



Name of Principal
Name of School
Street Address
City, State, Zip

September 23, 2013

Dear (Name of Principal)

Help *End Polio Now* by holding a ‘Purple Clothes Day’ at your school on Friday, October 18.

In all of history, human beings have completely eradicated a disease only twice before (most famously, smallpox). We’re determined that polio will be next – and we’re now very close to this truly historic achievement. For World Polio Day this year I’d like to ask your school to help.

There is a lot your school can do: by raising awareness and raising funds, everyone can help support the global eradication efforts against this terrible disease.

- *World Polio Day marks the birth of Jonas Salk, the leader of the breakthrough team that invented the first successful polio vaccine in 1955.*
- *Polio was a disease that once spanned the globe and devastated millions of young lives. However the Salk vaccine and the later developed Sabin oral vaccine have been used in global vaccination campaigns to reduce polio cases by 99 per cent.*
- *Charities, governments and individuals all have helped in the campaign - and endemic polio now remains only in: Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria.*

The virus that causes polio cannot be “controlled”; and the final push to eradicate polio completely is critical and the only way to assure that all children everywhere will be safe from its effects.

How Can “Purple Clothes Day” Tie in with Education?

The primary aim of World Polio Day is fund raising and awareness, but it provides also an opportunity for young people to learn:

- ***History.*** *The history of medicine and campaigns against disease reflects the history of social change and the emergence of the modern world.*
- ***Science.*** *The science of vaccination is a fascinating subject for all ages – perhaps starting with Edward Jenner in the 1790’s and the discovery of this most vital of medical principles.*
- ***Geography.*** *A discussion about vaccination in terms of geographical, religious and economic differences across the world would help to place in context different cultural approaches to medicine.*



What is Rotary and Why Is It Involved?

Rotary International is a global network of business, professional and community leaders volunteering their time and talents to serve communities locally and around the world and forming strong, lasting friendships in the process. There are over 1.2 million Rotarians in 34,000 local clubs all around the world. While each local club is autonomous in supporting local causes, all Rotary clubs are united in working toward the global eradication of polio.

In 1985, Rotary International launched its most ambitious project ever – and over time our '***End Polio Now***' campaign has raised over \$1 Billion which, in partnership with health agencies and other charities, has helped bring the number of polio cases down by 99 per cent.

There used to be 350,000 new cases every year, but by 2012 there were only 223 new cases. Unfortunately, there are more cases than that already this year because of an outbreak in Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia, all countries that once were polio free. This outbreak emphasizes why it is critical to eliminate the wild poliovirus, as the disease is only a plane ride away from any child in the world. We must wipe it out to make sure that no additional child falls prey to this paralysing and sometimes fatal illness – and that it never can come back to threaten young lives.

How Can My School Become Involved in '*End Polio Now*'?

At the Rotary Club ([name of Rotary Club sending letter](#)), we are getting local schools such as yours involved, by holding a Purple Clothes Day on Friday the 18th October (the last Friday before World Polio Day 24th October). Purple is symbolic of the polio campaign because vaccinators in many parts of the world paint children's pinky fingers with purple ink to show they have received the vaccine.

The idea is for pupils to donate some change or a few dollars to the cause and wear something purple to show their support! If we could get the support of just half of the pupils in ([name of community or school district](#)), we could raise important funds to help eliminate polio; and those students would be participating in an event that is in the process of making history. Not only that, but for every dollar raised, the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* will donate two dollars so that your school can protect even more children from the devastating effects of polio.

If you feel that you can support this worthwhile cause, or would like to find out other ways you can support Rotary and the '***End Polio Now***' campaign, please contact me or visit EndPolioNow.org.

Sincerely yours,

[Name](#)

[Contact Details](#)