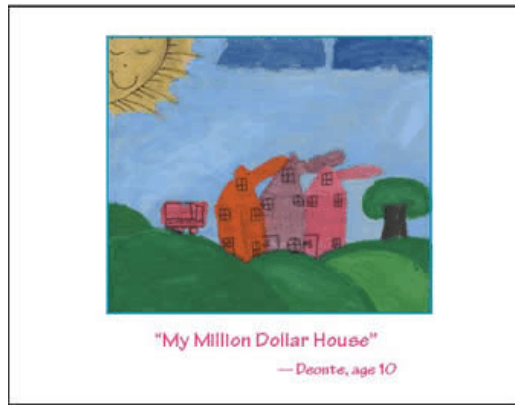


**ForKids, Inc.
Public Relations Plan**



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CONTENTS

I. Executive Summary.....	3
II. Situation Analysis	4
<i>History of ForKids</i>	4
<i>Funding</i>	6
<i>Funding Sources in Hampton Roads</i>	7
<i>Who Gives and Why</i>	8
<i>Fastest Growing Ways to Give to Charity</i>	9
III. Goal.....	10
IV. Objectives.....	10
V. Target Audiences.....	10
<i>Primary Public</i>	11
<i>Intervening Public</i>	12
<i>Special Public</i>	13
VI. Budget.....	14
VII. Evaluation.....	15

Executive Summary

ForKids has been committed to ending the cycle of homelessness in South Hampton Roads since its founding in 1988. The vision of the organization includes a future in which no child is homeless. Over the past nineteen years, ForKids has helped thousands of local homeless families become self-sufficient. During this time, the organization's network of shelters, housing, and services has grown significantly. Unfortunately, there are still currently about 6,800 homeless children in the Hampton Roads area.

The problem that ForKids is facing is the lack of funding and property necessary to provide shelter and service for the existing homeless families in the area. The goal of this plan is to provide strategies and tactics for increasing both financial and property donations to ForKids, Inc., allowing the continuation of its mission to end the cycle of homelessness in South Hampton Roads. This plan will examine funding sources in Hampton Roads and well as national philanthropy statistics in order to gain a better understanding of who gives to charity and why.

In order to achieve this goal, this plan will target not only potential contributors, but the intervening public of the media, as well as the special public of individuals and organizations that have supported ForKids in the past. One of the main strategies set forth in this plan focuses on maintaining mutually beneficial relationships between ForKids and the target audience. The budget set forth takes into consideration the fact that as much funding as possible will go directly towards helping the families; and therefore, utilizes the skills of current employees of ForKids in order to execute the tactics involved. The necessary time requirements and evaluation methods for each of the tactics are discussed as needed.

Situation Analysis

History of ForKids

In the winter of 1988, Father Joe of Holy Trinity Church began finding homeless women and children sleeping on church grounds in the Ocean View section of Norfolk. He called on parishioners, friends, and other churches to help raise money in order to open a homeless shelter specifically for families. These efforts turned into ForKids, which was incorporated in 1988. The organization developed a mission and set of values that has continued to guide it to this day (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 ForKids; Mission, Vision, and Values

Our Mission:

ForKids provides families with housing and comprehensive services to foster permanent, positive family development leading to self-sufficient futures. ForKids is passionately committed to ending the cycle of homelessness for children in South Hampton Roads

Our Vision:

We envision a future where no child is homeless. Through innovative programs and persistent advocacy, ForKids will break the cycle of homelessness, foster strong families, and help parents gain and maintain safe and stable homes.

Our Values:

- We believe the future of our community is rooted in securing the future of our children.
- We believe family responsibility is the key to generational stability.
- We believe each individual has unique strengths and abilities that can be nurtured so that they can achieve self-sufficiency.
- Our families are our full partners in the process of achieving self-sufficiency. We accomplish goals *with* them, not *for* them.
- We believe change is a process, not an event. Emergency shelter is not a permanent solution to homelessness.

