

# Ryan's story

This is a story about a boy on the other side of the world, in Canada. His name is Ryan. This story is about what happened when Ryan was six years old and he was a student in Year One.

One day Ryan's teacher, Mrs Prest, told her class about children in a country in Africa called Uganda, who had no clean water to drink where they lived. These children had no cordial or apple juice to drink, only muddy water. If they were thirsty they would have to walk a very long way to get some water. Mrs Prest said that a pump for getting clean water from the ground would cost \$70. So Ryan decided to try to help the children who had no clean water.

That afternoon when Ryan went home, he told his mum he needed \$70 for a well in Africa. Ryan was very insistent and his mum told him she would give him extra chores to earn the money.

Four months later, Ryan and his mum went to the office of the charity that was working to provide wells to communities that needed them. The charity worker congratulated Ryan for his fundraising efforts but told them that \$70 was enough to

buy the pump—but it cost \$2,000 to dig the well.

Ryan went home disappointed, but he did not give up. He kept on working towards his goal of raising enough money to pay for a well. He told all his friends and family, and they all helped him. His mum emailed her friends and they helped too. Lots of people helped him till he got the whole \$2,000. They went back to the charity again with \$2,000. The charity worker remembered Ryan and was impressed that he had raised so much money, especially as he was only six. Ryan told her he did it with the help of lots of friends and neighbours. He asked if the well could be dug next to a school.

A year later, Ryan's next door neighbours, who had also been impressed with his efforts, gave him tickets to fly to Uganda to see the village where the well was being dug. People in the village came to welcome him and say thank you. He found out that twice as many students now came to the school because they could have a drink of fresh water at lunch time. The school had to build extra classrooms.

That was more than ten years ago. Today, with the help of people all over the world, he is still raising money to dig wells. By 2009, the *Ryan's Well Foundation* had raised millions of dollars and dug over 500 wells in 16 countries. You can find out more from the website <http://www.ryanswell.ca>.