

OACS

Good Neighbour Campaign

A Targeted Program of Effective Communication
and Community Special Events Which will Heighten
the Profile of the Local Christian School



O A C S

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“... Passing the Light to the Next Generation.”

September 2006

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I. Introduction

Whether Christian schools desire to increase the public's awareness, increase enrollment trends, discover and develop new streams of revenue or work to achieve fairness in educational funding from government, all of these goals require consistent and effective communication with people who can help them achieve these goals. The OACS Good Neighbour Campaign (GNC) is an organized series of community special events and activities designed to help schools achieve these goals.

With Whom Should Christian Schools Communicate?

Christian schools have two important groups or audiences to consider:

- Potential supporters—people in the local geographic community who will invest in the school in some way (finances, admissions, membership, media coverage, cooperation with other non-profits, prospective volunteers, government, etc.).
- Current supporters—parents and non-parents supporters who will refer others to the school.

What are Community Special Events?

They are non-fundraising, fun, easy-to-organize-and-implement, non-threatening school outreach activities that, when done regularly, effectively impact the local community, heightening the presence of the Christian school. (See *Currents*, Spring 2004)

What is the Plan?

The plan is that all Christian schools will take advantage of this OACS, province-wide program with OACS GNC Regional Coordinators assisting school representatives in organizing, implementing and communicating the events and activities of the Good Neighbour Campaign.

- **Fall 2006**—OACS GNC Regional Coordinators attend school membership meetings, organize regional training and orientation meetings, offer communications training.
- **Fall 2006/Spring 2007**—OACS GNC Regional Coordinators provide regional support while local schools implement GNC activities and communications.
- **Spring 2007/Fall 2007**—Assessment of GNC and on-going communications planning for OACS schools (radio advertising campaign).

II. Planning For Effective Communication

A. Testing Your School for Readiness

Begin by taking the *Good Neighbour Campaign Communications Readiness Assessment* (Appendix I, p. 11) to get you started on planning for effective communication for your school. Ideally, this assessment should be completed with the school administrator, the board chair, your school's GNC representatives and a GNC Regional Coordinator. The questions should be answered based on the *current situation*, not a desired situation. Using your school's scoring results at the end of the assessment, the rest of this manual will become a helpful planning tool, giving you a good place to start no matter what type of school you are (urban, rural, big, small, etc.).

B. Creating the Conditions for Change in Your School

Developing a solid, written communications plan for your school will not only keep your school organized, it will keep leaders focused on the chosen activities, resulting in the most effective communication with important stakeholders. *Instructions on creating a school communications plan can be found in Appendix II (p. 14).*

Your school's communications plan must contain promotion ideas and activities that differentiate your school from all other schools in your area in the mind of the identified audience(s).

Put It In The Plan!

Communication from your school must consistently show what makes your school special or unique, so that it will “stand out” to prospective supporters. Before anything goes in the plan, debate whether or not the proposed activity will do this.

Your school's communications plan must contain promotion ideas and activities that showcase your school's strengths; these strengths should be things that will resonate in the mind of the audience(s).

Put It In The Plan!

Communication from your school should consistently focus on the school's strengths that will resonate with prospective supporters. Before anything goes in the plan, debate whether or not the proposed activity will do this.

Your school's communications plan must be overseen by one individual who is given the responsibility of organizing, executing and reporting on the plan. This person will:

- write all news releases (e-releases);
- give interviews with the media and prepare statements;
- provide ideas for letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, general statements;
- provide consistency in messaging for advertising and promotion!

Put It In The Plan!

Communication from your school should be overseen by an appointed officer who is either a volunteer or a hired staff member. This person should work closely with the administrator and board chair and have a Good Neighbour Campaign Support Committee available for collaboration. Before anything else is planned, decide who the Communications Officer is going to be for your school.

Your school's communications plan must contain promotion ideas and activities that will answer one important question in the mind of the audience(s): “Why Should I?” ...be interested? ...participate? ...support?

Put It In The Plan!

