



LeadYoung: Stories for young changemaking

Toolkit for starting a storytelling movement in your school, town or beyond.



WELCOME

What if every young person knew they had the power to create change for the good of all wherever they are – in their school, their neighborhood, their city or beyond? The answer? Solutions would outrun problems. Our communities would be fairer, more just, happier and healthier. Ours would be an Everyone a Changemaker world.

As a changemaker, you have found your special power to make things better for the good of all. This power will be with you throughout your life to navigate whatever challenges you face and to seize new opportunities that our everything-changing world throws your way. It is time for everyone to be confident contributors in their communities and the more practice the better. And here, you play a very important role.

This toolkit was prepared to help you use storytelling to activate new changemakers. Ashoka has developed a LeadYoung series of stories about young people changing their worlds and successful adults who started things in their teens. Through this LeadYoung experience, they found their power for life. The toolkit provides short stories together with questions and activities that you can share in your school or broader community to help others understand a key element in an Everyone a Changemaker world: that young people don't need permission to change the world; they just need practice, and it starts by leading young.

The LeadYoung stories show what you already know about changemaking: it's about spotting problems, empathizing with others, building a team and stepping up with solutions for the good of all. These skills – empathy, teamwork, new leadership, and changemaking – are important for all of us to develop and practice. By showing young people what is possible, you will empower them to start thinking like a changemaker and believe in themselves to start creating the world they want to see. By spreading these LeadYoung stories and even creating your own stories, you and your team will be fueling the movement for an Everyone a Changemaker world.

How to use the toolkit?

The following stories are compiled here as a tool for you to inspire your peers to recognize and activate their own power to effect change for the good of all. We know this is a big task, but the LeadYoung team here to support you.

We call each one of these small movements initiated by one or several young change-makers in a specific place a “**LeadYoung Movement**”. We are inviting you to start your own LeadYoung movement, as we know there is no one more powerful than you to talk your peers into finding their own power. Your movement might start small, but can reach enormous impact if you keep going.

Activities

The story is a short text that you can either read out loud in front of a group, role play or print-out and share. Reading each story should not take you longer than 3 minutes.

The first activity always offers some discussion questions to share with the group. You can either share them all or choose your favorite ones if you are short on time.

The second activity offers a guided exercise to do in groups, in order to develop a reflection or skill that is linked to the story.

All activities are designed to help you to talk to your peers about the power of young changemaking. The flow of the activities in this toolkit aims to help guide participants in first exploring who or what inspires them, then identifying problems they care about, finding their passion, and finally naming what they are good at. If you create new activities, make sure to share them with us to keep the conversation going.

Where should you start your LeadYoung movement?

AT SCHOOL

School is an amazing place to promote changemaking among your peers. Think about sharing a LeadYoung story and a short activity during your school's morning meeting, or using your school's newspaper to feature LeadYoung stories and inspire fellow students' to think about their role in changing the world for the good of all. There may also be some special activities or celebrations that you can leverage, such as sports events or school celebrations.

WITH YOUR YOUTH GROUPS

Groups of peers of which you are a member outside school (such as, for example, a Scouts group or church group) may be an excellent platform to kickstart your movement and share LeadYoung stories. You know your own group, so make sure to analyze which moment is better to share the stories, and to ask for authorization to group leaders if necessary.

THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

You get to decide which channel is better for sharing the stories on social media. Stories in this toolkit are presented in different formats, and you may use the format you prefer on your favorite platform, to ignite the power of changemaking among your peers. Make sure to check <http://leadyoung.ashoka.org> for stories and videos.

“ We have identified youngsters from various schools who monitor the process of storytelling. Once we pitch the idea to the school authorities and get the permission to have it going, we pass on the mantle to these campus ambassadors who take charge and share with us media clipping of the stories told every week. We've identified some amazing youngsters from across 20 schools who are actively and enthusiastically pioneering this process. ”

Garvita Gulhati (India) WhyWaste.org (Launched her LeadYoung Movement at her school and beyond)

Important Disclaimer: The material in this toolkit is yours to use as you choose, and we trust in your creativity and resourcefulness to advance the use of stories and the tools presented to maximize their impact. We trust you to be bold and courageous, and to aim to big goals honoring the true changemaker that you are, even if that means starting small.

