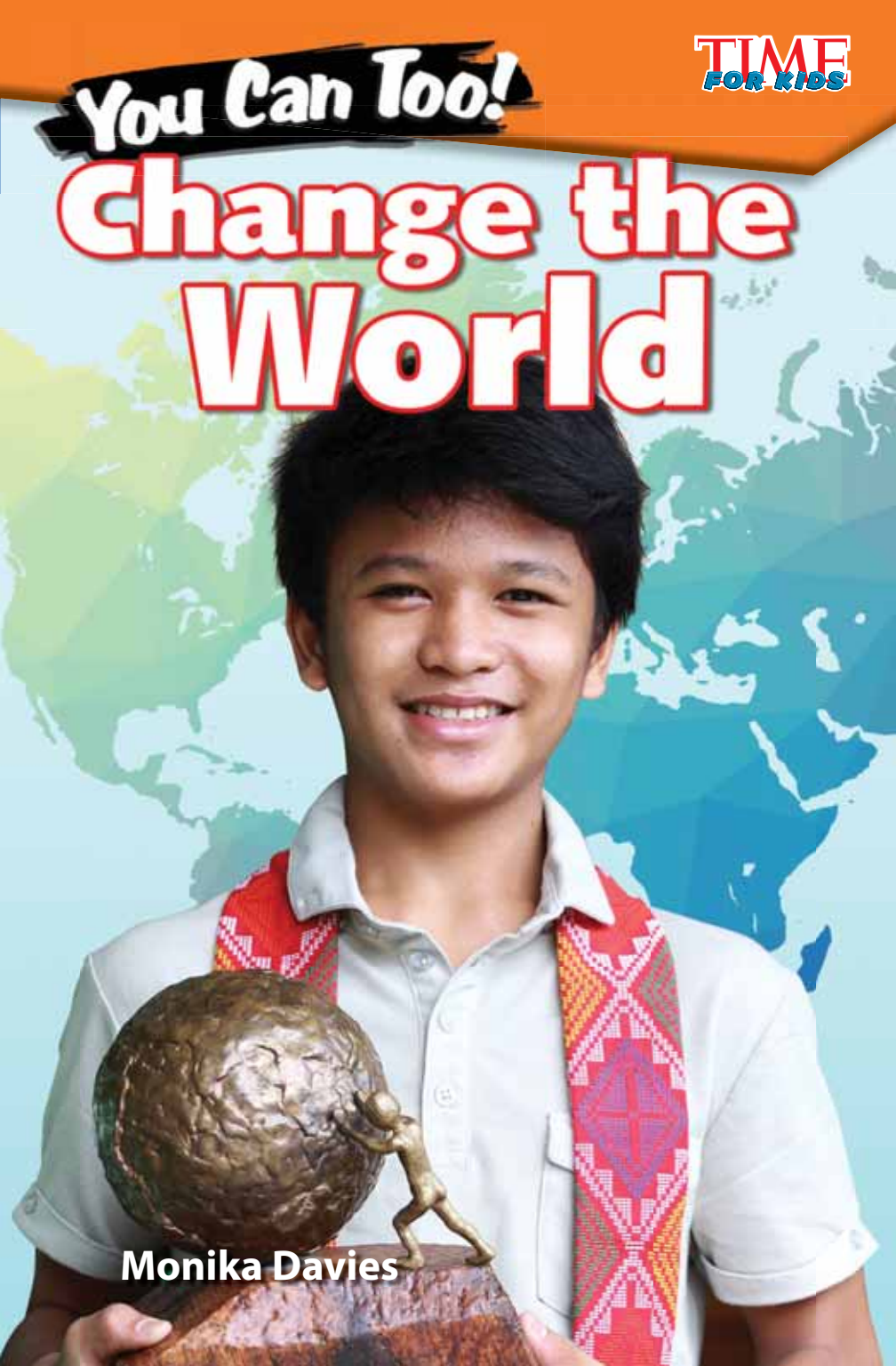
TIME FOR KIDS

You Can Too!

Change the World



Monika Davies

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Courageous Visions

Our world is home to many heroes. These people work hard to help their communities. Some of them are your age! They raise **awareness** for their causes. They make our world more **inclusive**. They protect at-risk kids. And they fight for children's rights.