Communication from your school should consistently answer the question, *why should I?* Before anything goes in the plan, debate how partnering with your school will improve the lives of supporters and affect them personally.

C. Attracting Attention to Your School

Your school's communications activities should "show" the surrounding community that you care about it and that you are excited about making positive contributions while conveying important messages about your school's uniqueness (See Section B, p.2).

Communication of these activities should cover the most important question the audience asks—"what's in it for me?" and then follow-up with the necessary basics—who, what, where, when, why, and how.

Communication plans for your school should include planned, positive, public reactions from current supporters as well as supportive high profile members of the community.

Communication plans should incorporate the best practices of getting the word out to the community. Be sure to use current methods and practices.

D. Following Up

Once effective communications result in increased attention to your school, it is imperative to have a system in place designed to respond to all inquiries and comments of prospective supporters in a timely and professional manner. This system should include responses for:

- prospective parents;
- prospective donors;
- prospective volunteers;
- members of the media;
- government officials;
- interested members of the geographic community.

Develop a method to track all inquiries from every caller and visitor. Record names, contact information, questions asked, where and how they heard about your school and the recommended follow-up (both a person and an activity).

Implement and update a database to keep track of all respondents to the school as well as the course of action for follow-up.

Prospective supporters should receive regular communication as part of an on-going cultivation process for your school.

Consider the list of regular events and activities in the life of your school and determine ways to include prospective supporters in these activities, and by extension, more fully in the life of your school.

III. Community Events

Your school's greatest communication tool is inexpensive and highly effective—current supporters. These supporters are effectively involved in community events and can share their enthusiasm easily and casually with others they meet during those events. Christian schools can make great “word-of-mouth” communications happen simply by being out in the community providing unique service experiences—the Good Neighbour Campaign!

A. Setting Up for the Good Neighbour Campaign at Your School

Prepare the groundwork for a GNC team in your school. This team should be ad-hoc to the Community Relations Committee.

Choose a Good Neighbour Campaign Coordinator. This person:

- chooses the community events to be undertaken in consultation with the GNC support team;
- coordinates GNC event details and volunteer details;
- is someone who is motivated, articulate, “unflappable” and loyal.

Appoint a Good Neighbour Campaign Support Team—four to seven enthusiastic volunteers to serve as a team with the Coordinator. These people:

- take care of community events details (volunteer management, acquisition of supplies and equipment, communication of events);
- help identify community events for the school to undertake;
- participate in the follow-up process at school.

Choose an Honorary Spokesperson who will

- provide memorable quotes to be used in the communications plan;
- facilitate great media coverage for events;
- heighten the excitement of current supporters and prospective supporters.

Work Towards a Monthly Schedule

- begin by holding a community event once each season, and work towards holding one each month;
- develop a communications plan with consistent practices to support this schedule of community events.

B. Choosing Community Events for Schools

Community events should be chosen as a result of the imaginative thinking of the GNC Support Team at your school (you can reach at least 300 people each time one of these events is undertaken—they are light-touch, quick-paced experiences!). They can be your school's contribution to an already planned festival or event in your geographic community, or you can use the list of examples given at the back of this manual (Appendix III, p. 18).

All community events should be accompanied by a school “Connection Card” or “Connection Label” (which is directly attached to a giveaway item). Examples of and advice on making these cards is found at the back of this manual (Appendix III, p. 19).

For more ideas on great community events, visit www.kindness.com.

For some ideas on where to get great giveaway items at good prices, see www.smilemakerscanada.ca.

C. Planning Your School's Community Events

The difference between holding an effective community event which reaches lots of people and an ineffective community event that doesn't reach many is PLANNING. The school's GNC Coordinator should provide planning checklists (Appendices IV-VII, pp 20-24) for those on the team that are responsible for recruiting members of the school community to participate, acquiring and organizing necessary equipment and supplies for the event, and communicating with the media both before and after the event. Together the team should use the guide below to plan each event.

The school's GNC Support Team should get together and create a "dream list" of events, leaving it flexible and open to change depending on weather, product availability and last minute notification of events being held in your city or town.