SARAH TOUMI'S LEADYOUNG STORY

Leading change in rural areas of Tunisia since the age of 11



Growing up, Sarah Toumi, a French-born Tunisian woman, spent time with her extended family in Bir Salah, a small town in southeast Tunisia. During one visit, she remembers sharing with her cousins her dream of becoming an astronaut when she finished school. She then asked them about their dreams. Her three cousins, all girls, said that they were dropping out of school because there was no bus to take them. The high school was 12 km away and it was too dangerous to go by foot. Sarah remembers thinking, “How is that possible? I can become what I want because the school is close by and everything is possible for me.” Sarah enlisted her father’s support and set up her first organization—helping children in her family’s village and beyond have access to learning opportunities in and outside of school. She was 11 years old.

Now 29, Sarah is leading Acacias for All, a movement to curb desertification in rural communities across Tunisia. She introduces alternative crops, like Acacia trees, to help farmers increase their income while restoring the quality of the soil. Sarah’s initial program in Bir Salah with 300 farmers and rural craftswomen resulted in an average 60% increase in income. She is now expanding to half of Tunisia’s provinces with 100,000 trees planted. Sarah’s aim is to change the way farmers and policy leaders approach climate change mitigation, taking it from a low-priority, costly endeavor to a core strategy for improving rural livelihoods.

What made it possible for Sarah to do this? Sarah’s early changemaking experience was critical to her success today. “When you start early, you learn how to work with others and solve problems... I didn’t know I was a ‘changemaker,’ but I was sure I was going to be an actor of change.” From an early age, Sarah’s parents involved her in their own purpose-driven work and her teachers gave her the space to be creative and curious.

According to Sarah, it is critical to give young people today the kind of exposure and support that her parents and teachers gave to her. “For those who think that their children will become successful if they simply become a doctor or lawyer, they are wrong. Their children will be completely out of the game.” Sarah sees the world her young cousins are growing up in as unstable and frightening at times with extremism, terrorism and climate change. “But young people have the ability to dream without constraints. They are connected, have access to information, can travel and talk to people who are different, and talk across continents.

What they need is support from my generation and older to gain the skills and motivation to believe in themselves, do things and try.”

Read Sarah’s Story Online
<https://goo.gl/SNp3nF>

See the video Sarah’s story:
<https://youtu.be/OejuqZoVzSo>

GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask your class/group to organize in small groups of 5 people each, and take 10 minutes to answer the following questions. Invite your teacher or coordinator to join one of the groups. Afterwards, take 5 minutes to share each of the small groups’ main findings with the larger class.

How do you think Sarah was inspired to create the schoolbus program for her family’s village?

How important was this early changemaking experience for her later work as a social entrepreneur founding Acacias for All?

Do you think you have what it takes to lead change as Sarah did in her teens?

If you had to quickly name a problem that you care about in your community or a community you know well, what problem would you choose?

GROUP ACTIVITY

YOUR FAVORITE CHANGEMAKER

Ask the class/group the following questions:

Who around you is a changemaker like Sarah Toumi?

Help them think about people of different ages who they know well and who are part of their daily life or community. Even if they are making small changes, that surely means a lot for other people around them.

Let’s draw! Invite each person of the group to draw individually the changemaker they thought about.

Once everyone has finished their drawing, hang them all together in a place where it is visible and ask each person to share. You will have a gallery of great changemakers to inspire you for the rest of the day.

TIP: If you don’t think your peers will like to draw, you can invite them to write a short story about their favorite changemaker and read them out.

DARIO RICCOBONO'S LEADYOUNG STORY

Mobilizing young Italians against the Sicilian mob in Italy since he was 13 years old



When Dario Riccobono was 13, his little-known hometown of Capaci in Sicily, Italy, was suddenly thrust onto the world stage. A massive explosion orchestrated by the Mafia killed the renowned anti-Mafia prosecutor, Judge Giovanni Falcone. The gruesome event was a turning point in Dario's life. Growing up, few people had talked about the Mafia, let alone challenged it. Dario's father was an exception having stood up to the Mafia as a matter of principle. Seeing him cry at the news of Falcone's killing marked Dario profoundly. He had to do something.

