

# INTRODUCTION

## **Welcome to the Revolution!**

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

—MARGARET MEAD

Americans love a good Revolution. In fact, Thomas Jefferson once said, “A little rebellion now and then is a good thing.”

Maybe one starts with dumping tea in a harbor to start a Revolution for Freedom; perhaps another starts with an inspiring speech, challenging the citizens of a great nation to judge people by the content of their character and not the color of their skin in a Revolution for Civil Rights; and just maybe a new revolutionary change in the world starts today in this library, in this study, in this living room, in this cozy chair by the window – with you reading this book, one page at a time.

Revolutions, after all, aren’t always fought by large armies or entire nations. They don’t even require gunfire, violence or bloodshed. In fact, the most important revolutions start small; one person at a time. An idea, an observation, a thought or even just a feeling can all give rise to the power of a revolution.

That’s why I’m here: I want to challenge you to start a Revolution of your own and to let you know just how to make

that happen. Anybody can be the catalyst to a fundamental change in our society, even kids.

The younger you are the more power you actually have to act on your thoughts, feelings and emotions. Think about it: you grow up, get married, buy a house, have kids of your own, and get bogged down with bills and responsibilities. How are you going to start a revolution then? We have the freedom, the power, the energy, the dreams and the courage to start revolutions. All we need is a little push. I've met about 100 kids that have done just that with a hundred separate causes and I've heard about 1,000 more, and that doesn't include the few thousand I haven't *heard* about.

If you'll join us I think we'll see a very different and far better world five years from now; a better world created by Revolutionaries like *you* and *me*.

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## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE BACK YOUR POWER**

Since I started the *Just Yell Fire* Revolution a few years ago, I've met a lot of rape survivors and near-rape avoiders. They've all told me horror stories that I hope you never have to hear or experience. And the one thing all rape victims – all victims in general – have in common is a feeling of powerlessness. Whether it is by surrendering your power unwillingly, the taking of your power without permission, or purely a lack of personal power, being victimized is a horrible feeling.

Do you know how that feels? I bet you do. Kids are some of the most powerless people on the planet; or so we think. When you are bullied and afraid to leave the house, that's powerlessness. When you are singled out because of your race, religion or sexual orientation, that's powerlessness. When you are punished by parents, principals and the powers that be, that is powerlessness in its simplest form.

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When you can't play on this team because you're a girl or cheer on that squad because you're a boy, that's the powerlessness of inequality. When you can't walk to school because bigger kids might hurt you, that's the powerlessness of injustice. When you turn on the evening news and see hunger and earthquakes and tornadoes and hurricanes and bombings and are frustrated by the inability to help – *that's* powerlessness pure and simple.

But I want you to know that you can turn that powerlessness around and into real positive power; many a revolution began by turning powerlessness into power.

When settlers braved hunger and thirst and wild animals to colonize America, they did so because they felt powerless back home in England. When England began persecuting settlers all over again in their new country, they felt powerless once more. They were tired of feeling powerless and so they did what no one thought they could do: they started a revolution.

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I'm here to tell you that you don't have to be powerless anymore.

It's time for you to take back your power.

It's time for your Revolution!

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE A REVOLUTIONARY**

When I first saw the video footage of eleven-year-old Carlie Brucia being abducted in front of a car wash in broad daylight several years ago, I was outraged. When I learned that Carlie had been raped and killed, I was sickened. When her killer was put in jail, I felt that Carlie had been vindicated. That feeling lasted only a moment, and I only felt slightly satisfied.

I knew that a woman is raped every two minutes in the United States. I knew that there are over 114,000 attempted

abductions every year. I knew there would be more Carlies later that day, and the next, and so on and forever. But I knew something else: I knew I had the right to try and stop it. I knew I was powerful enough to overcome these feelings of powerlessness.

I knew I could start a Revolution of my own; I just had to figure out *how*.

So I started the *Just Yell Fire* movement and made a film about how to avoid being abducted or raped – and as of this writing 600,000 people have downloaded it from every corner of the world. I started speaking at schools all over the United States, and now I operate the *Just Yell Fire* non-profit organization, which has helped empower girls in 41 countries.

But what about *you*?

What can *you* do to turn your anger into action? What are *you* concerned about that you care enough to start a Revolution? What can *you* do to start changing the world, one kid at a time?