Several Weeks Before the Community Event

- recruit participants from within the school community to do the community event, mixing experienced people with inexperienced people when planning;
- list the products and/or equipment you will need;
- list everything to be specially ordered or specially made;
- chart out how the event will be communicated from start to finish for both participants and recipients;
- determine signage needs for your community event (banners, connection cards, etc.);
- prepare media advisories, press releases, e-releases;
- plan for events to be documented by digital photos for school archives and media submissions.

Week of Community Event

- confirm the participants from the school community needed for the event;
- confirm product arrivals (signs, cards, giveaways, etc.) and/or purchase needed items locally if necessary;
- adjust community event for last minute changes in weather or community calendar;
- print out route sheets, maps or directions, volunteer tips sheets and instructions and check lists (including necessary legal and safety advisories) and nametags;
- create community event signs if needed;
- create a schedule for the event day to manage all participants;
- prep-work for the event—put together kits if required and attach "Connection Cards" to giveaways if required;
- send press releases, upload web releases, send media advisories.

Day of the Community Event

- hospitality—music, coffee, refreshments for participants;
- registration—volunteers and distribute supplies;
- ensure all supplies are ready for easy distribution;
- meet with volunteers for team assignments and event instructions, give "quick tips", answer questions, welcome participants;

- remind everyone what the goals are for the school and then PRAY!
- remind everyone to meet at the same place at the end of the event to return materials and de-brief.

After the Community Event

- community event evaluation;
- start all over again at the beginning with the next event!

D. Community Event Evaluation

After each community event it is important for the school's GNC Support Team to take some time and process the feedback of the event while the details are still fresh in everyone's mind. You'll want to document stories (for newsletters and Web site), make notes on participant numbers, event results, challenges and opportunities for improvement should the event be done again. The goal is to continually be casting vision to prospective supporters to your school. Don't forget to send thank you notes to participants and sponsors (people and/or businesses who give free stuff and services) for their contributions to your community event.

Use the evaluation form (Appendix VIII, p. 25) and file it for future planning.

IV. Communicating Your Events (see Appendix II, p. 14)

Communication about community events should happen before (with planned pieces), during (signage, connection cards and participants' testimonies) and following the event (reactions and thank-you pieces). Effective communication begins with making your events newsworthy and includes building enduring relationships with media staff.

A. Media 101—Becoming a school whose events get noticed

Make sure your school is "present" where things in your community happen

- join and attend local Chamber of Commerce events;
- accept non-fundraising speaking engagements from service clubs;
- apply to be part of your newspaper's community editorial board;
- combine a community service event with a scheduled town festival.

Make some news for your school

- read the newspaper to determine what news items could be linked to your school and its services and the felt-needs of the reading audience;
- use survey, statistics or poll information to link into the services your school provides and the felt-needs of the reading or listening audience;
- write news releases, opinion pieces based on what you have learned.

Make a news directory for your school community

- find contact information for local media people using media directories found in public libraries (you can also purchase these directories at local bookstores) or by searching Web sites for names and e-mail addresses of editors;
- create a database of media personnel that you communicate with regularly (determine their preference on how they wish to be contacted).

Learn to “hook” the media into your school—make news “hooks”

- show you understand what their audience values;
- show an angle that is unique, unexpected and interesting (write interesting headlines and subject lines).

Organize and distribute free media passes to school events to help generate media attendance and coverage.

B. Media 101—News Release/E-Release/Media Advisory

There are so many distribution services that mass fax and mass e-mail news releases at low prices, media agencies are overwhelmed with the numbers they receive. They pay attention to releases that:

- have attention-grabbing headlines and/or subject lines;
- are straight to the point;
- are relevant to the publication to which they are being sent;
- are timely;
- have a professional appearance;
- are targeted to the right person in the right area of interest.

News Releases are now “E-Releases”

These are tightly focused and eye-catching like printed news releases but must catch attention in the preview window of a typical e-mail Inbox.

