Solidarity in action
with copains du Monde
Children – the future of solidarity

The younger generations are the first to suffer in the face of ever-increasing poverty. The situation is dire: almost half of the world’s children are poor. In addition, there is rising violence and we regularly see how the families we support have to cope with that strain. The Secours populaire’s response is to show solidarity. Since 1992, Secours populaire has encouraged children to join its copain du Monde children’s volunteering movement.

Encouraging solidarity
As part of the copain du Monde initiative, the younger generations are made aware of the plight of people living in difficult conditions: those who cannot afford to eat, dress, play sports, or go on holiday. The children involved are encouraged to take action to help them: they collect money, school supplies or food products, and express their sympathy to isolated people by writing to them or sending them drawings, etc.

Raising awareness about children’s rights
Copain du Monde children are also made aware of their rights. They learn that these rights are not always respected around the world. They are encouraged to work together and get involved in solidarity projects.

Committed children all around the world

A cross-border movement
Today, thousands of children in France but also in Houston, Morocco, Benin, El Salvador and the Philippines are getting involved in this solidarity drive. They meet regularly to learn about the values of sharing and caring, and to show solidarity to those in need.

Building friendships
Copain du Monde is also about creating friendships among children around the world. The children keep in touch with each other, and in doing so discover different cultures, habits, and experiences. And sometimes they actually meet them face-to-face. For example, a copain du Monde group from Seine-Saint-Denis took a trip to Greece; others from the Dordogne went to Bosnia.

Cultivating peace
The copain du Monde movement aims to bring people together. Children learn to overcome their differences. This is how Palestinian and Israeli children, or North Korean and South Korean children have come to spend their holidays together at copain du Monde villages.

For copain du Monde, we organised collections of toys and clothes to help those in need.

Léa

I have become a copain du Monde because I think it’s really important to help others when you have some time to give.

Johanna

The copain du Monde children’s volunteering movement is a way of showing solidarity.
Getting involved at home or on the other side of the world

Everyone can do something to help people in difficulty. Here are some of things that have been achieved by the copains du Monde

**Egg hunts for global solidarity**
Each year, the copains du Monde organise egg hunts over Easter weekend. Their aim is to raise funds for international solidarity projects. The idea is simple: the children and their parents buy a "hunting licence", then set off to look for the eggs that have been decorated and hidden in local parks or forests. They can then exchange them for treats.

**A solidarity race for disaster victims**
Since 2014, the copains du Monde have organised an annual solidarity race in Hem (Nord department of France). The 200 participants make a small donation to support solidarity projects around the world. The funds raised have helped rebuild a school in Nepal or provided relief supplies for victims of Hurricane Irma in the West Indies.

**Making lamps for Malagasy children**
Fifty students from a primary school in Clermont-Ferrand met every week to make lamps, which were then sent to students at a school in northern Madagascar. In Madagascar, access to electricity is a luxury, and many of the children there can't study during the hours of darkness because they have no lights. These lamp kits contain dynamos, and are easy to use.

**A great initiative for the victims of Hurricane Irma**
As part of the Transat AG2R La Mondiale yacht race, the skippers of the Groupe Royer - Secours populaire vessel went to Saint Martin to present around fifteen young people who had endured personal suffering as a result of Hurricane Irma with gifts prepared by 35 copains du Monde in Finistère.

**Meeting the homeless in Paris**
A class of 9 and 10-year olds from a school in the 15th district of Paris worked on a project to collect personal care products. They then went out on the streets to meet the homeless in Paris, accompanied by a Secours populaire street team. They gave out the personal care products and chatted with the recipients to provide a little reassurance and comfort.
Every summer, copain du Monde villages are organised in France and dozens of other countries. They allow thousands of children from over 50 countries to meet. For a period of one to three weeks, they get to know one another by playing games together, and they design projects to help each other. These villages encourage multicultural encounters and help children learn how to live together better. They learn about the values of tolerance and openness to others. It is also a starting point to drive them forward. At the end of the experience, each group of children leaves with ideas and plans that they can implement locally, in their department, country or on the other side of the world.

“During the initiative, all the children work together on a solidarity project to help the inhabitants of their various cities and countries.

Rama volunteer
If you’re a parent

Are the values of tolerance and helping others important to you? Would you like to share them with your child? Why not suggest that they join copains du Monde? If your child wants to be part of this rewarding adventure, just contact your nearest branch of the Secours populaire. They will be able to provide you with all the information you need: the dates of forthcoming meetings, what projects your child can get involved with, and how they can join a copain du Monde village during the school holidays.

Since being part of copain du Monde, my daughter makes commitments and sticks to them. Through these experiences and the diversity within the movement, she is more open to the world, and understands it better.

Valérie mum

If you work with children

Secours populaire is recognised as an official association to complement state education.

Do you play a role in children’s education as a teacher, facilitator or educator? Are you looking for ways to raise children’s awareness about solidarity and helping others? Secours populaire is recognised as an official association to complement state education, and has education populaire approval. Secours populaire volunteers can come to speak to your class, or visit you elsewhere, to explain the work of the association, give a small workshop on children’s rights, and encourage the pupils to organise a collection or carry out other solidarity projects. Contact your local Secours populaire.

The children chose to organise a collection of personal care products and to make cards for the homeless. The collection was a great success in the school and reading all the cards was a very moving experience.

Brigitte teacher

“Children, young people, and adults! Why not get involved and give some of your time to help others as part of the Secours populaire’s copain du Monde movement?”

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Are you a company or an association that admires the values of the copain du Monde movement? You can help the children involved to carry out their solidarity projects. Whether you have a room to lend us, or can provide financial and material aid, or even help to organise copain du Monde villages, any form of support is welcome. Depending on your area of business and your resources, you can make the ideas created by the copains du Monde children come to life, and help to build a better tomorrow. Contact your local Secours populaire.

As a Secours populaire volunteer, you are already in contact with families. You meet children who are keen to change things, as well as those who are facing the difficulties of everyday life. These children can easily feel excluded and forgotten. They need a chance to get out, to meet other children from other backgrounds, other cultures. For all these children, copain du Monde is an opportunity to open up to the world and to be a driver and player for solidarity. Why not suggest that the families register their children to be part of the movement?

It is important that children make pledges to help others, because they are our future. They want to change things; they want to exercise their rights everywhere in the world.

Rofiyat volunteer

Copain du Monde is an opportunity to open up to the world and to be a driver and player for solidarity.
Supporting us means investing in the future

We need you! Please send us your donations.

secourspopulaire.fr

Thank you for your support. 75% of the amount of your donation (capped at €530) can be deducted from your income tax. After that, the reduction is 66%, and limited to 20% of your net taxable income.