



Craig Kielburger grew up in Toronto and was a 12 year-old boy with ordinary dreams. But the morning of April 19th ,1995 would spark a global movement that would change the lives of millions of people.

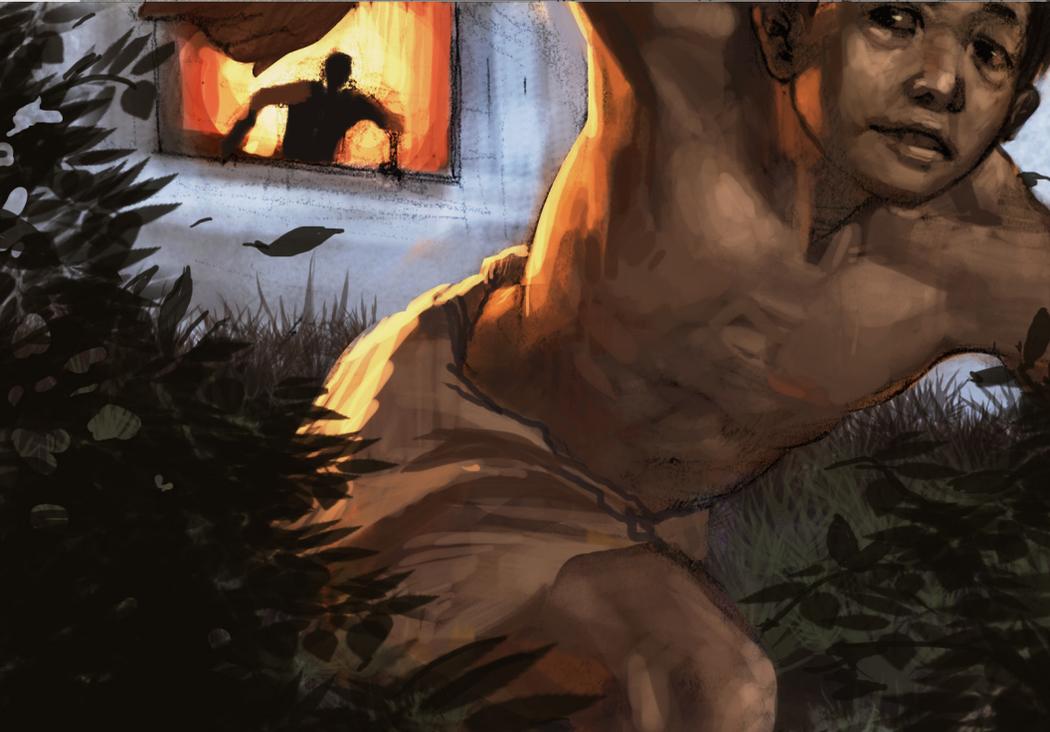


While Craig was heading for the newspaper comics, a headline jumped out at him, "Battled child labour, boy, 12, murdered." Intrigued he read the article.

It was like Craig was transported to a different world. He read about a 4 year boy in Pakistan named Iqbal Masih who was sold by his parents for less than \$16 to a carpet maker. They were desperate for money to pay for their eldest son's wedding. Craig could barely believe it! Who would sell their own child?



For the next six years, Iqbal was shackled to a carpet-weaving loom, tying tiny knots hour after hour. He worked 12 hours a day, six days a week and his repeated escape attempts were met with beatings by his master. Craig thought, how in the world could someone get away with this? What kind of monster chains a child?



Finally, at age 10, Iqbal escaped and began a crusade speaking out against child labour. Carpet sales began to go down and the carpet makers were furious.

Iqbal was riding with some friends when a member of the carpet mafia lurked in the shadows behind a wall.