Subject line	five exciting, tantalizing words—the new headline.
Headline	first line of the e-release (done in bolded text); should be relevant and timely (witty) and display evidence of strong benefit.
Sub-Headline	under the headline (done in italics); fresh, descriptive words not repeated in the headline—thirteen words or less.
Body	three short paragraphs, with no paragraph more than three lines for easy scanning. Write in inverted pyramid style with the most compelling, relevant and timely information at the top and supporting quotes, facts, statistics or anecdotes next.
Link	include a link where the journalist can find a longer release or more information on your Web site.
End	end the “E-Release” with the same ending as a print release: -30-
Follow-up	phone the media outlet a few days after the release has been submitted to confirm when the release will be published.

The Do’s and Don’ts of “E-Releases”

Do:

- keep the tone of your e-mail friendly and conversational, as if you were writing to a friend;
- use bulleted points to make for easy scanning;

- include links to relevant areas of your Web site;
- if you “mail merge” the e-release, be very cautious about making sure others are hidden in the “Bcc” (blind carbon copy) field of your e-mail;
- send yourself a test message to check the format of the e-mail.

Don’t:

- send an attachment. Train yourself to use internet links for everything;
- use words in both the subject line and text that could get you banned by spam filters. After you self-check, perform a final test with a spam checker;
- forget to include your contact information in the body of the e-release

C. Media 101—The Editorial or “Op-Ed”

Every newspaper has an editorial page or an editorial board that keeps a regular calendar of specific themes called “op-eds”. They:

- are first-person pieces;
- are 400-600 words long;
- express your personal opinions on a specific topic;
- reflect a particular trend or concern in the community;
- will have an impact for a large number of readers;
- make the strongest point up front;
- make your case with facts and a strong, emotional anecdote;
- conclude with a strong call to action.

D. Media 101—Letters To The Editor

Write a letter to the editor whenever you read an article you believe merits your comments and you have some authority to back your claim. These letters let you react to the news instead of creating it.

- can be sent by e-mail – use e-mail addresses provided or the link on the newspaper’s Web site;
- passion and emotion are important;
- make one point per letter;
- include full contact information at the bottom;
- can be planned in a string written by different people (answering each other’s letters).

E. Media 101—Web sites and On-Line Communications

In a rapidly changing technological world, the Internet is becoming the primary source of information and advertising for more and more people.

Your school’s Web site is a virtual “open-house” or brochure. This will soon be the primary way that people learn about the school and make inquiries to the school. Key elements to draw the traffic you desire are:

- a memorable domain name that is easy to spell;
- free information and rich content in the form of articles and useful links;
- keywords in HTML that are frequently used in the text of individual pages so they show up quickly on most search engines;
- a good navigation bar (don’t forget an easy-to-find “home” button!);

- avoidance of long flash introductions (or have a “skip” feature)—new have the patience to watch it;
- short and concise sentences—people really skim on the web;
- replace the words “I” and “We” with “You”—immediately showing the Web site guest what you can do for him/her;
- avoidance of spelling errors, dead links and outdated information which can be fatal—the site must look like it is frequently updated, fresh and professional;
- a place for guests to “sign in” or make inquiries and get responses;
- a “media room” or “press room” to increase the chances of being quoted by a journalist or interviewed for the media.

Elements of a Good “Media Room” for a School Web site

1. Biography or backgrounder of the school (include both a paragraph and full page version). Keep this updated! Journalists will often cut and paste your information and insert it into articles. This is especially true if they cannot reach you before a deadline.
2. Picture of your school and key spokespeople in various resolutions. The low resolution of a typical web image will blur on a newspaper page so higher resolution (300 dpi) pictures should be available to download.
3. Associations and distinctions – being a part of a larger network and receiving awards and distinctions for services provided is important information to keep current.
4. Interviews – a list of FAQs about your school will allow journalists to see how your school is organized and what makes it distinct.
5. Archive of media pieces – articles, interviews, etc, both as links to other sites and in full text are great credibility boosters. They reinforce your status as the leading expert in your field.
6. Archive of press releases – create them on a weekly or monthly basis and post them to your Web site. Be sure they are filled with keywords the media would use when looking for information on the topic.
7. An up-to-date list of future important school events – keep it updated and invite those who access the Web site to attend the events.
8. The name and contact information for a spokesperson – journalists are notorious for being on deadline, and needing a comment or quote immediately.

