



## Do's and Don'ts for Helping with Disaster Relief

Plan staff are available as a resource to youth, youth groups, schools, and any other interested parties. Please feel free to contact us at:

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### *What can you do to help the people of Haiti?*

#### **Fundraise**

The emergency phase of a disaster needs money more than anything else. A natural disaster can destroy roads, buildings, lines of communication, and airports. Getting physical objects into the country and to the right area is difficult and needs management. It is also more expensive and time consuming to ship long distance items that could be found within the country or region. Organizations like Plan have some supplies already in the country, and are in the best position to source exactly what materials they need (stored and sorted correctly) and how much of it they need as priorities change. Ideas:

1. Hold a **concert or dance performance** with your school's band, chorus, clubs, or students who perform outside of school
2. Have a **Talent Show**
3. **Penny Collection/ Penny Wars**- set up jars in classrooms and encourage everyone to donate their loose change. This could also be set up as a competition between classes or grade levels
4. Hold a teacher (or student, if you wear a uniform) **dress down day**, wear a hat day etc. Students collect money from teachers and/or students which would give them permission or dress down, wear a hat etc.
5. Have a **Bake Sale or sell sodas**, bubble tea or something else in the cafeteria at lunch
6. Bundle up warm and have a **car wash**. Winter weather means lots of salt on cars!
7. Organize a **raffle**. See if a teacher, staff member or another student will donate an item or prize to be raffled off. Think outside the box and ask a teacher to raffle off extra credit or a no homework day.

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### **Tell Your Story!**

If you, your family, your school, or your community has a connection to Haiti perhaps one of the most powerful things you can do is to share your story. By sharing your story you may inspire those who are able to, to donate to the people affected by the earthquake. It is important that our communities know how connected our world is. And, that Haiti is not so very far away, it is here in the spirit and families of Americans. Just be sure that all of these are written from your point of view, they should reflect you.

- ⇒ Write a letter to the editor for your favorite newspaper
- ⇒ Find your local TV news online and send them an email with your story and your own pictures if you have some you would like to share
- ⇒ Post on Facebook, Twitter, or your Blog. Add pictures, videos, and links to more information and places to donate
- ⇒ Ask to make an announcement at your school, or to hang posters in the hallways. Building a sense of community in your school will help support those who might have been impacted by the earthquake. It also might create more ideas on ways to help!

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### Send Cards

Plan is a sponsorship organization, and sending letters between people in the US and the children in countries we work in is a key piece of what we do. Youth from Haiti have been to the US to visit our youth group, YUGA, more than once, so we have a close connection to their communities. If you would like to do more than send money, send cards, banners, drawings, and photos from your school showing your support of the people of Haiti. The fewer words the better because everything will need to be translated. Art can speak just as loudly as a note, and may be more impactful for the children in Haiti.

Mail any cards you collect to the Plan office and we can send them to the affected communities in Haiti as soon as transportation and communication re-open.

**Mail to: Elizabeth Murphy  
Plan USA  
155 Plan Way  
Warwick, RI 02886**

### Lastly, *what you shouldn't do.*

- ⇒ Collect items like canned food, bandages, and blankets
- ⇒ Go to the country to volunteer (unless you have arranged it with an organization working there, it is safe, and you know *how and if* you can be of use) **The people already working in the area are the best people to continue helping.**
- ⇒ Stop donating or working to help just because it isn't on the news anymore, recovery is a long process, and every bit helps