I'm here to let you know that you have rights. Maybe you don't possess the right to vote or the right to drive or drink alcohol... *yet*. But here's a list of 9 rights that every one of you already has – even if you've forgotten what they are:

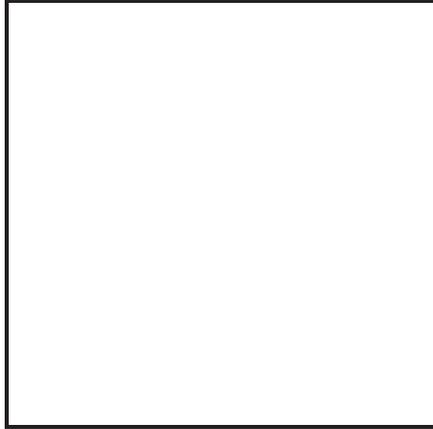
## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO...**

- Get Angry at Injustice
- Live a Life Free of Fear
- Believe in Yourself
- Fix What's Broken
- Listen to Your Gut
- Change the World
- Help Others Who Can't Help Themselves
- Fight for Your Rights and the Rights of Others
- Fight for Your Personal Bill of Rights

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I'm here to remind you of the rights you have and don't use as well as the rights you may not have even realized you had in the first place. I'm here to remind you that if you do not protect these rights, you may very well lose them.

I'm here to let you know it's time for you to start saving the world, one Revolution at a time.



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## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO RECOGNIZE YOUR POWER – AND USE IT!**

Here's the kind of real, usable power I'm talking about: you are school smart and you know something of how the world works and how to use technology in order to reach hundreds, even thousands, of people with a single Facebook post or YouTube video or text message – and even with all that knowledge racked up in your brain **you have power you don't even know about.**

You have the power to start a Revolution – a Revolution where not only *your* life gets better, but hundreds or thousands or even millions of people improve the quality of their lives, too. You can be more than just a kid or a jock or a nerd or a brain or a cheerleader or whatever label the world uses to call you now; *you* can be more than that.

You can be a Revolutionary!

## YOUNG REVOLUTIONARIES WHO ROCK

Let me tell you about a world I've discovered and one you can be part of: When *Just Yell Fire* took off and hundreds, then thousands, and millions of people joined my revolution to put predators and rapists out of commission worldwide, I was amazed at this unprecedented response to my cause. Because of all that activity I received hundreds of invitations to meetings around the country. These meetings are usually centered on an award or scholarship for community service, but what they are really about is bringing kids together who are trying to change the world. It's a way for all of us young revolutionaries to meet and greet; to get a break from school and work and fundraisers and catch up with each other – or meet each other for the very first time.

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It's really amazing to sit in a room with other kids who have made a difference in the world and talk about things like cancer cures and eliminating homelessness and poverty and quitting smoking and getting relief for flood victims. These kids are just like you and me and they have actually solved these problems in their own communities. We're not just talking pie-in-the-sky theories or warm and fuzzy wannabes; these are **Young Revolutionaries Who Rock!**

In just the past couple of years I've become part of this brave new world and have met some phenomenal people along the way:

- I met a guy from Canada who was bullied by kids and even bullied by his TEACHERS when he was growing up because he was different from them. He started an organization to teach people tolerance. He soon had 300 people working for him and has a million others helping him now – he is a Revolutionary.
- I met a high school student from South Carolina who found out about a school in India without books, without desks and without electricity. He called companies

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around the US, and now spends his summers delivering container loads of supplies to this school and others like it in India – he is a Revolutionary.

- One girl figured out how to communicate with autistic kids. She's spreading the word, and parents, doctors, and teachers all over the world are listening – she is a Revolutionary.

- One girl sent a few CDs and DVDs to the troops overseas. The response she got was so overwhelming that she started a non-profit organization to encourage other people to provide more gifts for more soldiers – she is a Revolutionary.

And I have hundreds of stories just like these; stories of modern revolutionaries who couldn't wait any longer and decided to *fight for their right to a better world*.

Kids are taking on world hunger, speeding up the search for cures to horrible diseases and standing up for the environment. We are teaching other kids about the dangers of smoking, the effects of drugs, and the problem of underage drinking. We are doing what adults can't, won't or just plain don't. So there are thousands of kids changing the world – all different colors and shapes and sizes and zip codes – and do you know what they all have in common?

*They all started out in middle school or in high school. Most weren't old enough to drive; they had never given a speech or held a public office; they weren't the best students or the best athletes; they were just everyday, normal, average kids. Kids like me; kids like you. But the other thing they had in common was that they all saw a problem and decided to do something about it. They went from being kids to become **Young Revolutionaries Who Rock**.*

**Young Revolutionaries Who Rock** don't wear uniforms or pick up guns. They don't fire bullets or tear down walls.

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They simply see something that needs fixing and fix it – or at least are in the *process of fixing it*. They don't wait around for help or ask the government for assistance or pass around petitions; they woke up one day, took a step in a new direction and started their own personal revolution to change the world.