F. Media 101—Using Radio To Communicate School Events

Become the subject of Community Minute

All radio stations highlight interesting community events a few times each week

- send an e-mail to the radio station describing your event;
- follow up with a phone call to secure a time for the community minute before your event;
- offer a one to three minute live, on-air interview where you give a benefit to the audience first, then give the “who, what, where, when, how” details.

Pitching to radio producers

To become a radio guest, you will need:

- a lively, personable voice that captures the interest of the producer on behalf of listeners;
- persistence—use the same “hooks” as for printed media.

Preparing for radio interviews

- have your message points and supportive facts clearly in front of you;
- plan to use a land-line and be sure the call-waiting feature is turned off;
- have water ready in case your throat gets dry;
- be sure kids and pets are out of range for the interview;
- if this is a call-in show, have a few friends call in during the question time to “break the ice;”
- plan to call the radio host by first name.

Become a “repeat” interview

The more helpful you are during interviews, the more likely the journalist will use you again as an “expert” source. You can increase the opportunity of this happening by:

- forwarding any documentation that might help finish the story;
- sending a thank you to the journalist afterwards.

Some radio interview precautions

- resist the temptation to waiver from your key message points;
- avoid saying words like “no comment”—instead phrase your answer so as to return to one of your key points;
- wrong statistics and incorrect facts can come back to haunt you; if you are unsure, say nothing and return to one of your key points;
- never say anything “off the record.” If you said it, it’s on the record!

For more information on media strategies, check the following OACS publications:

Managing the Media: A Resource for Effective Interviews, OACS, 2002

Media Relations Workbook for Christian Schools, OACS, 2002.

Appendix I:

Good Neighbour Campaign Communications Readiness Assessment

Take the Good Neighbour Campaign Communications Readiness Assessment to get you started on planning for effective communications for your school. Ideally, this assessment should be completed with the school administrator, the board chair, your school GNC representatives and a GNC Regional Coordinator. *Questions should be answered based on the current situation, not a desired situation.*

1. Does your school have a distinct identity—does it “stand out” in some way?
 Yes Sort of No
2. Is your school in the process of implementing a written and organized communications plan?
 a) Implementing Communications Plan for internal audiences: Yes No
 b) Implementing Communications Plan for external audiences: Yes No
3. Whose responsibility is the communication plan?
 a) One person (position) _____
 b) A committee (name) _____
 c) No one has this responsibility.
4. Is the school’s communications plan aimed at specific audience(s) with specific goals or is it general advertising?
 a) Targeted Communications—communication is specific to audience and goals
 b) General Communications—communication is not specific to audience and goals
 c) Both—targeted and general communications are evenly spread
5. What results are evident from your school’s communications?
 a) Internal (check all that apply):
 Current supporters are enthusiastic
 Current supporters are making referrals to others about the school
 b) External (check one only)
 Increased inquiries at the school office
 No evident increase in interest for the school
 Don’t know
6. Are your school’s Admissions and Membership policies “in-line” with the messages of the school’s communications plan?
 a) Admissions Policy Yes No Do not have one
 b) Membership Policy Yes No Do not have one

7. Does your school's communications plan contain messages that are *informational* ("this is what we have to offer") or *invitational* ("let us know how we can serve you")?
- a) Informational Messages
 - b) Invitational Messages
 - c) Both Types Of Messages
 - d) Don't know
8. Are current parents and supporters actively participating in the school's communications plan?
- a) Yes—for the most part, they are equipped and participating
 - b) Sort of—some seem to participate, others do not
 - c) No—we have not given a lot of attention to the participation of current parents and supporters in communications
9. Does your school have a follow up plan for people as they seriously consider joining and supporting the school?
- a) Yes—we actively follow up with ALL interested persons
 - b) Sort of—our follow up is "hit and miss" depending on the situation
 - c) No—we leave follow up to the prospective supporter
10. Does your school use a system for measuring the effectiveness of the school's communications plan on a regular basis?
- a) Yes
 - b) No

