



Sam's 'How to Start a Campaign'



Sam is a campaigner. Recently, Sam and his school's Eco-Committee have been campaigning against fracking (an issue that affects his local community)... Read on to learn Sam's advice on running a successful local campaign about an issue important to you.

Step 1: Campaigners

First of all, you need to decide who is going to be involved in your campaign. A good starting point is the students and staff involved in your Eco-Committee but, depending on the issue you are campaigning on, many more members of your school and wider community may also want to be involved.

Step 2: What Campaign?

Sam and his school's Eco-Committee decided to campaign against fracking as this is an issue that affects their local area. When deciding what issue you want to campaign on, Sam recommends you ask you whole school about the issues that are important to them. Issues to begin a campaign around can be local, regional, national or even global; but the more everyone in your school cares about the issue, the more they will engage with your campaign.

Step 3: Planning a Campaign

Sam's campaigning always focuses on positivity with the message that a successful campaign has to educate, not hate. Here are his top tips:

- Choose an issue that is important to your school and local community.
- Do your research, if you want to run a successful campaign it is important to be informed. Use concrete knowledge and facts and figures as these help to back up your argument and help you to be prepared for difficult questions.
- Set a goal for you campaign: will it be to raise awareness or achieve a specific goal?
- Inform and involve as many people as possible (see Step 5: Informing, Involving, Campaigning).
- Create a platform that people can refer back to this could be through resources such as flyers or a digital platform – does your school website have a space to promote your campaign?
- Have great visuals, the more your focus on the look of your campaign the more it will attract attention.
- Do something interesting and creative to draw attention to your campaign, remember to also keep it safe and legal.
- Start with your Eco-Committee, and then build your campaign brick by brick throughout the school and eventually into the wider community.

Step 4: Campaigning and the Curriculum

Depending on what campaign you decide on there will be a variety of different curriculum links, for example for Sam's fracking campaign his teachers also taught about renewable energy sources. In Step 5, Sam recommends involving local businesses and groups and writing to your local MP: this gives all those involved the perfect opportunity to practice their formal letter-writing skills.

Step 5: Informing, Involving and Campaigning

Sam recommends informing the local media about your campaign, they will be especially interested in your campaign if you do something interesting and creative to raise awareness or funds during your campaign. As well as the media, you could try to involve local businesses. If you have picked an issue affecting your school it may also affect businesses in the local area. Stalls in school fairs and local farmers' markets are a tried-and-tested way to increase support in your campaign and Sam also recommends writing to local politicians, sports teams or celebrities.

Step 6: Evaluating your Campaign

If your campaign aimed to raise awareness of an issue, you could check whether it was successful by asking people to complete surveys or questionnaires. If you set a specific goal – did you achieve it? Remember that, even if you didn't achieve your goal, raising awareness of an issue is definitely a success.

Sam Says: People say we are the leaders of tomorrow, but we're already the leaders of today, what do you say?