

the school kit
CHALLENGE



Activity guide



How to use this resource

Thank you for your interest in making MCC school kits! We're so grateful that you are sharing God's love with your global neighbours in such a tangible way. Soon, your school kits will travel across the globe to help children in need. So, let's have fun packing!

This resource offers instructions, information and ideas to engage your group as you participate in the School Kit Challenge. You can use any part of this resource, in any order, to help plan your event.

The activities in this resource are ideal for Sunday School classes, vacation Bible school groups, families with kids or anyone young at heart. Although this resource is aimed at elementary-school aged kids, it can be adapted to suit other age levels.

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Let's get social and win some pizza!

What's a challenge without a little contest? Post a photo of your school kit packing group to social media and you'll be entered to win a pizza party courtesy of MCC! There are two prizes for two different categories of photos:

1. The most creative display of your school kits in a photo.
2. The most school kits featured in a photo. Can you get 200 school kits in one photo?

To enter, post your photo to social media, tag @mccpeace in your post and use the hashtag, #MCCSchoolKitChallenge. All photos posted to Facebook or Instagram by August 31, 2023 will be entered to win some tasty pizza!

If you have any questions about this challenge, email canada@mcccanada.ca



Moses Akot, a student in South Sudan, proudly displays his MCC school kit supplies. (Loreto Schools Rumbek photo/Herbert Orwa)

All about school kits

School kits help children in need. Each kit is filled with basic school supplies.

The supplies are collected and packed by caring people like you. Across Canada and the U.S., generous people donate thousands of school kits.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) collects and distributes the school kits. They are sent all around the world to help children in need.

Children need school kits for different reasons.

Reasons children may need a school kit



Their family cannot afford school supplies.

