

OTHER TITLES IN THIS SERIES:

GRANTMAKING

NONPROFIT UNIVERSE

COLLABORATION

LEADERSHIP FOR A CHANGING WORLD

THE PATH TO IMPACT

THOUGHTFUL SITE VISITS



Teen Philanthropy CAFÉ

SNACKABLE BITES ON GIVING, FOR TEENS

ON TODAY'S MENU: **USING YOUR VOICE**



Welcome to the Café



WHY MIGHT I CONSIDER GOING PUBLIC ABOUT THE CAUSES I CARE ABOUT? WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO LETTING OTHERS KNOW I CARE? HOW CAN I ENGAGE OTHERS IN MAKING A DIFFERENCE?



These are big questions, and you've come to the right place for answers. In this issue, we'll explore the value of going public as a giver, and how to become more comfortable about being known as a philanthropist. So pull up a seat, order your tall iced frappe or green tea, and we'll get you thinking and talking about what giving means to you. Would you like foam on that?

On Today's Menu **USING YOUR VOICE**

OBJECTIVE:

Share with others the mission and meaning behind your giving. Consider whether you want to "get out there" publicly with your giving. Make a difference by using your voice.

It's natural for many philanthropists to want to keep their roles and work hidden from public view. At the same time, there are lots of compelling reasons to go public with your giving.

Regardless of whether you want to "go public" with your giving, you can make a bigger difference in the world by simply talking about and engaging with the causes you care most about.

Going public about your giving or your interests is a form of leadership. It's a chance for givers to shine a light on issues that matter to them—and become a role model for others. When your friends, classmates, or others in your community find out that you feel strongly about a certain issue, it may inspire them to do the same. In that way, you are not only raising money for a cause you care about, but also raising awareness for it as well. (Check out *Leadership in Philanthropy*, another guide in the Teen Philanthropy Café series, to learn more about the ways philanthropists lead.)

What are some ways you can go public with your giving, if that's right for you? And how can you gain more confidence in telling peers or talking publicly about the causes you care about most? Keep reading to find out.

WHAT'S PHILANTHROPY, REALLY?

Philanthropy is a big word that means to *give*. It usually refers to giving money, and can also include giving other things (volunteering your time, for example, or sharing a special skill). The word itself is defined as a "love of humanity." It's a way to show kindness, to express what you care about in the world and the difference you want to make—and to do so with a gift of your money, time, or talent.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE:

This series introduces young people to strategic, thoughtful philanthropy, and inspires them toward giving with impact. Families and adults who work with youth can use these guides to facilitate peer discussion and fun activities around giving. This project is a partnership of Exponent Philanthropy and Youth Philanthropy Connect, with funding by the Frieda C. Fox Family Foundation.



SO DIG IN AND BEGIN.

GETTING THOUGHTFUL ABOUT USING YOUR VOICE

There are several reasons why you might use your voice as a complement to your philanthropic involvement in causes you care about. Here are some of them:

- 1 YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT AN ISSUE, ORGANIZATION, OR POPULATION THAT COULD BENEFIT FROM MORE PEOPLE KNOWING ABOUT IT.
- 2 YOU WANT TO MAXIMIZE YOUR DOLLARS, CONNECTIONS, EXPERTISE, OR INFLUENCE FOR A CAUSE YOU CARE ABOUT.
- 3 YOU RECOGNIZE YOU CAN DO MORE WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHERS THAN YOU COULD ON YOUR OWN.
- 4 YOU FEEL FRUSTRATED ABOUT SOMETHING, AND YOU WANT TO MAKE CHANGE NOW AS OPPOSED TO LATER.
- 5 YOU HAVE BEEN GIVING TO A CERTAIN CAUSE OR ORGANIZATION, AND THEY HAVE ASKED YOU TO SPREAD THE WORD.

SPEAKING UP ABOUT
THE GOOD WORK YOU'RE
INVOLVED WITH CAN
AMPLIFY YOUR IMPACT.