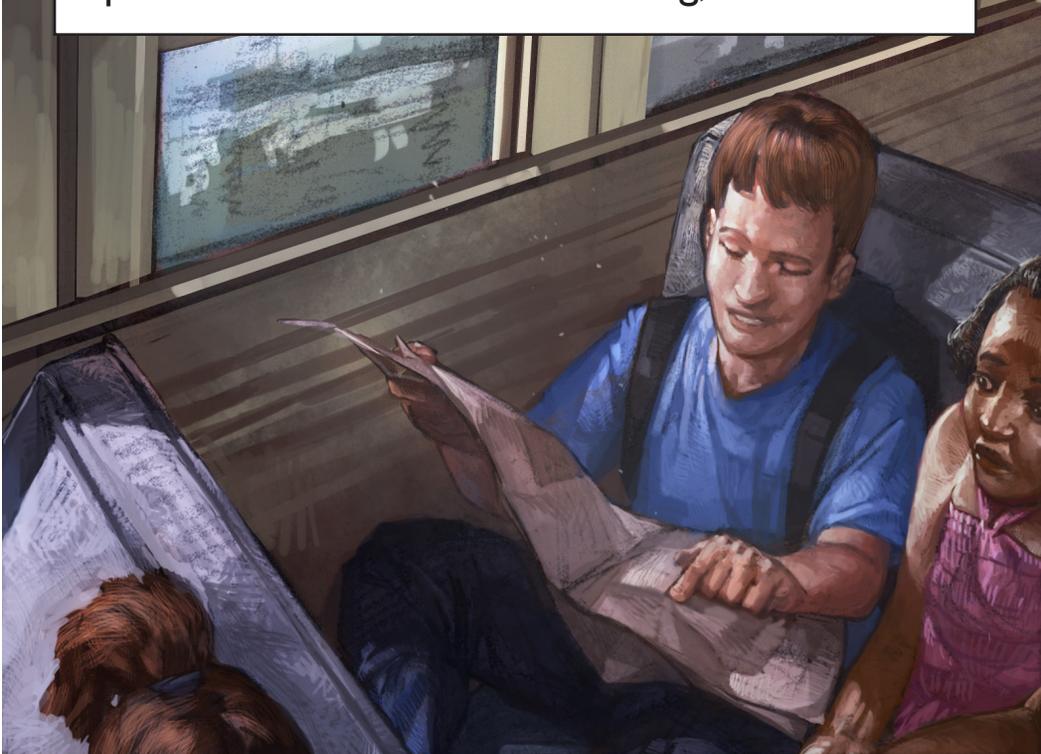
He fired his shotgun and sadly, Iqbal was killed for his fight against child labour.



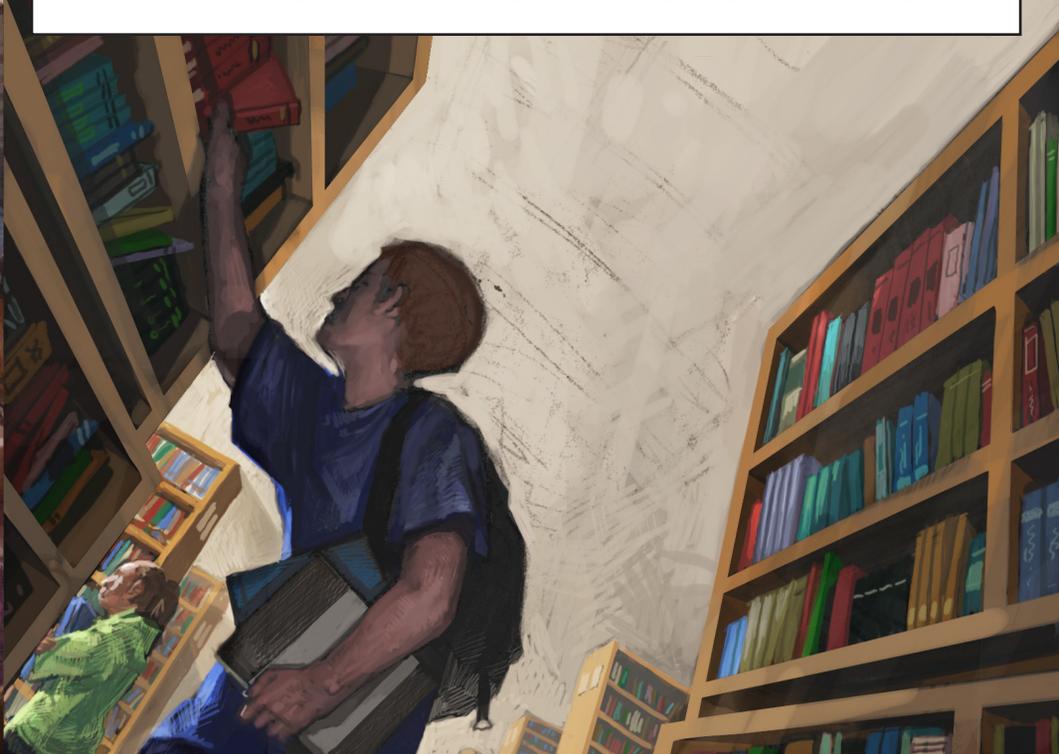
The story shocked Craig, he had never heard about child labour before! He thought all kids went to school and didn't have to work.