- We believe we must be fully accountable for every contribution made to ForKids and wisely use all funds entrusted to us.
- We believe it is our responsibility to educate others about the complex nature of homelessness and advocate for changes in community policies and programs.
- We work as a team to address the complex challenges of homelessness through innovative thinking, hard work and service excellence.

In 1991, the Haven House Emergency Shelter was opened on D View Avenue in Ocean View. The house was renovated by board members as well as volunteers, and took over two years to complete. Haven House provides temporary shelter to about 18 families at a time, including 20 to 30 children. While families reside at Haven House, they participate in a 120-day program structured to address stability issues such as mental and physical health, employment, budgeting, housing-related issues, debt payment, and childcare.

In 1992, Life Savings Bank donated two apartment buildings on 7th Bay Street, also in Ocean View, to ForKids. The buildings were named Morgan House, and serve as transitional housing for families for 24 months at a time. During their stay at Morgan House, parents maintain full-time employment, reduce debt, and participate in a life-skills program focused on long-term stability. Children, as in all of ForKids' programs, attend school and receive health insurance. The kids also receive services for their developmental, emotional, and educational needs.

In 1994, the Legacy Permanent Supportive Housing program began thanks to help from Norfolk's Episcopal Churches. The program provides housing to six families that have diagnosed disabilities. In order to continue providing support to families after they leave one of ForKids' housing programs, the LEAP Aftercare program was established in 1998. The six month program helps families transition to independent living. Most recently, Elizabeth

Place was opened in 2005, providing transitional housing to families for 3 to 6 months. Elizabeth Place consists of five apartments and allows ForKids to help 25% more families every year.

Funding

The effort of ForKids to end homelessness began with meager funds that were collected from the church and community, and also through the services of dedicated volunteers. In 1995, the organization began to receive grants from the Department of Housing & Community Development as well as the Federal HOME Program. The total of the grants from the two agencies is about \$1 million a year. The amount of the grants is determined by how much money ForKids raises in public funds. The grants require a 25% “match” from the community. For example, every dollar that ForKids raises privately, will bring in four more from the government. Therefore, receiving community donations is essential to the overall financial picture of ForKids. The more money that can be raised, the more families that can be helped.

Raising contributions is the biggest challenge for ForKids, according to Marketing Director Whitney Hausmann. The organization is well established in the community and receives a tremendous amount of support through volunteerism and dry-good donations. However, it takes a lot of money to support Haven House and the other programs. For example, it costs \$35 for one child to live in the Haven House for one day. For one family to stay for a month, it costs about \$1500. In order to continue its mission to end homelessness in South Hampton Roads, ForKids must acquire funding to maintain its current expenses as well as to increase housing opportunities for existing homeless families.

One circumstance that should be considered is the fact that grant funding can change drastically at any time depending on a variety factors within the government. It is important to create and maintain relationships with private donors and other funding sources.

Funding Sources in Hampton Roads

According to the *Dimensions of Philanthropy in Hampton Roads 2006*, a report put out by The Norfolk Foundation, donations to human services organizations like ForKids have stabilized following several challenging years. In 2005, more than \$16 million was contributed locally to human services organizations from a variety of different non-government sources (Figure 1.2)



Who Gives and Why

Nationally, about 89% of households give to charity. According to the National Philanthropic Trust, the average annual contribution per household is \$1,620. In 2005, Americans spent \$260.28 billion on charitable causes. However, there were approximately 1,010,400 different organizations competing for this money. In order to attract contributors amongst this vast competition for charitable giving, it is important to understand who gives and why they give it.

According to Generous Giving, an organization that tracks charitable giving in the United States, the two groups that contribute the most to charity are the wealthy (those making over \$100,000 a year) and the poor (those making under \$20,000 a year). The middle-class (those with incomes between \$40,000 and \$100,000 a year) contribute the least to charity.