FIELD EXAMPLE: A FOUNDATION GOES PUBLIC WITH GRANTEE STORIES

In 2011, after seven years in operation, the Skees Family Foundation decided to “go public” with its first-ever website that revealed details about how the foundation gives and to whom. According to Suzanne Skees, “Skees.org has at its center a collection of success stories about what students do with scholarships, what survivors do with healing, and what families do with microloans. We report them because we get blown away on a daily basis by the courage of staff members who run our partner organizations, and their clients who bring amazing courage and tenacity to the opportunity opened to them through “philanthropy.” Skees says the foundation created an online forum not because they have a lot of money for funding or because they think they know more than anybody else how to give hours and dollars—but simply out of a wish to connect with others.

Source: Skees, Suzanne. The Real Motivation Behind Going Public in Philanthropy. Huffington Post



USE THESE QUESTIONS TO REFLECT OR DISCUSS WITH YOUR FAMILY OR PEERS.

GOING PUBLIC ISN'T FOR EVERYONE

Some philanthropists choose not to go public with their giving, and there are many sound reasons this might be the best route for you! Some funders worry about being inundated by requests, and yet others are concerned about privacy and safety issues. Particular sensitivity is warranted when youth are part of this equation, so proceed with caution and sensitivity. Even if you don't go public with your giving, consider ways you can use your voice to make positive change!

HOW DOES YOUR FAMILY OR FOUNDATION APPROACH ITS GIVING? IS IT DONE IN A QUIET WAY, OR IN A PUBLIC WAY? DO YOU KNOW WHY? IF NOT, FIND OUT!

IF YOUR FAMILY OR FOUNDATION GIVES IN A PUBLIC WAY, WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES (E.G., SPEAKING AT EVENTS, DESCRIBING GIVING ON A WEBSITE OR BLOG)?

WHAT REASONS MIGHT YOU HAVE PERSONALLY FOR USING YOUR VOICE TO FURTHER THE CAUSES YOU CARE ABOUT?

CONTINUED →



HOW DO YOU THINK IT COULD BENEFIT YOU? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT SKILLS DO YOU THINK YOU MIGHT DEVELOP FROM TALKING MORE PUBLICLY ABOUT THE ISSUES YOU CARE ABOUT AND/OR YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN PHILANTHROPY?

HOW DO YOU THINK IT COULD BENEFIT THE CAUSES YOU CARE ABOUT?

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE TO YOU ABOUT "GOING PUBLIC" WITH YOUR GIVING?

HOW DO YOU THINK GOING PUBLIC MIGHT HELP YOU BE A LEADER?

WAYS TO GO PUBLIC WITH YOUR GIVING

There are many ways to go public with giving, and these are some of the most common. If your family has a foundation or you participate in a giving program, perhaps you are already familiar with some of these.

GATHER, SHARE, OR SPOTLIGHT INFORMATION

- Research an issue and share your findings with your friends or classmates.
- With the help of an adult, talk with local nonprofits to find out what their needs are.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper (or your school newsletter) about why you care about a certain issue.
- Post updates or blog about your cause on social media, or share social media posts from organizations you fund to spread awareness.
- Talk with others about the issue that's important to you, and share easy action steps so others can get involved.

ADVOCATE FOR AN ISSUE

- Write a letter to an elected official about important issues in your community.
- Organize a petition for a cause or issue in your neighborhood.
- Engage your Student Government Association or school volunteer group to create a community service project around the issue.
- Research other groups or organizations that are working on related issues, and seek their assistance.
- Work with an adult who has experience in public or media relations to help you develop a clear, concise, and consistent message that advances your issue.
- If the opportunity presents itself, offer to tell your story or share your view at a public hearing or town hall meeting.

