



“Pennies For Polio”

Kids Helping Rotary End Polio Worldwide



Dear Educator:

On behalf of your local Rotary club(s), we wish to thank you and your students for participating in the “**Pennies for Polio**” campaign to help Rotary International in its quest to eradicate polio worldwide. We’ve been working toward this goal for over 25 years and the end is near. To date polio has been eliminated from **99.8%** of the world, but the last **0.2%** is proving to be the most difficult. That is why we are reaching out to our communities and to our schools to work with us in this very important endeavor.

During the past few years we have become acutely aware that our communities and our children do not realize that polio still exists in the world primarily because the US has been polio-free since the 1960’s. Since 1985 Rotary has immunized **2 billion** children with the oral polio vaccine and the simple fact is that until polio is eradicated everywhere, children and adults in all parts of the world are still at risk.

This disease primarily strikes children under five years of age. It is a global health issue that the World Health Organization has made its #1 Priority. It is also Rotary’s #1 Priority and working together with our other Global Polio Eradication Initiative Partners (*WHO, UNICEF, Centers for Disease Control, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*), we are very close to achieving our goal but we need everyone’s help to do so.

The “**Pennies for Polio**” program is an outgrowth of two previous programs that raised money from school children to put an end to polio in the United States . . . the Easter Seals “March of Dimes” program and UNICEF’s “Trick or Treat for UNICEF” program. By combining the primary elements of these two programs into the “**Pennies for Polio**” program, we are continuing a long-standing tradition of school children helping to insure that other children, without the same opportunities that our children have, will be protected against polio. Our children will be saving the lives of other children half way around the world. *(NOTE: For those schools that participated in the “Pennies for Peace” program, they will be helping the same children that they raised money to build schools for as Afghanistan and Pakistan are two of the four remaining countries where polio is still endemic.)*

The “**Pennies for Polio**” campaign has two components . . . education and the collection of coins from school children. In addition, Rotary is working with various local businesses to match funds which are raised by the schools. In terms of “education” there will be widespread media with numerous PSA’s on radio and TV and news coverage before and during the campaign.

We hope you will decide to incorporate polio and its impact on global health in your curriculum. To make this as simple as possible, we have developed an Educator’s Resource Center with numerous tools and references at the following: <http://www.penniesforpolio.org/educators.htm> You can use these materials to create awareness among your students and their families about polio. We are constantly updating this information to insure that it is current.

Again, we thank you for your participation. For Rotarians, there is something truly inspiring about children helping other children. For a mere **\$.60**, enough polio vaccine can be provided to save a child’s life. We are hoping that many lives will be saved by your students as they contribute their “**Pennies for Polio**”.

Tick or Treat with Pennies for Polio Campaign Checklist for Teachers	Completed
Visit http://www.penniesforpolio.org/educators.htm for educational resources to support your curriculum	
Encourage students to develop posters and bulletin boards about polio to create awareness	
Send informational flyer home with students during Campaign Kick-Off period (provided by Rotary)	