

When people say Craig and Marc Kielburger are working “behind the scenes,” the phrase can sound more definite than it is. It does not, by itself, identify a job title, a company, or a formal change in responsibility. It usually describes a shift in how the brothers are seen: less as the public faces of a youth-led movement and more as advisers, organizers, or people developing ideas away from the spotlight.

That distinction matters. The Kielburgers became widely known through public-facing activism, first with Free the Children and later through WE, the organization and brand built around youth service, events, education, and charitable work. Their public profile also became tied to scrutiny of WE Charity’s operations and its proposed federal student grant program in Canada. Any account of what they do now should separate confirmed roles from broad descriptions, and distinguish a quieter public presence from proof of a particular behind-the-scenes position.

Still, the phrase points to a larger question: what happens when leaders who once built a movement in public turn toward advising, storytelling, or helping other organizations shape their work? The answer involves legacy, reputation, and the changing role of public figures in purpose-driven movements.

From youth activism to work outside the spotlight

Craig Kielburger’s public story began with youth activism. In 1995, at age 12, he founded Free the Children after learning about the murder of Iqbal Masih, a child labour activist in Pakistan. His brother Marc later became a central partner in the organization’s growth. The project expanded from youth advocacy into school programs, volunteer opportunities, international development work, and the WE brand.

For years, the brothers’ work was highly visible. They spoke at events, appeared in media, published books, and helped build a recognizable model for youth engagement. That visibility was not incidental: it helped attract students, educators, donors, sponsors, and public figures. The leaders and the movement became closely connected in the public imagination.

But visibility can become complicated when an organization faces questions about governance, finances, or political relationships. In 2020, controversy around WE Charity’s proposed role in administering a federal student grant program led to intense public and parliamentary scrutiny in Canada. The charity later announced that it would wind down its Canadian operations. Those events are part of the public record and an essential part of the context for any discussion of the Kielburgers’ current public profile.

Against that backdrop, “working behind the scenes” may describe a lower-profile approach to leadership: advising, developing projects, or contributing to conversations without serving as the central public spokesperson. But the phrase should not be treated as a verified job description unless it is tied to a named role and a reliable, current source.

What “behind the scenes” can—and cannot—mean

In ordinary use, behind-the-scenes work can cover several different activities. A person may help shape an organization’s strategy, coach its leaders, develop a campaign, support fundraising, or advise on communications. They may also be building a new venture or simply choosing not to make frequent public appearances.

Those possibilities are not interchangeable. An adviser is not necessarily an executive. A public speaker is not automatically a representative of an organization. And a person’s past leadership does not establish their current authority over a project.

When assessing claims about the Kielburgers, useful questions include:

- Is there a specific organization or project named?
- Does the organization confirm a formal role, such as founder, adviser, director, or consultant?
- Is the information dated, so readers can tell whether it is current?
- Does the description distinguish an individual's work from the history of WE or Free the Children?
- Are claims about outcomes supported with concrete examples rather than a broad use of the word "impact"?

These checks are especially important because a quieter public profile can invite speculation. The absence of regular interviews does not prove that someone has left public life, nor does it prove they are directing work privately. It simply means the public has less current information to evaluate.



Legacy as the organizing idea

For people associated with a long-running movement, legacy can become the central organizing idea. It is the story that connects earlier work to whatever comes next: what was built, who was served, what changed, and what should be remembered. In the Kielburgers' case, that story includes youth participation and campaigns against child labour, as well as the later expansion of WE and the serious controversy surrounding the charity's federal grant arrangement.

A credible legacy account has to hold those facts together. It cannot rely only on inspirational language, and it should not reduce years of activity to one chapter. It should explain the work with dates, name the organizations involved, and make room for both accomplishments and criticism.

That is also where **impact storytelling** can either help or hurt. At its best, impact storytelling makes a broad claim understandable by showing what happened in a specific place, to a particular group, over a stated period. For example, rather than saying a program "changed lives," a careful account would identify the program, its dates, who took part, what was measured, and where the evidence came from.



At its weakest, impact storytelling substitutes emotion for documentation. A moving anecdote can illustrate a program, but it cannot by itself establish scale, effectiveness, or financial accountability. For leaders working on legacy, that distinction is not a communications detail; it is part of the work.

Legacy is not the same as reputation management

There is a difference between preserving a record and polishing a reputation. A useful legacy project can collect stories, documents, and lessons from past work—including difficult ones. Reputation management, by contrast, may focus mainly on restoring confidence or directing attention away from uncomfortable questions.

Readers can look for signs of a fuller account: clear timelines, named partners, specific examples, and acknowledgement of criticism. They can also look for what is missing. If a story describes a movement's growth but does not mention the later scrutiny that reshaped its public standing, it is incomplete. If it dwells only on controversy and omits the people who participated in its programs, it may be incomplete in a different way.