The American Wealthy

- 54% say tax benefits motivate them to contribute money to charity; however, this does not outweigh feeling strongly about a cause (74%).
- 50% say they feel an obligation to give back to the community.
- 36% say their spiritual or religious belief is their motivation to give.
- People of greater wealth contribute a larger percent of their income to charity (5%) than people with high income but low wealth (3%).

The Middle Class

- The more money a person makes in this income bracket (\$40,000-\$100,000/year), the less money he or she contributes to charity:

\$40,000- \$59,999/year- 4% of group gives 10% of income to charity

\$60,000- \$74,999/year- drops to 2%

\$75,000- \$99,999/year- drops to 1%

The American Poor

Less than \$20,000/year- 8% of group gives 10% of their income to charity

\$20,000- \$29,999/year- drops to 5%

\$30,000- \$39,999/year- 5%

- The majority of the contributions in this group go to churches or religious causes.

Fastest Growing Ways to Give to Charity

It is important to be knowledgeable about all possible ways to generate funding. There are numerous non-traditional ways people are contributing to charity today.

1. *Donor Advised Funds*- allow people to donate to a charity by putting money into a fund set up by the organization; allows for maximum tax benefits to contributor.
2. *Charitable Remainder Trusts*- are used for planned giving, people put money in a trust, which pays out a certain amount to the charity each year; upon death, the remainder goes to the charity.
3. *Supporting Organizations*- obtaining contributions through intermediate sources.
4. *Charity Related Credit Cards*- percentage of purchase goes towards a charity when the customer uses the card.
5. *Pooled Income Funds*- used by companies or organizations that have a fund set up in which employees can donate a certain amount of their income to a charity.

Goal

The goal of this plan is to provide strategies and tactics for increasing both financial and property donations to ForKids, Inc., allowing the continuation of its mission to end the cycle of homelessness in South Hampton Roads by providing families with housing and services that lead to a self-sufficient future.

Objectives

1. To generate 7-10 new financial contributors to the organization.
2. To generate 2 new property donations.
3. To increase media coverage of ForKids programs and events by 25% in order to advance awareness of the organization.
4. To achieve a 90% repeat-contributor rate.

Target Audiences

1. Primary Public: potential financial and property donors
2. Intervening Public: local media outlets
3. Special Public: individuals and organizations that have previously supported ForKids

Primary Public: Potential Financial and Property Donors

Key Message: The acquisition of property, as well as the financial ability to support it, is essential to the mission of ForKids.

Objective: To generate 7 to 10 new financial contributors as well as acquire 2 new properties.

Strategy: Building and maintaining relationships with those who are able to financially support the vision of ForKids.

Tactics:

- Construct an HTML page, which would be part of the existing web site that allows direct contributions by credit card, on-line check, and Paypal.
Completion time: one month, by in-house marketing consultant.
- Construct an HTML page, which would offer information about property donation, including history of property donation to ForKids and how to contribute.
Completion time: one month, by in-house marketing consultant.
- Alert local churches to the fact that people may donate property to ForKids through bequests. This information can be included in church newsletters and bulletins.
Completion time: Send information releases to local churches once a year.
- Set up a donor advised fund to allow maximum tax breaks for people who contribute a large sum of money.
Completion time: will require continuous monitoring by in-house accounting department.
- Add information about charitable remainder trusts to web site as well as newsletters and other relevant communication vehicles.
Completion time: include in yearly newsletters, also upon web site completion; one month.

- Establish a ForKids Credit Card through local bank. Create an informational brochure and send through a mass community mailing.
Completion time: consult in-house accounting department; information should be sent out immediately following account set-up.

Intervening Public: Local Media Outlets

Key Message: The easiest and cheapest way to raise awareness about ForKids is through media coverage.

Objective: To increase media coverage of ForKids' programs and events by 25%.

Strategy: To maintain relationships with the local media in order to increase coverage of For Kids.