Every year, one young hero wins the International Children's Peace Prize. A group called KidsRights awards this prize. The award recognizes **courageous** kids. Sometimes, the people who fight hardest for change are the people who need it most.

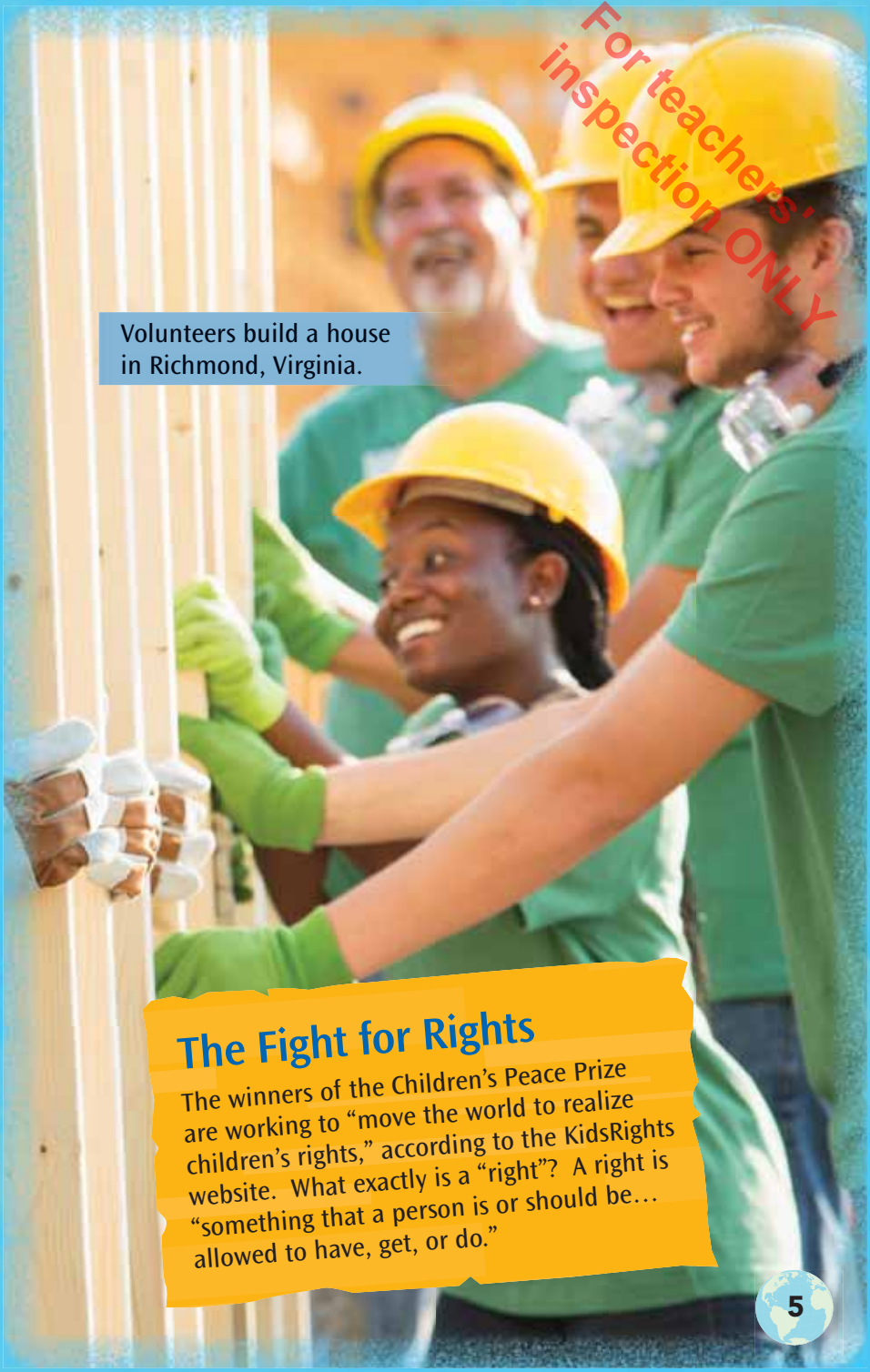
The world faces many serious problems. These kids are finding ways to solve them. Let's discover how they are making a difference in our world!