Finding Your School's Score

Communications Readiness Assessment—Circle your answers in the chart below

Question #	(A) Answers	(B) Answers	(C) Answers	(D) Answers
1	10	6	2	—
2a	10	0	—	—
2b	10	0	—	—
3	10	5	0	—
4	10	5	7	—
5a	5	5	—	—
5b	10	5	0	—
6a	10	5	0	—
6b	10	5	0	—
7	7	7	10	2
8	10	5	2	—
9	10	5	0	—
10	10	0	—	—

Add up all of the numbers you circled in the chart and record the total below:

Your School's Total Score - _____

Use this Total Score as a guide to help your school know where to begin planning for participation in the OACS Good Neighbour Campaign.

Scoring Results	What To Do Next - Planning For Effective Communications
70-100	You're doing well. Your school's communications plan is clear and is attracting new supporters as well as current supporters. The GNC will fit easily into your already developed plan! Begin with Section IV – "Communicating Your Events" (p. 6).
40-69	Your school needs to take its current calendar of activities and support it with an effective communications plan. You also need to allocate appropriate budget for communications activities and assign someone from the school to bear responsibility for the plan. Implementing the GNC would be an easy, non-threatening way to make some positive changes as you add intentionality to your communications planning! Begin with Section III "Community Events" (p. 4).
0-39	Your school's practices and communications are not on the same page and most likely, you have many individuals or small groups of people all doing their own thing. It would be good to address those identity issues before communications planning proceeds. Begin with Section II, B, "Creating The Conditions For Change In Your School (p. 2).

Appendix II:

Developing a Written Communications Plan

Once you have debated over and finally decided upon the activities you will undertake to promote your school with current and prospective supporters, it is just as important to intentionally plan how you will most effectively communicate about those activities to the intended audiences. *It is most effective to prepare this plan in June for the following school year.*

A “Post-It Note” Communications Plan

Supplies Needed:

- 1 large piece of chart paper,
- magic markers,
- 2 colours of 1 x 1 “Post-it” notes,
- 2 colours of small dot stickers

1. Take a large piece of chart paper and lay it out landscape style (at least 3 ft long).
2. Using a black marker, divide the chart paper into 12 equal columns from left to right. Put the months of the year at the top of each column—one month heading for each column—beginning with August and ending with July (to coincide with the school year).
3. Using your completed list of school activities to be promoted, record all of the activities on one colour of “Post-it” notes – one activity on each “Post-it” note.
4. Plot these “Post-it” notes with the school activities onto the chart paper according to the month they are anticipated (i.e., the school’s Christmas program would be plotted under the “December” column). Spend some time plotting these activities to appropriate times of year, spreading them out for frequency in promotion and bearing in mind any local festivals or events that may compete too heavily with your school activities. Be sure to plot your “Good Neighbour Campaign” activities as well. Use the two sets of coloured dot stickers to label each of these “Post-it” notes according to whether the activity is aimed at current parents and supporters (one colour) or prospective parents and supporters (the other colour).
5. Using a complete list of possible communications activities, such as the ones listed in Section IV of this manual, write which ways you will communicate each school activity on the other coloured post-it-notes—one communication method for each “Post-it” note.
6. Plot the communications “Post-it” notes in the same way the school activities were plotted, allowing ample communication time to the most important audiences for each activity.
7. You now have a visual tool that allows you to see your activities by colour and audience as well as supporting communication by colour. Move the “Post-it” notes around until you have an ambitious calendar that you believe will effectively promote your school to the necessary audiences.