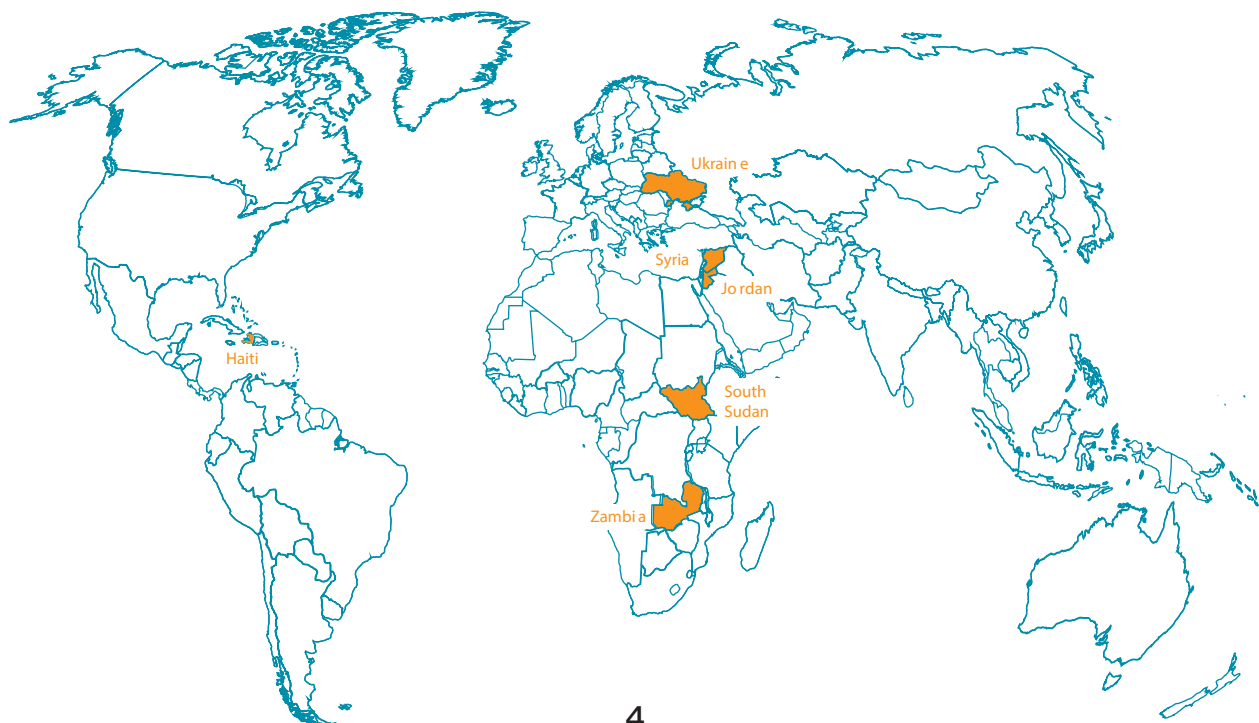


School supplies are not easily available where they live.



A disaster has disrupted access to school supplies.

Last year, MCC delivered 89,369 school kits to children in need. They were sent to places like Haiti, Jordan, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Zambia.



Why pack a school kit?

As Christians, we are called to love each other. This is the example Jesus sets for us in the Bible. There are many ways we can show love to each other.

We can say kind things, spend time with people or give them something they need.

Many children around the world need school supplies. By packing a school kit, you are giving them what they need—it is a visible and practical way to show someone they are loved.

Your school kit will travel across the world, bringing a message of Jesus's love. Isn't that cool?

Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. Hebrews 13:16 (NRSV)

Prayer for school kits

We want God's love to be evident in every ruler, pencil and eraser that is donated. We encourage you to take time to pray as a group over your school supplies and for the children around the world who will be receiving them. Pray that they will feel God's tangible love through these gifts. Here's an example of how your group can pray:

Jesus, we are so thankful that you love everyone in the world. Help us to share that good news with others.

Please bless these school kits as they travel to children in need. Bless everyone who helps deliver the kits where they need to go. And especially, please bless the children who receive them.

May the supplies help them learn and grow. And may your love be shown in a visible way.

We ask these things in your name. Amen.

How to pack a school kit

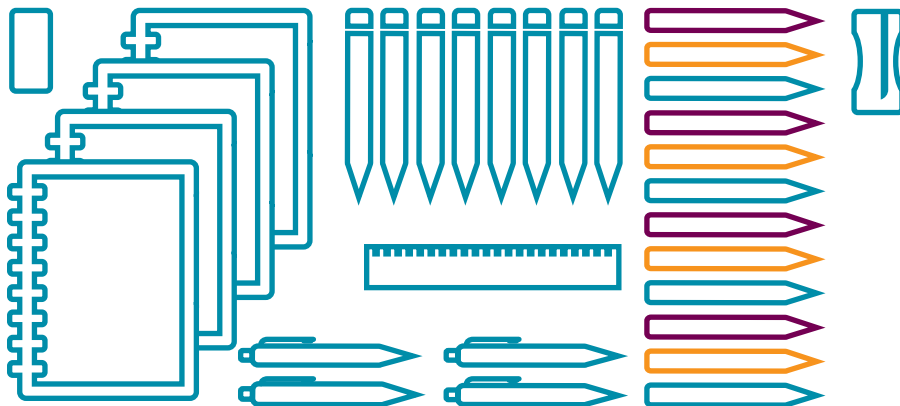
To pack a school kit, you will need to gather the items on the shopping list below.

If you are packing many school kits, it can be helpful to set up stations with each type of item spread across a long table or multiple tables. The participants can then start with a kit bag and go to each station to add the required items. If you choose to use this method, there are printable signs you can use for each station at the end of this resource.