It was the early 1990s and Dario saw that teenagers like himself did not have a place or a clear voice in the movement. He started a youth wing of a local citizen organization and helped recruit and empower other teenagers to expose the psychological and cultural control the Mafia exerts over communities. In his twenties, Dario and a group of friends realized that a key to conquering the entrenched power of the Mafia was to cut it off from the pizzo, the "protection tax," that nearly 80% of Sicilian businesses paid to the Mafia bosses. They created Addiopizzo ("goodbye pizzo") to bring together business owners who refused to pay the pizzo and consumers who pledged to purchase goods from non-pizzo-paying establishments.

Dario expanded his work beyond Sicily by tapping into the massive tourism market. Addiopizzo Travel specializes in educational tours that not only asks the tourists—many of them teenagers—to commit to buying non-pizzo products and services, but also helps visitors see Sicily through the lens of its anti-Mafia struggle, countering the glorified Mafia of "The Godfather" and "The Sopranos." By putting citizens and tourists at the center of a strategy to fight organized crime, Dario shows how they can make change in their own communities through their power as consumers. Addiopizzo has been replicated in three cities where about 20 percent of consumers purchase mostly pizzo-free products. As more consumers and tourists join the Addiopizzo network, more businesses have joined the pizzo-free community. The network has been growing at a rate of 100 new businesses per year, and Dario thinks that the tipping point will be when 50 percent of consumers are buying pizzo-free products. Dario felt his own power as a teenager and saw firsthand the potent force of collective action; he is now helping to influence a new generation of

- engaged young citizens who know they can change society for the better. Once any young person knows this power, they will have the skills and be ready to address any new challenge.

Read Dario's Story Online
<https://goo.gl/A3rcjR>

See the video of Dario's story
<https://youtu.be/A9ldclaqLFc>

GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask your class/group to organize in small groups of 5 people each, and take 10 minutes to answer the following questions. Invite your teacher or coordinator to join one of the groups. You may use as many of the questions below as you need. Afterwards, take 5 minutes to share each of the small groups' main findings with the larger group.

What do you think it was that made Dario find his power when he was 13 to start fighting the Mafia in his hometown in Italy?

What do you think were the skills and abilities that helped Dario and his friends mobilize people to take action against the Mafia?

What do you think are the problems that your own community is facing? (Note: problems may be large or small, the important fact is that we are able to notice them around us).

What do you think you could do to act against one of the problems you care about? What would be your first step? Who could help you?

GROUP ACTIVITY MAPPING THE PROBLEMS

Challenge the group members to think about the main problem that is affecting his or her community. In order to do this, distribute cards with tape or sticky notes and ask each person in the group to write in one short sentence the problem they see around them and they care most about. Once everyone has taken a few minutes to think and write their response, use a large blackboard or wall and ask every person in the group to stand up and put up their card, taking care to group similar problems together. After some time reading and comparing problems, the group should have a visual picture of the most pressing social problems in their community. Take some time to reflect on this and to discuss whether or not this picture reflects reality in the community and if not, what is missing and work together to fill-in those elements.

ARA KUSUMA'S LEADYOUNG STORY

How a love of cows led to teaching dairy farmers about environmentally-friendly methods



Obsessed with cows as a little girl, Ara Kusuma asked for a cow of her own when she was 10. She and her parents set off to Central Java to visit a few farms and learn the best way to raise and care for farm animals. The first farm they went to had 1,500 cows living in clean, healthy conditions. The farmers used integrated farming to repurpose waste for fertilizer – it was a dream! But at the next stop, they found a different reality: villages overrun with cow dung, flies everywhere, and unhappy animals and humans.