All along the way to school, Craig thought about Iqbal. He wanted to do something, but what?



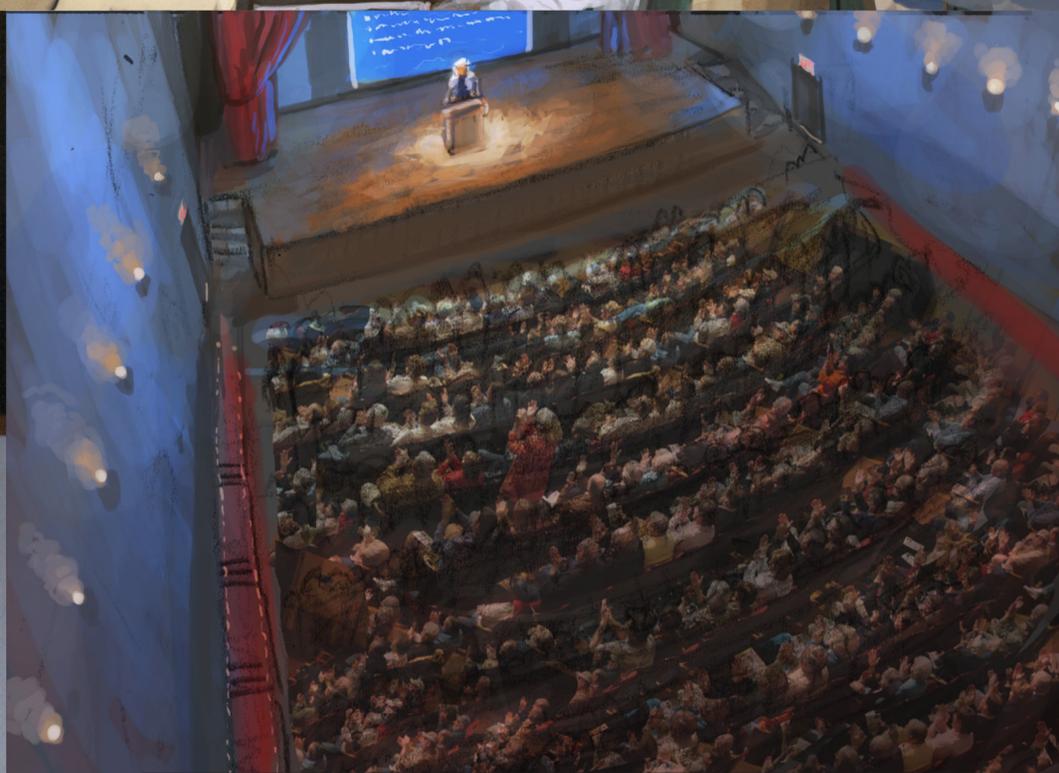
As Craig hit the library, he learned that there were 250 million child labourers in the world. Unreal!



His teacher let him speak to his grade 7 class and Craig shared the article and the plight of children around the world. Then came the nerve racking moment, "Who will join a group and help these children?" 11 hands shot up.



Free the Children was born, and they fought injustice with petitions, bake sales, and car washes.



Soon Craig was speaking to thousands.



At the age of 12, Craig decided to take a trip to Asia. (he had a chaperone)

He thought it was time to visit the working children and see it for himself.



Craig took his first visit to a slum. He would never forget the cramped conditions and the horrors of poverty.

In the brick making kilns, Craig meet children who had never even heard of school.



In a tea shop they met a boy who worked from 4 in the morning to 10 o'clock at night , 7 days a week!