Tactics:

- Send updates about ForKids events and programs to journalists who have previously covered stories regarding the organization.
Completion time: every six months and for special events, by in-house marketing department.
- Send out information releases to non-traditional news sources that may reach target audience (country club newsletters, local college alumni publications, charity tracking organizations).
Completion time: two months; however, in-house marketing should continuously consider new mediums in which to reach potential contributors.
- Continue to invite opinion leaders and celebrities to volunteer their services for ForKids.
Completion time: summer 2007; outdoor gardening work by opinion leaders always attracts a lot of media coverage for housing programs (Mayor Paul Fraim, FM 99. Guiding Light stars).

- Invite local television stations to send a group of employees to volunteer their services, creating a mutually beneficial situation between ForKids and the volunteering news station.

Completion time: summer 2007; projects to be determined by housing director.

Special Public: Organizations that have previously Supported ForKids

Key Message: It is essential to show appreciation for those who have supported ForKids in the past and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with them.

Objective: To achieve a 90% repeat-contributor rate.

Strategy: Maintaining relationships with past donors in order to encourage repeat-contributions.

Tactics:

- Create and send out a ForKids Newsletter to past supporters once a year (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Past Contributors by Organization

Chesapeake Office Supply	Half Moon Cruise and Celebration Center
Brutti's	BJ'S
Costco	City of Norfolk Division of Parks and Forestry
Home Depot	Krispy Kreme
Ocean View Hardware	Old Dominion University
Olive Garden	Sam's Club
Pizza Hut	S.B. Ballard Construction
Subway	Paul Finch & Associates
TowneBank	AmeriGroup Foundation
The Robert Hayes Company, Inc.	Virginia Natural Gas
Bank of Hampton Roads	Issue Trak

Titan America	Virginia Housing and Development Authority
Wilcox & Savage	Bon Secours Depaul Foundation
Dominion	John Lapentina, DDS/ Family Dental Care
T.J. Crooks Marine Construction	Sentry Business Solutions
Ghent Computer	Headway Corporate Resources
Stealth Shredding	Net Telcos

- Send creatively designed postcards to past contributors containing information about new web pages.
Completion time: upon web site completion; one month.
- Send information to companies regarding pooled-income funds. Encourage companies to set up funds payable to ForKids.
Completion time: two months to research and construct informational content; direct mailing upon completion by in-house marketing department.
- Mention past donors by name in publications or to media whenever possible in order to reference relationship.

Budget

In keeping with the values of ForKids, it is essential that the majority of available funding directly benefits the families supported by the organization. All of the tactics in this plan can be completed by existing employees, eliminating the need for any new salaries. Services for all miscellaneous costs, including printing, mailing, etc., can be solicited from local businesses as well as from those with whom ForKids has a connection (see Figure 2.1). For example, a local printing company may be interested in helping ForKids by donating 500 free copies a month to the organization. It should be the goal of the organization to form these types of mutually beneficial relationships whenever possible.

Costs for this plan that are unavoidable include banking fees associated with donor advised funds, remainder trusts, and the ForKids credit card. These costs will vary and can be ascertained by the in-house accounting department. However, these fees will be insignificant compared to the amount of donations that will ultimately be derived from them. The long term benefits of these costs will further ForKids' mission to end the cycle of homelessness in South Hampton Roads.

Evaluation Methods

1. The number of new financial and property donors can be judged based on existing records of current donation statistics that have been compiled by ForKids.
2. Media coverage can be calculated and monitored by recording the number of column inches (also broadcast and radio minutes) dedicated to ForKids each month. The marketing department should gather information about past media coverage in order to gage increase resulting from this plan.
3. The number of repeat-contributors can be ascertained based on existing records maintained by ForKids.
4. The effectiveness of the HTML pages can be judged by the number of hits and number of donations obtained through the web site.
5. The success of donor advised finds, bequests, remainder trusts, and ForKids credit cards, will be evident by the way each donation is received. Detailed records should be kept measuring the progress of each of these tactics to ensure that the benefits are worth the costs.
6. Any establishment of pooled income funds from local businesses or organizations should be considered successful.

Evaluations should be conducted yearly and used to update this plan as needed.