Shopping list

These are the supplies needed per school kit:

- 4 spiral or perforated-pages notebooks (21.5cm x 27cm totalling 500-600 pages)
- 8 new unsharpened pencils
- 1 ruler (flat, good quality; must indicate 30 cm; inch markings optional)
- 12 coloured pencils (in packaging)
- 1 large eraser
- 4 new black or blue ballpoint pens
- 1 small all metal pencil sharpener, one or two holes*
- 1 kit bag**



Packing a school kit

Watch the instructional video on our website where Erin shows how to pack a school kit. You can then either give instructions to your group or play the video for them to watch.

For more information on how to pack a school kit, visit mcccanada.ca/get-involved/kits/school or scan this QR code.



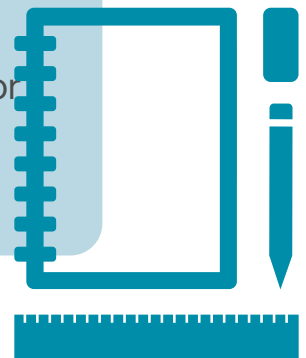
Metal sharpeners*

All metal sharpeners can be found online on Amazon.ca or in the art supply section of retail stores like Staples. Plastic case pencil sharpeners are not accepted because the plastic breaks more easily, especially when being transported long distances. If you cannot find all metal sharpeners please pack the kits without them and we will add the sharpeners.



Kit bags**

Kit bags are available at your local MCC Materials Resources Centre and some local MCC offices. Or, if you have basic sewing skills, you can make your own. You can also recruit a group of volunteers to sew the kit bags ahead of your event. Instructions for sewing a kit bag are found on our website at: mcccanada.ca/get-involved/kits/bag



Group activity: The right tools for the job

This game challenges kids to pass on a secret message. However, they will quickly find out that the game is difficult without the right tools for the job. The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate why school kits are necessary and help your group build empathy with others, especially those who have less than they do.

Supplies

- Secret message printout x2 (there are two options available to print out on pages 10 and 11 for different difficulty levels).
- Pencils
- Paper
- Stopwatch (Many cell phones have a built-in app for this)

1. Preparation ahead of time

- a. Read through these instructions ahead of time so you are familiar with the game.
- b. Print out two copies of the “secret message.” There are two different options with different difficulty levels. Choose the message that is appropriate for your group.
- c. Tape one copy of the secret message on a table a few feet away from where the activity will take place. Cover it with a blank sheet of paper.
- d. Keep the other copy with you.
- e. Gather the pencils and pieces of paper needed.

2. Setting up the activity

- a. Divide everyone into at least two groups.* Have each group form a line.
- b. Explain the rules of the game:

“You have all been assigned to a very important mission. Choose someone from your group to receive a secret message. However, this person will only have 90 seconds to study the message. After that, they will need to return to their line and give the message to the person behind them. The message can only be whispered once, so pay close attention. Then the next person will give the message to the person behind them, and so on.

Remember to whisper quietly so the other group does not hear you. The last person in line will have to say the message out loud to me. Your goal as a group is to deliver the correct message.”

*Note: For large groups, it may be more manageable to separate everyone into three, four or even more groups. Aim for about 5-7 kids per group.

3. Round one

- a. Bring the first person from each line over to the table and start the timer. They will have 90 seconds to try and memorize the secret message.
- b. Once 90 seconds is up, cover up the message. Everyone must return to their line and pass along the message.
- c. Once the message reaches the last person in line, ask them to repeat it out loud to you. Prepare for the message to be changed substantially or forgotten entirely.
- d. Thank the groups for putting in a good effort. Announce that round two will begin momentarily, but with some changes.

4. Round two

- a. Give each group a piece of paper and a pencil. Announce that everyone will try again, but with some supplies to help.
- b. Bring the first person from each line over to the table and start the timer. They will have 90 seconds to copy down the message using the pencil and paper.
- c. Then, they must return to their line and pass along the message. This time, they can simply pass the paper along the line to the end.
- d. The last person will read the message out loud. It should be nearly perfect, if not an exact match.

Discussion

Now that the groups have had a chance to play, both with and without the necessary supplies, start a discussion with the following questions.