Ara wanted to know, “What if all animals could live on farms like that first one?” With support from her parents, who took her seriously and helped her lay out a plan, Ara started Project Moo: For the Welfare of All. The goal? To surface and share innovations among village farmers to increase dairy production in a more sustainable way. In the four years that followed, Project Moo brought together 150 farmers, many of whom became leaders in the community, testing the new approaches and spreading what worked for the benefit of all. The community saw more income from new dairy products and sustainable fertilizer. It also became cleaner, new opportunities for ecotourism emerged, and a spirit of collective problem-solving took hold.

In 2008, at age 11, Ara was recognized as an Ashoka Youth Venturer and got connected to other young people who were setting their ideas for change in motion, too. She went on study marketing and management in Singapore. Now 21 and back in Indonesia, she has started a second venture, a travel-learning project URTravelearner (www.urtravelearner.com) to help others envision changemaker lives by seeing social entrepreneurs in action.

“From Project Moo, I found my passion for being an integrator, aligning everyone’s interest for the benefit of all.”

Read Ara's Story Online <https://goo.gl/zuEN6Q>

GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask your class/group to organize in small groups of 5 people each, and take 10 minutes to answer the following questions. Invite your teacher or coordinator to join one of the groups. You may use as many of the questions below as you need. Afterwards, take 5 minutes to share each of the small groups’ main findings with the larger group.

Ara found her passion when she was very young. Do you remember what your passions were when you were 6 or 8? Do you still enjoy these passions?

The connection between Ara’s passion and making significant social impact was not evident from the beginning, but she found an innovative way to use her passion for social good. Can you think of examples in your own life? Do you know or have you heard about people that use their passions for social good in creative ways?

How important do you think it was for Ara to receive support from her parents? Do you think this is the same for you?

What would you do if you had to start a changemaker project today, based on one of your passions? Who would you like to collaborate with?

GROUP ACTIVITY

SELF-REFLECTION EXERCISE

Ask your class/group to organize in small groups of 5 people each, and take 10 minutes to answer the following questions. Invite your teacher or coordinator to join one of the groups. You may use as many of the questions below as you need. Afterwards, take 5 minutes to share each of the small groups’ main findings with the larger group.

What are 3 personal qualities I like the most about myself?

What are 3 personal qualities I would like to change?

What excites me today?

Is there something I remember I did when I was younger, that I would love to continue doing today?

If time allows, ask participants to organize in pairs and to briefly share their answers to each question with their peer. Before sharing, ask everyone to commit to creating safe spaces where all answers will be kept confidential, and to only provide positive feedback to their peer. Before finishing, ask a couple of volunteers to share with the group what they have learned from this experience.

GINO TUBARO'S LEADYOUNG STORY

Turning kids with disabilities into superheroes in Argentina



At the age of 17, Gino Tubaro received a letter from a desperate mother. "Please make my boy, Felipe, a hand," it said. "We cannot afford a prosthetic." Gino had been inventing things since the age of 13. His own mother had taken him to science fairs and invention workshops, pushing him to follow his passion for technology. "Where would I be if I only had one hand?" Gino thought. He had acquired a 3D printer the year before and saw endless possibilities for his own future as an inventor. But Felipe's hand soon became his obsession.



Gino launched the Limbs Project (<http://limbs.earth/>) under the organization he founded called AtomicLab (www.atomiclab.org). He assembled a small team of like-minded inventors to use 3D printing to make Felipe's hand. He drew from various designs available online. After a number of attempts, Gino's team made a hand that fit perfectly AND made Felipe feel like a superhero. His new, red-colored robotic hand looked like something out of a Marvel movie. Gino saw for the first time how something he made could actually change lives. He accelerated the printing and started organizing "Hand-a-thons," (manotones in Spanish) events where he distributed prosthetics, turning hundreds of kids in Argentina into superheroes.

In April 2017, with a waiting list of 3,500 kids who needed prosthetics in 17 countries, Gino launched a video with the help of Ashoka and PlayGround, a digital media company. The video recruited "Atomic Ambassadors," people around the world committed to the cause who had access to a 3D printer, to meet the demand in their own countries. The video went viral and within a month, Atomic Ambassadors began delivering hands in their own countries. Today, at 23, Gino has helped more than 750 Felipes and has unleashed the power of 1,000 changemakers in 30 countries to help kids most in need see themselves as superheroes. Gino inspired Marvel to get on board and signed a deal with Disney to print The Avengers-inspired hands for free to distribute to kids at Hand-a-thons in Latin America.

