



# SparkAction

**It should be easy to mobilize action on issues that matter to children and youth.** More than 104 million Americans are under age 24, 10 million Americans work in the nonprofit “helping” sector and many millions more care about child and youth well-being. Ours is a passionate sector, but it is notoriously fragmented. Our organizations and coalitions often lack the capacity to tell our stories and share data and calls to action in a way that engages the support we need for impact.

## SparkAction

**SparkAction.org is a collaborative online journalism and advocacy platform to mobilize action for and by young people.** We are a neutral brand that cuts across the silos and creates a central “megaphone” to mobilize like-minded adults and youth around calls to action. We also provide behind-the-scenes supports to help organizations and advocates use digital technology and old-fashioned communications savvy to reach and move their audiences.

We are the field’s premiere:

- destination for comprehensive coverage of child and youth issues
- promotional vehicle to align and amplify communications
- place where change happens

SparkAction, a project of the Forum for Youth Investment, was launched in 2010 after a year-long strategic planning process that involved more than 150 organizations that identified their key capacity gaps and underscored the ways a central platform could be useful. SparkAction is led by Caitlin Johnson, and supported by Thaddeus Ferber, Bonnie Bee and a dynamic team of contributors and interns. It offers articles, news and resources to inspire and inform, linked to opportunities for its 38,000 subscribers and site users to take action online and on the ground.

## SparkAction Services

Engaging content and on-line advocacy tools are critical for growing a network of multi-issue advocates. The SparkAction team doesn’t just create or repurpose content, it helps network members create it. SparkAction provides behind-the-scenes digital engagement supports to organizations, coalitions and youth-led groups who need affordable network services from experts who know the field. SparkAction’s tool chest includes:

- » **Interactive crowdsourced contests.** Online contests that build community, engage youth, and integrate with Facebook and Twitter. For example, one recent contest invited young people to submit a video with their solutions to reconnect themselves and peers to work and education, and campaign for their favorite ideas on social media.
- » **E-Advocacy and action alert supports.** Create easy-to-use Zip Code action alerts on your issues, targeting local, state and federal elected officials and others, with your talking points. SparkAction will work with you to craft engaging shareable graphics and messages to accompany the alerts and a plan to get them out to your networks; you keep all the information on activists.
- » **Social media strategy.** We help you design, implement and measure your social media strategy and tactics.
- » **Communications and advocacy training.** Increase grassroots citizen participation by training and supporting youth, parents and community members to conduct effective campaigns across a range of media.
- » **Integrated communications support.** Support is available for local partnerships to develop and execute effective online communications and social media strategies to advance your efforts.
- » **Full-service issue campaigns.** These campaigns bring together the field’s best organizations and content and integrate them with large-scale calls to action. You’ll find examples on SparkAction.org.



**Interested in learning more?** Please contact Caitlin Johnson ([caitlin@sparkaction.org](mailto:caitlin@sparkaction.org)) to chat about what’s on the horizon.



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