Say Hello to Neha

Neha Gupta (NEY-hah GOOP-tuh) won the Children's Peace Prize in 2014. She founded Empower Orphans. It is a charity that provides medical care, food, and clothing to orphans. She came up with the idea when she was only nine years old!



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Volunteers build a house in Richmond, Virginia.

The Fight for Rights

The winners of the Children's Peace Prize are working to "move the world to realize children's rights," according to the KidsRights website. What exactly is a "right"? A right is "something that a person is or should be… allowed to have, get, or do."

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Nkosi Johnson

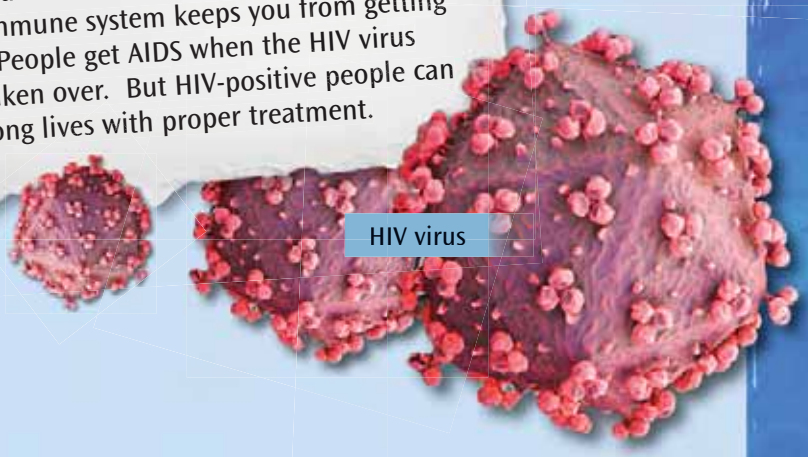
In July 2000, a young boy stood on a stage in front of 10,000 people. He wore a dark blue suit. His pants were baggy. He wore sneakers.

"Hi, my name is Nkosi (nuh-KOH-see) Johnson," he said. "I am 11 years old, and I have full-blown AIDS."

Nkosi spoke at the International AIDS Conference in South Africa. Nkosi's mother was HIV-positive. He had been born infected. This meant he was already sick and might not live long. At the time, many infected South African children died before they turned two. Nkosi hoped to help change this.

What Are HIV and AIDS?

HIV is a virus that hurts the immune system. The immune system keeps you from getting sick. People get AIDS when the HIV virus has taken over. But HIV-positive people can live long lives with proper treatment.



HIV virus

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"We Are All Human Beings"

Nkosi's speech at the International AIDS Conference changed lives. This is because he spoke from the heart. He said, "You can't get AIDS if you touch, hug, kiss, hold hands with someone who is infected." His message was powerful: "Don't be afraid of us—we are all the same."

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Nkosi's foster mom is Gail Johnson. In 1997, she tried to enroll him in school. But school officials said no. They thought that having an HIV-positive student in the school would be unsafe. Many people were afraid of AIDS. Fear made them **exclude** those who were infected.

Gail was upset. She went to the newspapers. Word spread about the unfair situation. The pressure from the **media** made the school change its decision. Nkosi was able to go to school.

Nkosi began to fight for awareness. He wanted to erase the **stigma** of having AIDS. His speech in 2000 was powerful. It made people stop and listen. "Care for us and accept us," Nkosi said in his speech. He taught the world to treat HIV-positive people with respect. Sadly, Nkosi passed away when he was only 12 years old. He was the first winner of the Children's Peace Prize.

A "Nkosi"

A Nkosi statue is given to each Children's Peace Prize winner. It shows how a kid can "move" the world. KidsRights also gives prize money to the winner's cause.



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Nkosi's Haven

Nkosi was separated from his mother as a young boy. His dream was to offer a safe home to HIV-positive mothers and their kids. Nkosi's Haven brings his dream to life. It is a care center in South Africa that helps those in need.

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Reader's Guide

1. What cause do you feel passionate about?
2. How do these Children's Peace Prize winners help their communities?
3. What do all the prizewinners have in common?
4. Compare your home to the community of each prizewinner. What are the similarities and differences?

