly Branson**. Sharing their own personal journeys of overcoming obstacles will be Vancouverite **Liz Murray**, inspirational speaker and best known as having been homeless in her youth and graduating from Harvard, aboriginal rights activist **Waneek-Horn Miller** and Me to We motivational speakers, former child soldier **Michel Chikwanine**, **Spencer West**, **Noah Kaplan** and **Robin Wiszowaty**. Pumping up the crowd with energizing performances will be multi-platinum, JUNO and MMVA Award winning recording artists **Hedley**, JUNO Award nominated, MMVA winning Canadian band **Down With Webster** and platinum selling, JUNO Award winning Canadian pop icon and producer, **Shawn Desman**. Shawn will also be leading this year's We Day dance and is offering students the opportunity to dance with him at We Day events across Canada through a video contest at www.AOL.ca/weday.

Lorne Segal, President of Kingswood Properties and Director of the Vancouver Board of Trade is the Chair of **We Day** Vancouver and has been the driving force behind Vancouver **We Day**, bringing the event to youth and educators across the province.

"Youth coming together to lead global change is the movement of our time. We Day proves to youth that a better world is possible and they are not alone in their commitment to social justice," said Craig Kielburger. "Though individual actions may seem small, if you shift your perspective you'll see that together the impact is huge. Last year alone these actions added up to 1.7 million volunteer hours logged and \$5.4 million raised for more than 500 causes locally and globally. We Day is truly a movement and a force of social change."

According to Dave Rosin, guitar player for Hedley, "We Day is all about striving for change together by connecting with other students, speakers, and leaders from around the world."

Vancouverite Jesse Giddings, MuchMusic VJ and co-host of We Day agrees. "We can all be the change. I hope everyone leaves We Day feeling encouraged, inspired and motivated to be the change in their community, and across this beautiful earth of ours."

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We Day is free to all students and educators thanks to the generosity of sponsors, including co-title sponsors National Bank Financial Group and OMERS Worldwide and broadcast partner MuchMusic, part of Bell Media who has partnered with Free The Children on We Day since 2007.

We Day is not just an event. Motivated by powerful speakers and performers, students take the messages learned at We Day back to their peers and begin planning their year of action through a unique educational program provided by Free The Children (www.freethechildren.com/weschools). Through the program they will pledge to take one local and one global action and will be able to see the positive results of their efforts during the school year. This unparalleled educational opportunity has led to increased student engagement in schools and communities and has contributed to a greater commitment to philanthropy, stronger academic achievement and caring school cultures.

Beyond the classroom, everyone can join the **We Day** movement with one simple action. 'Like' We Day on Facebook (www.facebook.com/weday) and join the over half a million others who receive daily tips and ideas on how to live 'we' every day. Even better, for every 'like' sponsors will donate \$1 to Free The Children, up to \$1 million dollars.

We Day momentum continues to sweep the country stopping next at the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium in Waterloo Region on November 16, the MTS Centre in Winnipeg on November 23 and Théâtre St-Denis in Montreal on February 29 and March 1, 2012.

Both Toronto and Vancouver We Days will be featured in a special to air on MuchMusic, **Sunday, Oct. 30 at 7 p.m. ET**. An encore broadcast will air on MuchMusic **Sunday, Oct. 30 at 10 p.m. ET**.

Note to Press:

Visit the **We Day** online press room (www.weday.com/press) to:

- Access photos from today's event as of **3:30 p.m. PST**
- Download high resolution photos of We Day speakers and performers
- Request an interview with Co-Founders of Free The Children, Craig and Marc Kielburger
- Access background information on We Day and Free The Children

Web Links:

Official We Day website: www.weday.com

We Day on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/weday.com>

Free The Children website: www.freethechildren.com

Live webcast: www.musicmusic.com/weday

About We Day

Youth coming together to lead global change is the movement of our time. We Day (www.weday.com) is the manifestation of this movement. Harnessing the energy and passion of this young community of change-makers, We Day brings youth together in an unparalleled setting to show them that they are not alone in their journey to make a difference. We Day is not just an event. It's a movement.

We Day is part of an unparalleled educational opportunity called the We Schools in Action program. Throughout the year-long program, young people turn their inspiration into action by committing to take one local and one global action throughout the school year. In the 2010/2011 school year alone,

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youth volunteered 1.7 million hours in their communities and raised more than \$5.4 million to support local and global organizations.

We Day events are completely free of charge to students and educators, thanks to the support of generous sponsors who believe in the power of youth to change the world.

We Day events will be held in Toronto, Vancouver, Waterloo Region, Winnipeg and Montreal throughout the 2011/2012 school year.

About Free The Children

Free The Children (www.freethechildren.com) is the world's largest network of children helping children through education, with more than one million youth involved in our innovative education and development programs in 45 countries. Founded in 1995 by international child rights activist Craig Kielburger, we are a **charity** and **educational partner** that believes in a world where all young people are **free to achieve their fullest potential as agents of change**. Our domestic programs **educate, engage and empower hundreds of thousands** of youth in North America, the UK and around the world. Our international projects have brought over **650 schools** and **school rooms** to youth and provided **clean water, health care and sanitation** to **one million** people around the world.

Free The Children has a proven track record of success. The organization has received the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child (also known as the Children's Nobel Prize), the Human Rights Award from the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations, and has formed successful partnerships with leading school boards and Oprah's Angel Network.

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For more information or to speak with someone directly, please contact:

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