



Re: Children's March 60<sup>th</sup> Commemoration Summit & Reenactment  
*R.I.S.E. Renewed Intergenerational Student Empowerment from 1963 to 2023*

Date | Time: Friday, May 5, 2023 | 9:00am-2:00pm

Location: 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church, 1530 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., N., Birmingham, AL 35203

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The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute is excited to announce our 6<sup>th</sup> annual commemorative reenactment of the historic Children's Crusade. Also known as the Children's March, this annual event is designed to bring together current students from the greater Birmingham area and Civil Rights Footsoldiers – the students of 1963 who heroically placed themselves on the frontline of a movement that changed the world.

Although separated by 60 years, civil and human rights remain battleground topics across the decades as it pertains to voting rights, policing, mass incarceration, education curriculum, poverty, healthcare, gun violence, and so much more. We find similarities between the students of 1963 and the students of 2023 as the issues that plague our communities have left a mental residue of unhealed traumas due to the stigma surrounding social emotional wellness. For generations we've been encouraged to "be strong" and "soldier through" despite the pain. As a result, we live with a sentient scar tissue that leaves us desensitized and numb to the juxtaposition of a world that is both evolving and stagnant in its care (or lack thereof) for the Black community.

On Friday, May 5, 2023, the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute will commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Children's Crusade with an intergenerational summit where Footsoldiers and high school students come together to identify, reflect, and establish workable pathways to healing from the civil and human rights battleground issues that have shaped each generation. This signature BCRI event kicks off "Youth Peace Weekend" in collaboration with the first-ever [International Peace Conference](#) and the [Youth & Peace in Action and NewGen Peacebuilders summit](#).

High School students from the Birmingham Metro Area are invited to join this engaging event that begins with a moderated conversation between a student leader and guidance counselor involved in the Children's March of 1963, and a student leader and guidance counselor involved in the work today. We'll also have reflections from [Paul Kix, author of the newly released book, \*You Have to be Prepared to Die Before You Can Begin to Live: Ten Weeks in Birmingham that Changed America\*](#). We then move on to three energizing presentations from Professor Doug Evans, III (*The Parallel of 1963 and 2023: The More Things Change, the More Things Stay the Same – A Discussion of Historic and Contemporary Issues*); Professor Keene Walker (*Awakening the Genius in Our Youth: Activism and Leadership*); and Dr. Gerry White (*Trauma, Triggers, and Resilience – And Still We Rise*). Woven throughout the presentations will be pops of energy and movement, including spoken word and riveting a cappella song. The morning ends with Rev. Gwendolyn Webb presenting the roll call of participating schools and initiating the walk out.

Carrying placards displaying affirmations and calling for peace and rights, students, educators, community leaders, and Fightsoldiers will reenact the 1963 Children's March by ceremoniously walking across the street to the historic Kelly Ingram Park for our culminating rally where participants can enjoy lunch, music, vendors, and a college fair.

This event, including lunch and giveaways, is free and open to all pre-registered groups. [Transportation will be provided](#) for Title I funded schools. Once we receive your [registration request](#), a member of the BCRI team will contact you to make arrangements to deliver the event toolkit, which includes transportation and parking details; pre/post surveys; curriculum resources; National Park Service Junior Ranger Books for the Civil Rights National Monument; Junior Ranger badges; pencils; posters; event lanyards; and more!

If you would like to [register for Day Two](#) of Youth Peace Weekend – the Youth & Peace in Action and NewGen Peacebuilders Summit on Saturday, May 6th, please email organizers at [info@youthpeaceweekend.org](mailto:info@youthpeaceweekend.org) for more information and registration links.

For more information, please contact Charles Woods, III, Director of Education and Training for the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute: [cwoods@bcri.org](mailto:cwoods@bcri.org) | 205-328-9696 ext. 246; or, Dr. Samantha Elliott Briggs, BCRI's Vice President of Education: [sbriggs@bcri.org](mailto:sbriggs@bcri.org) | 205-328-9696 ext. 222.

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The Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, part of the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is a cultural and educational research center that promotes a comprehensive understanding for the significance of the civil rights developments in Birmingham. We stand strong as the cornerstone of the civil rights story, a living memorial with an ongoing mission to enlighten each generation about civil and human rights by exploring our common past and working together in the present to build a better future.