CONVENE AND MOBILIZE OTHERS

- Invite others to participate in conversations about an issue, either online or in person.
- Speak at a school assembly, or to your religious congregation (if applicable).
- Hold a bake or craft sale to generate money and awareness for your cause.
- Start an online crowd-funding campaign (using a site such as Razoo.com or GoFundMe.com) to raise money for your cause.
- Engage some of your friends or classmates in a mini giving circle—where each of you contributes a small amount of money and decides as a group where to give it (for examples of giving circles, see GivingCirclesFund.org, AmplifierGiving.org, and AwesomeFoundation.org).



HERE'S A TIP: Even if you decide it's right for you, you don't have to go public with your giving overnight. Take small steps over time. You might build up your knowledge of the issue or organization you want to support, which will then give you more confidence in talking about it. Even taking tiny steps can make a big difference.





ACTIVITY GETTING OUT THERE

1 What cause, issue, or organization do you want to focus on at this time? (Pick just one. We know it's hard!)

2 What are 3 steps you can take to bring more awareness to this cause, issue, or organization?

3 How can you involve your family or foundation in this work?

4 What could be your best next steps for getting their interest?

5 What are you willing to commit to in the next month?
In the next 3 months?

In the next month, I will...

In the next 3 months, I will...

6 Who can you call on for support (e.g., parent, teacher, friends, another adult you look up to)?

Name:

Name:

FIELD EXAMPLES: FOUR TEENS GO PUBLIC WITH THEIR GIVING

Are you ready to get inspired? Check out these stories about four teens who went public about causes they care about, each in different ways.

INSPIRED BY HER TRIP TO THE UNITED NATIONS and what she learned about educating young girls, Gillian Parker made a compelling video when she was 15. See the four-minute clip *Change a Girl, Change the World* on YouTube: <http://bit.ly/1ku8lUJ>.

COLTON STRAWSER BECAME THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION AT AGE 15. He has translated his passion for and experience in philanthropy and nonprofits into presentations and even a book. See www.coltonstrawser.com.

AS AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER IN THE COMMUNITY SINCE AGE 12, Simone Bernstein felt frustrated by the lack of information and resources available for youth who wanted to volunteer in the St. Louis community. She took it upon herself to create StLouisVolunteen.com, a website for youth and families to find volunteer opportunities that match their interests. Learn more about Simone's work here: <http://bit.ly/W8Fi3w>.

TALIA LEMAN IS CEO AND A FOUNDER OF RANDOMKID.ORG, an organization to develop ideas, strategies, and networks among kids internationally. She leads assemblies, gives seed funding to help jump-start philanthropic ventures, organizes web conferences among youth across the globe, and mentors her peers in how to achieve their goals to benefit others. Read more about Talia in the *New York Times* op-ed "Talia for President": <http://nyti.ms/1mfy4zR>.

IN SUMMARY:

To-Go Box

- Some people prefer to stay quiet about their giving, but others choose to be super vocal about it. Both approaches are perfectly fine. Many philanthropists see the value in sharing what's important to them and what they are doing about it—but there are many ways to do so.
- Whether you choose to go public about your philanthropy or not, you can still use your voice and leadership to shine a light on a cause you care about. Doing so can help raise money, and, more important, awareness.
- There are many ways to use your voice to make a difference. Choose one as a first step and build your knowledge and confidence from there.



WANT MORE?

If you're curious to learn more, check out these resources:

Youth Philanthropy Connect: youthphilanthropyconnect.org

Exponent Philanthropy: exponentphilanthropy.org

Youth-Led Campaigns: dosomething.org

Jewish Teen Funders Network: jtn.org

Online Petitions: change.org

Follow us on Twitter: [@exponentphil](https://twitter.com/exponentphil) and [@EngagingYouth](https://twitter.com/EngagingYouth)



QUESTIONS?

Contact info@exponentphilanthropy.org

Thanks for coming by!
See you next time at
Teen Philanthropy Café.

EXPONENT PHILANTHROPY

1720 N Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-580-6560
exponentphilanthropy.org
Twitter: [@exponentphil](https://twitter.com/exponentphil)
Blog: philanthrofiles.org
exponentphilanthropy.org/teen-philanthropy

© 2015 Exponent Philanthropy
All rights reserved.