And THAT is what this book is about. In these pages you will find everything you need to know about how to spot a problem, find a solution and then share it with the world, one revolution at a time.

That's all you have to do:

- Spot a problem
- Find a solution
- Share it with the world

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So, let me put it in a way any young revolutionary can appreciate:

### **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO GET ANGRY**

I'm angry that thousands of guys are abducting girls and raping them, killing them or selling them into slavery; that's MY thing. But what makes YOU angry?

Do you get angry when you see your friends getting bullied?

Do you get angry when you see companies pouring toxic waste into the rivers and streams of our country?

Do you get angry knowing that someone has a disease that they are denied the cure for because they don't have ENOUGH MONEY?!

Do you get angry knowing that 1 in 5 kids in our country go to bed hungry? Imagine what THAT feels like.

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Well then, stop wasting your energy on anger and start putting an end to the bullying, the polluting, or hunger. Stop putting it off and find a way to get food to those kids or CDs to the troops or money to those in need or to solve whatever problem you want to take on. *No matter how old you are, you are old enough to know what makes YOU angry and to do something about it.*



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It's easy to feel powerless in the face of so much hunger, poverty, sickness, crime, violence, bloodshed and scandal that we see on the news every day. But revolutions are about taking back your power and doing something about it.

Are you ready for that?

I have a feeling you *are* ready; right now, *today*. I have a feeling you picked up this book because you didn't just want to know what **Young Revolutionaries Who Rock** look like but because you wanted to become one yourself. Well, now is your time; here are all the tools you'll need in one handy resource and all that's left for you to do is to make the decision.

It's time to start your Revolution.

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE A YOUNG REVOLUTIONARY WHO ROCKS**

In this book you will meet nine amazing kids – just like you – who saw a problem, decided to fix it, and started their own revolution from the ground up. They aren't millionaires, they aren't politicians' kids or celebrities; they're just normal kids who wanted to right a wrong and knew the only way to get it done was to start a revolution. So they did.

And here are the **Young Revolutionaries Who Rock**:

**Vasanth Kuppuswamy**... who turned a summer trip to his father's village in India into a nonprofit organization that provides education, supplies, motivation and inspiration for children to complete school and go on to college.

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**Claire Crawford**... who started a program to give teddy bears with cleft palates to children with cleft palates so they won't feel so alone in the hospital as they recover from surgery.

**Chad Bullock**... who has made it his life's mission to stop kids from smoking – and make sure other kids never start.

**Ana Dodson**... who started an organization called *Peruvian Hearts* when she was only eleven to improve the quality of life for children in Peru who are living in orphanages or in extreme poverty.

**Daniel Feldman**... who started the non-profit organization *Kids Feeding Kids* and has raised nearly \$40,000 by organizing bake sales and other fund-raising activities to feed hungry children.

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**Niha Jain...** who visited a local battered women's shelter and was so moved that she started an organization called *Generation United to Succeed (GUTS)* to help fund women's shelters in her community and make them a more pleasant, inviting place to go in time of need.

**Pat Pedraja...** who, while recovering from chemotherapy for cancer, saw a news story about how hard it is for minorities to get bone marrow transplants and started an organization to help them do just that.

**Austin Gutwein...** who helped bring the plight of children orphaned by AIDS in Africa to light when he went to his school gym and shot 2,057 free-throws to represent the number of kids who would lose their parents during the average school day. Not only did Austin raise awareness for the desperation and devastation that AIDS was causing in Africa, but he raised money to help, with every single basket!

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**Jeremy Dias...** who, when bullied by classmates (and even teachers) for being "colored and gay," successfully sued his school board – and used the award money to create a youth-driven charity to address discrimination and promote diversity in Canada's communities and schools.

**Jasmine Petro...** who, in addition to her own charitable work, teaches other kids how to be **Young Revolutionaries Who Rock!**

But guess what? With all these great, passionate, inspiring young peopel you'll meet in this book there's still

## YOUNG REVOLUTIONARIES WHO ROCK

one missing. Can you guess who it is? That's right, it's *you*. You may not know one single, solitary thing about India, bone marrow transplants, the negative effects of nicotine, the poor people of Peru, cleft palates or even shooting baskets, but deep down inside I *know* you have something to contribute, something to give, something that sees a need for change.

This is your chance to join the revolution.

This is your chance to be one of the **Young Revolutionaries Who Rock!**