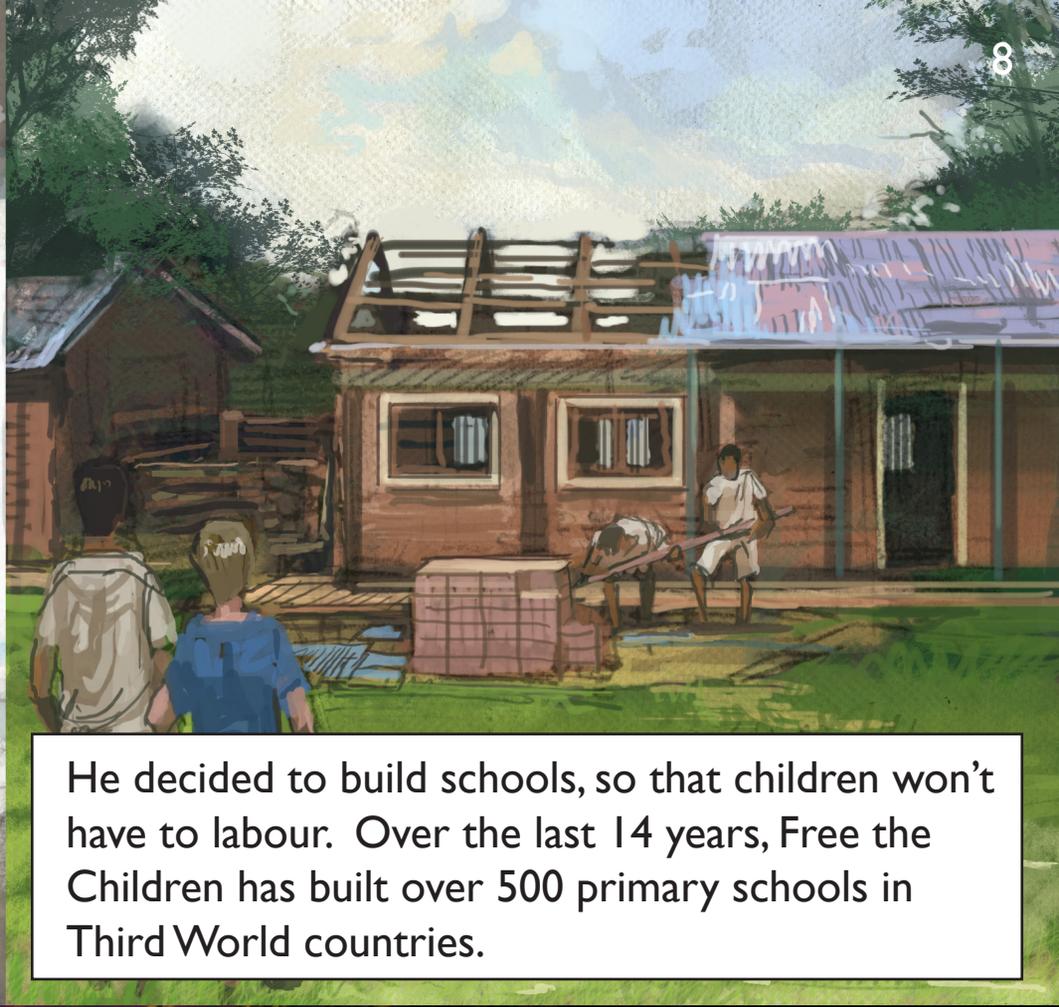


A girl named Muniannal took apart used needles with her bare hands to recycle the plastics.