8. The final product should be a 12-month (by school year) picture of activities and communications—you can see the year as a whole as well as each month's projects. Once this plan is finished, stick with it and don't add any new "Post-it" notes!
9. From this plan, transfer all of the monthly communication items that will need your attention to a Communications Schedule Sheet (p. 16). This will help you follow your plan each and every day without carrying the large chart around with you.
10. Review your large chart as a team each month at the beginning of your meetings. If you need to make changes, move the "Post-it" notes around but don't add new ones. Complete all of the communication items each month.

Communications Schedule Sheet

Communication Items

August

September

October

November

December

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

Appendix III:

Community Event Ideas

***Don't forget your "Connection Cards!"**

Giveaway Events

- Small Business or Person-To-Person Candy Blast—Zip-lock baggie with between three and seven pieces of wrapped candy (could be holiday appropriate).
- Newspaper Blast—hand out free newspapers at a local coffee shop.
- Water bottles—put school labels on water bottles and hand them out during a local festival or sporting events.
- Door-to-Door Giveaways—target the neighbourhood nearest your school and do a gimmicky give-away paired with the right holiday or time of the year – use your imagination!
- Specific Location Giveaways—go to parking lots, area festivals, local parks, and do a giveaway that matches what the people are doing there. You can reach over 300 people each time out with these events. It's a lighter-touch, quick-paced experience. Cold soda or water on hot days is great for this.

Mercy Events

- Nursing Homes—Deliver donated magazines (recent issues) like *Time*, *MacLeans* or *Reader's Digest* and handmade cards (by students). Other popular items in nursing homes are single flowers (carnations last best), quality hand lotion or tissues.
- Bag Hunger—Go to lower-income areas and offer bags of food that you have collected from within your school community (create a non-perishable food item "kit"). Offer a "Connection Card" with one extra goodie (candy bar, etc.).
- Dry Shopper—on rainy days, take out some big umbrellas and offer to escort shoppers caught out by the weather. Serve people coming in and out of all kinds of businesses.
- Coin-Dropper—tape a quarter to a "Connection Card" and attach to payphones around the city so the next call is on you.

Activities With A Twist

- Free Car Wash—Your car wash will be different in one important way—IT'S FREE!! Put together car washing kits, make signs, wrangle people in off the streets and spiff up their rides and send them on their way having gotten something for nothing! Opens the door for great conversations about a school that would do something like that.
- Leaf Raking/Snow Shoveling—great limited-time-only seasonal events!—Go to a neighborhood where you're pretty sure there will be lots of leaves or snow. Go door to door, letting folks know you're raking or shoveling for FREE.
- Restroom Cleaning—Assemble "Cleaning Kits" and head out to local area businesses, roll up your sleeves and scrub some of the dirtiest places around! Due to the unusual nature of this event, it can have a great impact and get great news coverage!
- Time-Change Event—Help your neighbors remember to change their clocks by

offering a smoke-detector battery or simply a “Connection Card” that is also a reminder to change the clocks.

- Windshield Washing—wherever there are a lot of parked cars (sporting events in the spring are great for this), there are opportunities just waiting! Assemble windshield washing kits and pleasantly ask if you can wash the windshields for free. Leave a “Connection Card” whether they agree or not.

For more great ideas of community events check – www.kindness.com

For more great giveaway ideas check – www.smilemakerscanada.ca

Community Events “Connection Cards”

Connection Cards are to be attached to or distributed with every Good Neighbour Campaign activity. They can be made professionally at your favourite printer or you can make them in-house using a business card template or software. Ideally, here is what should be on them:

Side #1

<p>School Name & School Logo</p> <p>School Telephone Number</p> <p>School E-mail Address & Web Address</p> <p>School Location (Simple Map if Desired)</p> <p>School Slogan or Tag-line</p>

Side #2

<p>“Yes... it’s really free! We hope this small gift (act of service) brings some light to your day. It is our way of saying that _____ Christian School cares about you and our community! Have a great day!”</p>

For more great ideas on making original “Connection Cards” visit www.kindness.com

Appendix IV:

Community Event Checklist: GNC Coordinator

Name of Event: _____ Date: _____
Location of Event: _____ Time: _____
Event Main Contact Person: _____

