



*Mobilizing our generation to create and sustain peace*

## **Overview and How-To!**

### **Our mission:**

To provide students and youth with effective tools to create political will and to proactively affect the way individuals, communities, schools and governments react to conflict and violence. Our approach enables students to address root causes of conflict and create lasting changes in the ways we integrate peace into personal and political decision-making.

### **What we do:**

#### **Advocacy**

We advocate for evidence-based legislation and policy that will enhance our capacity to reduce violence and build sustainable peace both domestically and internationally. Our current legislative priority is the **Youth PROMISE Act (H.R. 1318 & S. 1307)**, which is an acronym for the Youth Prison Reduction through Opportunities, Mentoring, Intervention, Support and Education Act. Learn more about the bill at [youthpromiseaction.org](http://youthpromiseaction.org). Our long-term vision is the creation of a U.S. Department of Peacebuilding that would research, articulate and facilitate leading-edge peaceful solutions to domestic and international conflict.

#### **Applied Peacebuilding**

We facilitate the practice and promotion of community and campus peacebuilding efforts that engage people in the day-to-day work of creating peace in our homes, communities, and institutions. Applied peacebuilding means engaging in actual peacebuilding practices as well as advocating for their implementation.

### **How we do it:**

#### **Action Teams and Monthly Calls**

Student Peace Alliance chapters follow a similar format as that of our Peace Alliance Action Teams. SPA chapters and Peace Alliance Action Teams meet together every month for a powerful national conference call, take a monthly action together, and work with Members of Congress and the media to educate constituents and policymakers on peacebuilding opportunities. The National Call usually has a major guest speaker and it gives everyone the chance to hear what the month's actions will be, how other chapters are doing, and includes a training session on how to take the monthly action. We also have a

monthly call for SPA chapters to come together and communicate with each other about campus programs and projects and to share resources.

### **Direct support for SPA chapter initiatives**

Sally Kaplan, our Student Peace Alliance Coordinator, directly supports SPA chapters in creating and implementing local projects and events on campus. Sally works to provide and share resources among SPA chapters and to facilitate the organizing and outreach process for students who are starting new chapters or working on growing membership. If you have an idea but are unsure of how to implement it, Sally will help connect you with other chapters who have held similar events or will help you work through a plan to make your ideas become reality.

## **Our goals:**

- **To pass the Youth PROMISE Act (YPA)**
- **To establish 25 new chapters by the end of 2014**
- **To re-launch the SPA website with new, up-to-date resources for student organizers**
- **To host a second national SPA weekend conference by the end of 2015**
- **To orchestrate an SPA National Call In Day to Members of Congress in 2014 to advocate for Youth PROMISE Act**

## **How to start a Student Peace Alliance Chapter:**

1. Visit our Student Peace Alliance website, [studentpeacealliance.org](http://studentpeacealliance.org), and fill out an inquiry form.
2. Sally will contact you to find out more about your chapter.
3. You will need to start an SPA Chapter on campus by following your school's rules. This usually requires you to get a faculty sponsor, fill out papers, and host elections. There are resources available on our website including chapter constitutions, sign in sheets, and outreach materials.
4. Once you've created a chapter on campus, email [sally@peacealliance.org](mailto:sally@peacealliance.org) about your group's official status. We will then schedule a launch call with your chapter to train you on our program and on the Youth PROMISE Act. The launch call is necessary for you to become an official Student Peace Alliance chapter.

\*Note-if you already have an SPA Chapter on your high school or college campus, please fill out an inquiry form on the SPA website so that we can connect with you.

## **For Faculty:**

Faculty are an essential aspect of the Student Peace Alliance. Most universities, high schools and community colleges require that in order to become an official student organization, there must be a faculty or staff sponsor. SPA relies on those sponsors to ensure that the student group is sustainable and has a process for renewing and continuing its membership as students graduate and leave the chapter. We provide support and resources for faculty sponsors and encourage them to be active in helping to sustain the chapters.

### **Links:**

Previous Monthly Action Call audio recordings:

<http://peacealliance.org/take-action/action-resources/#.UmU-ztLrxFm>