- How did you feel playing the game the first time without any supplies to help you?
- How did you feel after you received the supplies you needed for the game?
- Although this is just an activity, there are many kids around the world that do not have the supplies they need for school. How do you think those kids feel?

Secret message for older groups

Last year, MCC delivered 89,369 school kits to children in need. They were sent to places like Canada, Haiti, Jordan, South Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Zambia.

Secret message for younger groups



How a school kit makes a difference in South Sudan

All around the world, kids like you go to school. Have you ever wondered what school might be like in another country? Let's learn about a student named Maker.

Maker is 10 years old and lives in South Sudan. At one point, he didn't have all the supplies he needed for school. Like many other families in the community, his parents found it difficult to afford school supplies.

Can you imagine what it would be like for Maker to go to school without school supplies? Taking notes and working on homework would be hard.

But thanks to someone kind like you, Maker received an MCC school kit. Now he has everything he needs for school.

"I am happy to have received the school kit because the items help me in my everyday studies," says Maker. "I really like the books because they are big, and they can cover one and half of the school term."

Maker also likes to create artwork. He uses the coloured pencils and pens for drawings.

Having a school kit has made a big difference for Maker. But it's also about more than just the school supplies.

By packing a school kit, you are sharing God's love with kids like Maker.

"I am so happy about the school kits and also the knowledge that there are some people who think and care about us," says Maker.

Thank you for packing a school kit and for caring about kids around the world.

Reflection questions

- How do you think Maker felt when he didn't have school supplies?
- How do you think Maker felt after he received an MCC school kit?
- What would it be like for you to do school without these supplies?
- Can you name some things you think Maker might do differently after receiving a school kit?

Students in South Sudan display their notebooks from their MCC school kits. (MCC photo/Loreto Schools Rumbek photo/Herbert Orwa)



School kit riddles

Match up riddles that describe each school kit item with the picture of the item.
When you are done, you can also colour this page!

No matter your age,
you can write on my page.

Use me to write, draw or trace. And
use my other end to erase.

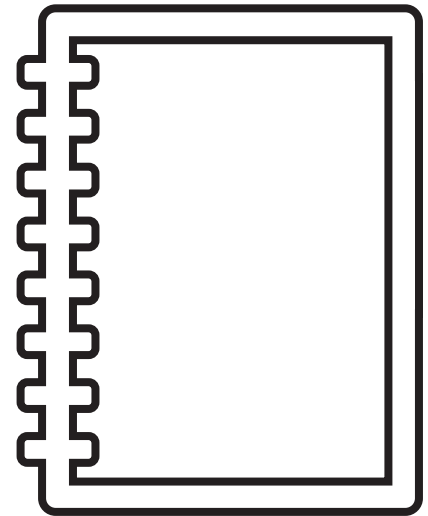
Marked with lines to measure,
I am very long. You can also use
me to draw a line that's strong.

I come in many colours, like yellow,
blue or green. Use me to make sure
your drawings will be seen.

If you make a mistake, do not worry.
I'll get rid of it in a hurry.

People who write with me can be
very clever. But be careful what you
put, the words will last forever.

If your pencil's dull, you know
what to do. Use me and I'll make
it work like it is new.



Kit packing station sign

Fold on the line to make a tent card sign from this page.



Four notebooks (4)

Kit packing station sign

Fold on the line to make a tent card sign from this page.



Eight pencils (8)

Kit packing station sign

Fold on the line to make a tent card sign from this page.



One ruler (1)

Kit packing station sign

Fold on the line to make a tent card sign from this page.

**One pack of
coloured pencils (1)**

Kit packing station sign

Fold on the line to make a tent card sign from this page.



One eraser (1)

Kit packing station sign

Fold on the line to make a tent card sign from this page.



Four pens (4)

Kit packing station sign

Fold on the line to make a tent card sign from this page.



One pencil sharpener (1)