

What is Acting on AIDS?

Acting on AIDS is a program started by Christian college students to create awareness and promote activism on the global AIDS pandemic at colleges and universities across the nation. With the support of World Vision, Christian college students have formed a network of Acting on AIDS chapters that seek to change hearts on campuses, create awareness in communities, and advocate for those impacted by the global AIDS pandemic.

AIDS introduces many global challenges, as it is both a product of injustice and a catalyst of further inequities. Our message is intended to mobilize students to create a groundswell of activity to bring attention to the AIDS pandemic and all of the injustices that feed it and result from it. Acting on AIDS introduces the fight against disease, poverty, and injustice as a journey toward understanding the life and message of Christ. Increased awareness of these global challenges should inspire us to make fighting injustice a manifestation of our relationship to God; it should not be taken as a message of despair about the state of AIDS and brokenness in the world. Our focus is to care for the *least of these*—the millions of widows and orphans who have been devastated by AIDS and are living in desperate poverty.

Acting on AIDS mobilizes students to action, not cynicism. Cynicism allows people to do nothing; we have the platform to speak out against cynicism through Christ. Those of us born in the United States are citizens of one of the greatest powers in the world and the richest nation that has ever existed. The goal of Acting on AIDS is larger than fighting AIDS—our goal is to extend the message of hope that Jesus offers, a message that will change the world.

Acting on AIDS has always been a grassroots movement. Ownership of your chapter is essential to make it grow. Each chapter is self-governed and self-sustained among local members on college campuses. There is not one organization or program that can care for and advocate for all orphans and widows by itself. But together, our unified voices can change our community, which in turn can change society, which ultimately could change the world. Through this toolkit, we invite you to take a journey of discipleship, out of which the knowledge to invite others in the fight against AIDS will flow.

There are three main components in this toolkit to help you to begin a revolution towards fighting AIDS and poverty: “how-to” documents to help you plan awareness-raising activities, educational pieces on HIV and AIDS, and discipleship tools.

Activism

After you send in the enrollment documents found in the *How to Start a Chapter* section, your campus movement can start with the *Do You See Orange?* campaign. This campaign will generate the awareness that you need to attract those who are interested in fighting AIDS. When you have established who will be the leadership core of your chapter, you can then establish meeting times and timelines for other activities, such as *World AIDS Day*, *Lives Are At Stake*, the *Broken Bread Meal*, advocacy and fasting options found in the *Creative Activism* document, letter-writing campaigns, and various fundraising opportunities. Once you are in the planning stages of your event, complete our included *Media Opportunities Form* so that we may help generate media coverage of your event and let others in the Acting on AIDS national network also know about it.



Education

To educate yourself and others on AIDS, please read the documents found in the resources section of the toolkit. To understand more about advocacy and its strategic importance, please read the documents found in the advocacy section.

Discipleship

Without the ability to have roots in something greater than education or activism, the movement that you begin to generate through Acting on AIDS will only last as long as human effort can carry the weight of it. This toolkit does not provide a Bible study, but gives you the foundation for your own personal and community discipleship. Because you are ultimately responsible for your own growth, and for carrying your message to others (Matthew 28:18-20), we hope to simply encourage you in the right direction. For this reason, Acting on AIDS can be incorporated into existing campus or church ministries.

We provide two documents as a starting place: The Discipleship Wheel and an excerpt from the upcoming book, *Rediscovering the Good News*, by James Choung.

The Discipleship Wheel describes the fullness of life that is to be found in our relationship to Christ and is a practical example that has been used for 55 years. It presents the functions necessary to produce a life of obedience and faithfulness and draws parallels between the spiritual disciplines and disciplines necessary to sustain physical life: breathing, sleeping, eating, and exercising. The Discipleship Wheel illustration and the foundational scriptures it provides can be a starting place for fellowship, growth, and accountability in your Acting on AIDS movement.

What it means to be a follower of Jesus

Discipleship is the process of being conformed to Christ through studying His life and teaching and applying this teaching to your own life. Jesus' interaction with each individual that He met was different than the next, showing that each person has a unique relationship to Him. Likewise, the discipleship journey does not have a one-size-fits-all approach. In your distinctive mission to know Christ, it is only through understanding and receiving God's mercy that you can enter into a relationship with Him. It is only through a relationship with Christ that His message will be relevant to you. And it is only through inviting His Holy Spirit into your life that it will be possible to live out Christ's teachings. When you come to an understanding of mercy and grace in your own life, this message is meant to be shared with others.

The fruits of this relationship—peace and joy—can be experienced in community. When there is great inequity in the world, such as the vast number of people affected by AIDS and poverty, there is a breakdown in community; and, there is a great deficit of hope. The message of hope has to be shared and lived out if it is to bear fruit. Community and care for others is an integral part of both our relationship to Christ and the discipleship process. We can only overcome injustices like AIDS through unity. Educating others about injustice is the first step of the journey.

World Vision and Acting on AIDS is privileged to partner with you in the effort to care and advocate for widows and orphans affected by AIDS.

Welcome to the journey, we can't wait to meet you on the way!

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