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# Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America

*Paul Tough*

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**Whatever It Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America** Paul Tough
What would it take?

That was the question that Geoffrey Canada found himself asking. What would it take to change the lives of poor children—not one by one, through heroic interventions and occasional miracles, but in big numbers, and in a way that could be replicated nationwide? The question led him to create the Harlem Children's Zone, a ninety-seven-block laboratory in central Harlem where he is testing new and sometimes controversial ideas about poverty in America. His conclusion: if you want poor kids to be able to compete with their middle-class peers, you need to change everything in their lives—their schools, their neighborhoods, even the child-rearing practices of their parents.

*Whatever It Takes* is a tour de force of reporting, an inspired portrait not only of Geoffrey Canada but of the parents and children in Harlem who are struggling to better their lives, often against great odds. Carefully researched and deeply affecting, this is a dispatch from inside the most daring and potentially transformative social experiment of our time.

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