



1993 Freedom Award
National Recipient
Marian Wright Edelman



PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY

Biography

Marian Wright Edelman grew up with the legacy of segregation and discrimination. After graduating from Yale Law School in 1963, she was the first African American woman allowed to practice law in the state of Mississippi. Edelman served as the legal counsel for Martin Luther King’s Poor People’s Campaign. In 1973 she founded the Children’s Defense Fund, the most powerful voice ever created for millions of poor children in the United States.

What is Mrs. Edelman’s profession? (circle your answer or answers)

- A. Receptionist
- B. Philanthropist
- C. Attorney
- D. Activist

Answers:
C & D - Mrs. Edelman is a lawyer and an activist.

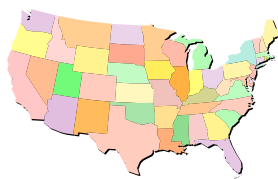
Vocabulary

Activist: A person who practices direct action to effect changes in social conditions and governments

Name two people (aside from Mrs. Edelman) who you think are **Activists**:



1.



2.



3.



4.

Can you identify the images above?

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

Answers:
1. World Map 2. United States 3. Mississippi 4. Washinton, D.C.



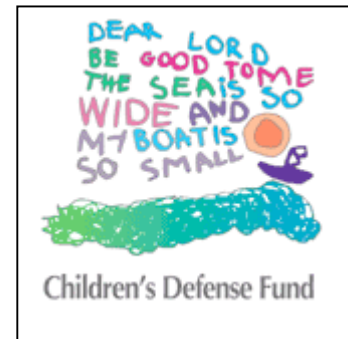
1993 Freedom Award
National Recipient
Marian Wright Edelman



POST-VISIT ACTIVITY

Marian Wright Edelman came up with the idea of creating the Children’s Defense Fund as a way to broaden the appeal of change. As the 1960s wore on, the demand for reform to erase poverty and secure civil rights exercised less force. The concerns of children provided a way to approach the issues of race and poverty so that they had an immediate importance for everyone. The Children’s Defense Fund’s mission is to provide a voice for all the children of America who cannot vote, lobby, or speak for themselves. Particular emphasis is placed upon the interests of poor, minority, and disabled children. It is the leading advocacy organization for children’s rights. The CDF approaches issues of child welfare from many angles. The organization provides information to parents on information on childcare, health insurance, mental health, and violence among youth. Legislation, training, and policy development are also methods the CDF employs to advocate for children.

Head Start is one governmental program the Children’s Defense Fund advocates for regularly. This program helps kids from low-income families prepare for kindergarten. A national program created in 1965, Head Start has helped millions of children gain the reading and mathematical skills important to entering school on an even footing.



New Vocabulary

- Advocacy:** Supporting or speaking in favor of a cause, group, or policy
- Legislation:** Laws passed by the state or federal government
- Child Welfare:** Concern with the health and education of children

Why is child advocacy important? How does it help a group that lacks political power due to the inability to vote?

Can you name some child welfare issues?

Why are the headquarters for many advocacy groups (including the CDF) in Washington, D.C.?