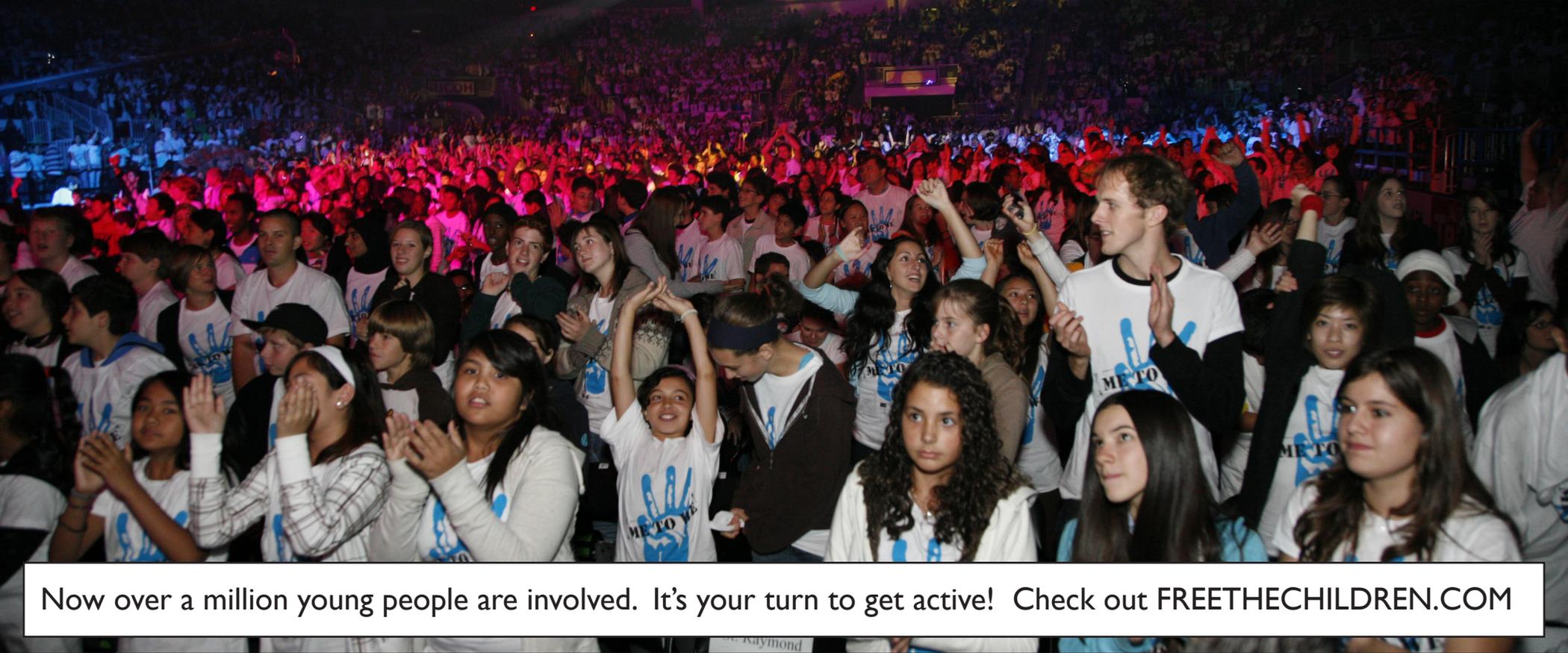


Most appalling was that children lived in dumps, scavenging for food and metals.

Craig thought long and hard on what he was going to do to help these children. He knew that He would share their stories with everyone back home. But how to fight against child labour? How to really make a difference?



He decided to build schools, so that children won't have to labour. Over the last 14 years, Free the Children has built over 500 primary schools in Third World countries.



Now over a million young people are involved. It's your turn to get active! Check out [FREETHECHILDREN.COM](http://FREETHECHILDREN.COM)

It is my hope that in reading this unbelievable true story, you've had, just like Craig, a life changing moment. Seeing child labour in the Third World, has gotten you to think, "How can it be like this? How can, right now, children be wading through garbage dumps? How can they be forced to work insane hours under horrible conditions, beaten and starved, cold and hungry, while we live like royalty? We must rise up! We must fight for children's rights." What would happen if all students reading this magazine pulled a Craig, and did something, anything to help! The world would be transformed!

**Now here's a word from Craig, now 27, founder of Free the Children, and still fighting for justice,**

"Dear Friends, a message of sincere thanks to David and George and the team for capturing the story of Free the Children. In our work we have been inspired by the power of young people to change the world. We hope this story will now inspire you to get involved and make a difference in the lives of children in need. Please go to [freethechildren.com](http://freethechildren.com) and see how you can make a difference. An amazing team at Free the Children is here to help in every step you take. Be the change and best wishes!" Craig