Read Gino's story here:
<https://goo.gl/H7Pgpz>

See the video about Gino's story here:
<https://goo.gl/sEUB5V>

Turning kids with disabilities into superheroes in Argentina

GROUP DISCUSSION

Ask your class/group to organize in small groups of 5 people each, and take 10 minutes to answer the following questions. Invite your teacher or coordinator to join one of the groups. You may use as many of the questions below as you need. Afterwards, take 5 minutes to share each of the small groups' main findings with the larger group.

Gino found his power at the age of 17, triggered by the empathy he felt towards Felipe and his need. Why do you think Felipe's story was so important to Gino at that time and pushed him to take action?

Do you think technology is a useful tool for changemaking? Which technologies do you think are most important today to effect social change? Do you know how to use these technologies? If not, what would it take for you to learn to use them?

Gino is inspiring millions of people to become changemakers as well, thanks in part to a video that was made by Ashoka and Playground and went viral. Do you think receiving recognition through social media is important? How do you think you would manage media and communications for your own changemaker project?

How would you like to collaborate with private companies in your own changemaker project?

GROUP ACTIVITY BECOME A SUPERHERO

Just like Gino is helping disabled kids to see themselves as superheroes, we all need to feel a little like superheroes sometimes, as this may help us see our strengths more clearly.

In this exercise, you will invite members of your group to imagine how would they be if they were a superhero.

How would this superhero look like? Which superpowers would each of them have? Who would be in her/his team? What problems would he/she face? How would he/she solve these problems? Who would support this superhero?

After each participant has ideated their own superhero, you can ask them to draw it, or if you have a little more time to share with a peer the description of their own superhero and too have the other person drawing it according to his/her perceptions.

Question: **Which superheroes could work together and collaborate between them to achieve better results?** All the superheroes can then be displayed as a team in a very visible place to remind the group about the great superpowers they all have or can develop!

You can find more stories like these at <http://leadyoung.ashoka.org>



NEXT STEPS

Congratulations! Starting your LeadYoung movement is a big thing, and certainly something you should be proud of.

We know from experience that when you have started making change happen around you, it's not easy to stop. We are here to help you grow your movement and to support you in the journey of enabling more and more young changemakers around you. We are excited to see your impact!

Some things you can do to keep connecting with the LeadYoung team and continue to grow the movement are:

SHARE



Use [#LeadYoung](#) to share on social media what actions you are taking to advance the LeadYoung message. You will inspire other young changemakers like you to follow suit, and, who knows, they may also decide to start their own LeadYoung movement.

EMAIL US



Email us at leadyoung@ashoka.org to share pictures and updates of your work, and to ask for any help or advice. With your permission, we will share them on our social media and show the impact of your work!

CREATE



Create your own LeadYoung story based on your own experience or someone you know well. Get creative with the activities and build new ones for existing or new stories. Be sure to send them to our team at leadyoung@ashoka.org

SIGN UP



For the LeadYoung Story-A-Week Package by emailing leadyoung@ashoka.org You will receive a weekly email containing a new LeadYoung story and activities every week to keep inspiring new changemakers.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE



Visit <http://leadyoung.ashoka.org> for updates on new stories and activities. We are preparing the launch of our new platform, so you will see some great news and tools over there too.



#LeadYoung

Ashoka LeadYoung is a storytelling campaign that uses the power of stories to demonstrate the power of a young person who had an idea, created a team and led a solution. LeadYoung aims to inspire young people to be bold and creative, and parents and educators to promote these kind of growing up experiences, in order to make young changemaking the new norm.

About Ashoka

Ashoka identifies and supports the world's leading social entrepreneurs, learns from the patterns in their innovations, and mobilizes a global community to embrace these new frameworks and build an "everyone a changemaker" world.

<http://leadyoung.ashoka.org>



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