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Before the Community Event

- Choose community event – set date and location
- Determine budget for community event
- Assign community event roles (Volunteer Manager, Supplies and Equipment Manager, Communications Manager)
- Coordinate community event planning meetings
- Apply for necessary permits when performing community events at certain sites
- Develop route sheets (if door-to-door event) and participant tip sheets (for all events) for the community event

Day of Community Event

- Be first on site to encourage all participants
- Offer directions to refreshments and run registration
- Before the event begins and once all participants have assembled, remind everybody of the goal, answer last-minute questions, give encouragement and then PRAY with the group about reaching your town as a school

After the Community Event

- Send thank-you notes to the Volunteer Manager, Supplies and Equipment Manager and Communications Manager
- Hold a community event evaluation session with the planning team and keep completed forms on file for helpful planning with the next event.

Appendix V:

Community Event Checklist: Volunteer Management

Name of Event: _____ Date: _____
 Location of Event: _____ Time: _____
 Event Main Contact Person: _____

Before The Community Event

- Post the community event in school newsletter with a list of opportunities to get involved
- Enlist volunteers by phone for pre-community event work (assembling kits and attaching Connection Cards to giveaways) and for the actual community event (participants and hospitality)
- Make volunteer schedules by name, time slot and job
- Contact and confirm with volunteers regarding their specific tasks
- Prepare volunteer packets to distribute at community event (tips sheet, route sheet, information about the event itself)
- Create generic participant badges for volunteers to wear during community event (identification to reduce fear from recipients)

Day of Community Event

- Set up registration table for participants to sign in and receive tip sheets and supplies for community event

After the Community Event

- Send thank you notes to all participants reminding them of the important role they play in communicating the school to neighbours
- Ask all volunteers to keep their names on a running GNC team list for your school
- Attend the community event evaluation meeting

Appendix VI:

Community Event Checklist: Supplies & Equipment Acquisition

Name of Event: _____ Date: _____
Location of Event: _____ Time: _____
Event Main Contact Person: _____

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Before the Community Event

- Make a list of equipment and supplies that will need to be rented, obtained or created for the community event (A/V equipment, extension cords, coffee urns, portable bathrooms, tables, chairs, etc.)
- Rent necessary equipment
- Purchase giveaway items or “Kit” items
- Hold an evening to assemble “Kits” for activity events or attach “Connection Cards” to giveaways
- Determine hospitality needs for community event day for participants and purchase supplies needed (don’t forget paper products, ice and coolers, and garbage collection and clean-up products!)

Day of Community Event

- Set up a hospitality area for participants—use tablecloths
- Set up A/V equipment if needed

After the Community Event

- Send thank-you notes to all sponsors and contributors to the community event
- Attend the community event evaluation meeting

Appendix VII:

Community Event Checklist: Communications

Name of Event: _____ Date: _____
Location of Event: _____ Time: _____
Event Main Contact Person: _____

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Before The Community Event

- Develop “Connection Cards” (or labels) for community event
- Develop School Banner and Signs to be used during community event
- Develop web announcements for community event (for participants and guests to Web site)
- Begin developing GNC Newsletter (for internal audience for recruiting and reporting)
- Draft Media Advisory (E-Release) and send one week prior to event
- Assign someone to digitally photograph the event
- Call radio station(s) to inquire about “Community Minute”—e-mail details
- Send details of community event to local cable station for “Community Information” screen (must be in 30 days before your event)
- Schedule school sign announcements for community event (if appropriate)

Day of Community Event

- Put up outdoor signs or banners as needed
- Have school media kits available and host any media representatives that attend the community event
- Ensure that digital photographs are taken

After The Community Event

- Send thank-you notes to all media personnel who attended the event or covered the event
- Send E-release with digital photographs to all local media outlets who were unable to attend or respond

- Record stories shared by participants about community event and file for future use in promotion (photos as well)
- Write summary article for school newsletter and post to Web site with photos
- Write thank you letter to the editor of the local paper thanking all participants and informing readers about how many people were touched by the event
- Attend the community event evaluation meeting