Purpose-driven movements for companies and foundations

The Kielburgers' public work also sits within a wider shift: companies, nonprofits, and foundations increasingly want to connect their activities to a stated purpose. That can mean supporting a community program, setting a public goal, or asking employees and customers to participate in a cause. The approach may help an organization explain why its work matters, but a purpose statement is not evidence that the work delivers results.

For companies, the practical test is whether the purpose has a clear connection to operations. What is the company funding or changing? Who benefits? How are results reported? For foundations, the questions are similar but may also include how grants are selected, what outcomes are expected, and whether the people closest to an issue have a role in shaping the work.

Leaders who advise these organizations can help turn a broad ambition into a plan people can understand. That may involve setting goals, [marc kielburger](#) choosing partners, telling a story, or deciding what not to promise. Done well, the work is less about attaching a cause to a brand and more about ensuring that claims match actual activity.

That is one possible meaning of behind-the-scenes leadership: helping an organization develop its approach without becoming the face of every campaign. But the description should remain specific. If someone is advising a

company or foundation, readers should be able to find the organization, the role, and the date—not just a vague reference to “purpose-driven work.”

Podcasting as a public-facing platform

Working behind the scenes does not necessarily mean disappearing from public life. Podcasting offers a different kind of visibility: less like a rally or a large stage, more like a conversation that can be heard over time. A podcast can give leaders room to explain an idea, interview practitioners, or discuss how organizations approach social issues.

The Kielburgers have been associated with podcasting, including a podcast partnership with iHeartMedia. A partnership of that kind illustrates how a public-facing platform can carry a movement’s ideas beyond live events. It can also give the hosts a way to remain visible while shifting from campaign leadership toward discussion and storytelling.

But a podcast is still a media product. It has hosts, producers, distribution choices, and an intended audience. Listeners should be able to tell who is speaking, whether an episode is sponsored, and whether a guest is offering personal views or representing an organization. A podcast conversation can raise useful questions; it is not, by itself, an independent audit or a substitute for documentary evidence.

For anyone covering this work, the same fact-checking habits apply across formats. Confirm names and titles. Check when an episode was recorded and published. Follow claims back to the original source. A polished conversation can make a topic accessible, but accuracy still depends on the details.

How media and publishing fit into the picture

Public understanding of a leader’s work is shaped not only by what that person says, but also by where the story appears. A local or regional outlet can provide a different lens from a national broadcast. For example, *Streets of Toronto* and *Post City Magazines, Inc.* serve distinct audiences and editorial contexts. Mentioning these publications in the same media landscape does not imply that either has a partnership with the Kielburgers; it simply points to the range of outlets through which city life, leadership, and community issues can be covered.

Digital editions add another layer. Issuu can be used to host or share digital publications, making a magazine or document easier to browse online. When a publisher provides an Issuu link, readers can use it to check the edition itself rather than relying only on a short excerpt or a reposted claim. The link should be described accurately: a digital-edition link is not proof of an endorsement or commercial relationship.

Media visibility also needs context. A profile, interview, or podcast appearance can show what a person chose to discuss at a particular time. It cannot establish every part of their current work. For current roles, readers should look for direct confirmation from the person or organization involved, especially when the role affects governance, fundraising, or public accountability.

A note about prices and scraped article content

One small but important reporting point: **no prices were present in the scraped article content**. That means a scraped page cannot support a claim about a fee, subscription cost, ticket price, or consulting rate. It would be a mistake to infer a price from a product name, a promotional mention, or a link to another page.

If a price matters to readers, it should be checked against a current, direct source—such as the seller’s own page—and dated. If no reliable price is available, the article should say so rather than fill the gap with a guess. This is a

basic distinction between information that is missing and information that is free.

What readers should take from the phrase

So, what does it mean that the Kielburgers work behind the scenes now? At its most careful, it means that their public role may be less front-and-centre than it was during the high-profile years of youth activism and the growth of WE. It may point to advising, project development, or other work that attracts less attention. Without a current, specific source, however, it should not be used as shorthand for a confirmed title or a settled account of what they do.

The bigger story is about how leaders try to carry a legacy forward after a movement's most visible period. That work can involve advising companies and foundations, building purpose-driven programs, or using a podcast to continue public conversations. It can also involve confronting the record: what happened, what was questioned, and what lessons can be supported by evidence.

For readers, the best approach is straightforward. Treat "behind the scenes" as a description to investigate, not a fact that explains itself. Look for dated roles, named organizations, and examples with measurable detail. That keeps impact storytelling grounded—and makes any discussion of legacy more useful than a slogan.

Phrase	What it can mean	What readers should verify
Behind the scenes	Advising, planning, or other work with less public visibility	The specific role, organization, and date
Legacy	The record and continuing influence of earlier work	Whether the account includes both documented work and public scrutiny
Impact storytelling	Explaining outcomes through evidence and examples	Who benefited, what changed, when, and how it was measured
Podcast	partnership	A public-facing way to distribute conversations
Who produced and distributed it, and whether sponsorship is disclosed		