**Stealing A Child’s Life**

In order for us to take action and be successful we have to believe in our self and that anything is possible. While people like you and me have wonderful lives, others in developing countries are having a life of exploitation. People around the world need to notice how child labourers live, how children in Canada live compared to the children in Pakistan and how we can take action and make a difference. People around the world need to know that child labourers are missing out on what life has to offer. We need to take action to make a difference in these poor, young children’s lives.

These children’s lives are affected by their living conditions. Child labourer’s lives are not what you think they are. Their lives are devasting and unhygienic that some of them end up dying. “About 246 million between the ages of 5 and 17 are engaged in child labour, according to the international labor organization’s (ILO) global estimate from the year 2000. An estimated 73 million of these children are below the age of 10,” (What is child labour, Chivy Sok). These children in child labour live in such despicable conditions that they do not even know where their next meal will come from. Kumar, a child labourer, explained that “It was like a prison, we were locked inside. We worked from 5 am until midnight making carpets and we slept among the machines,” (Kumar, child labour). In order for these lives to change we need to raise awareness and notice that child labour happens all over the world, even in Canada.

Children in Canada live in very different conditions than children in developing countries. “It’s not that Canada is free from child labour, but in fact the debate is so murky that the issue remains invisible,” (Child Labour is Canada’s Invisible Crisis, Craig and Marc Kielburger). In North America history is filled with abusive forms of child labour, such as children working in mines, sawmills, and sweatshop factories. However 70 percent of child labour takes place in agriculture, like harvesting bananas, cocoa beans for chocolate, picking coffee beans and tea leaves. However most of these products end up in supermarkets that you use and I use on a daily basis, but people do not know that they are buying products that children made. This is one of the main problems that people today have to learn about and stop buying these products. “The change starts within each one of us, and ends only when all children are free to be children,” (Craig Kielburger, 1). In developing countries child labour is much worse than here in North America. But the largest numbers of working children - 122 million – are in the Asia-Pacific region. **“**Let us be the ones who say we do not accept that a child dies every three seconds simply because he does not have the drugs you and I have. Let us be the ones to say we are not satisfied that your place of birth determines your right to life. Let us be outraged, let us be loud, let us be bold," (Betterworld.net, Brad Pitt).

 Clearly we need to make a difference in these children’s lives because right now no one is paying attention to them and many of them are dying. “There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want and that they can grow up in peace,” (Better world.net, Kofi Annan). In order for people around today to make a difference in at least one of these child’s lives is to learn more about this issue, and a good way to learn more about this issue is if you read the book Iqbal. Iqbal is a real story about a boy named Iqbal. This story is told by Fatima, a child labourer like Iqbal in a carpet factory in Lahore, Pakistan. She tells the story of Iqbal’s life while he was one of the children in child labour. Another thing that you could do to make a difference is you could support organizations that are raising awareness like Free The Children, which is an organization that works to dismantle the idea of simple aid, and truly empower communities to success by making them equal partners in the development process. Another Organization is Invisible Children, they use the power of the media to inspire young people to help end the longest running armed conflict in Africa. Or you could even provide direct help to individual children around the world. You could also spend your free time volunteering with organizations that are working to protect children and their lives. “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you did not do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover,” (Mark Twain, 6).

Around the world people need to be aware that child labourers are missing out on what life has to offer. We need to take action to make a difference in these poor, young children’s lives. Through the years now with all the information I gave you, you should know how the child labourers live, how child labour is different in Canada then Pakistan and how ***you*** could make a difference. “….. If you think that this is not your business. That’s not true. It’s your business, too. And it’s true that there’s no hope. Look at me. I had hope. You, ladies and gentlemen, you must have courage…..” (D’Adamo, 111). So have hope in yourself and try your best to make a difference and tell everyone else that you know to do the same.