UNITY DAY *guide*

WEAR AND SHARE ORANGE

#UNITY*every*DAY

National Bullying Prevention Center®

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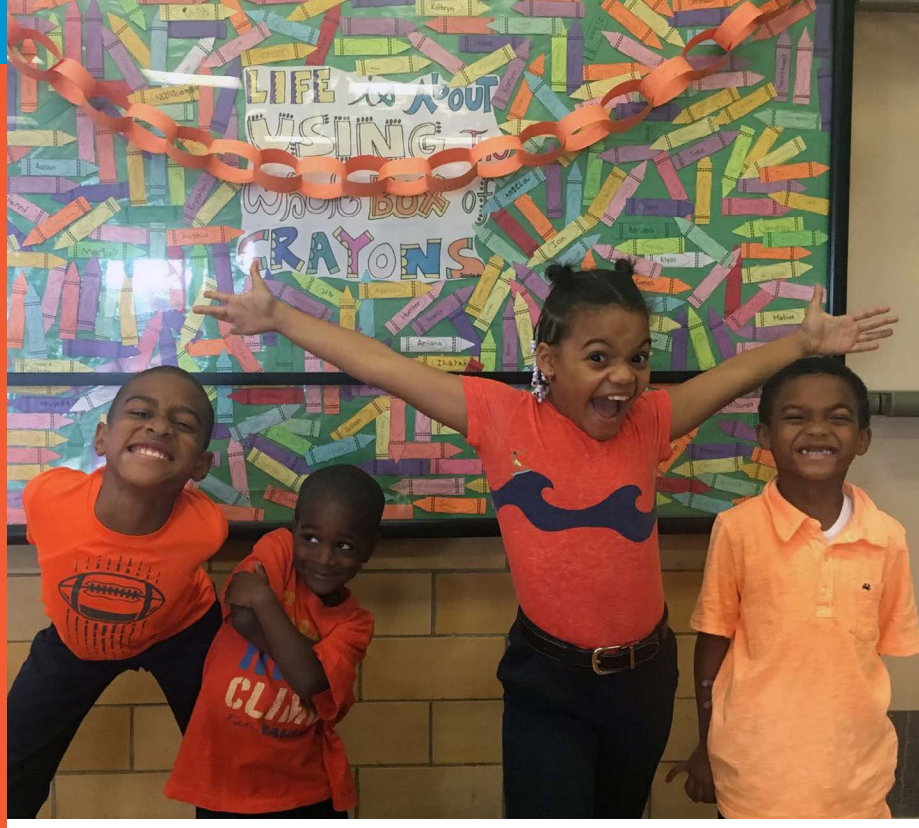

About Unity Day

Unity Day, started by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center in October 2011, is the signature event of **National Bullying Prevention Month**. It is the day when we come together to send a visible message of building community through kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. The call to action is simple: **wear and share the color orange**. This vibrant statement becomes a conversation starter, showing support for students who have been bullied and for bullying prevention.

This guide will help you plan how you will support Unity Day in your school, community, business, or as an individual.

National Bullying Prevention Center®

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THE BASICS

When is Unity Day held?

Unity Day is typically held every year on either the third or fourth Wednesday of National Bullying Prevention Month in October. However, if the date chosen for Unity Day does not work for your school or community, you're encouraged to choose another day during National Bullying Prevention Month that works for you.

Why unity?

For years, our culture justified bullying with expressions such as, "Bullying is a natural part of childhood," "Some kids just deserve to be bullied," or "Bullying is a rite of passage." The goal of the day is to bring together youth, parents, educators, businesses, and community members across the nation to emphasize the message that bullying is not acceptable and that all students deserve to be safe in school, online, and in the community.

What is the call to action?

The call to action is simple: wear and share the color orange as a visible representation of the supportive, universal message that our society wants to prevent bullying, build comm**unity**, and is united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.

Why the color orange?

Unity Day is held during October, and orange is a color commonly identified with that month and season. It is also a color associated with safety and visibility. Orange is described as warm and inviting, and its vibrancy makes a strong statement.

How can schools participate?

There are a number of opportunities to get involved, including displaying the **free Unity Day posters**, encouraging everyone to wear an orange item, or having a **classroom discussion** about what unity means and why it's important in bullying prevention. Schools have also contributed their own creative ideas for Unity Day, such as creating orange crowns for each student or participating in Project Connect, in which each student contributes a message on a strip of orange paper to create a chain representing the power of unity. Check out the "Activation ideas" section of this guide for more.

What can one person do?

Everyone's involvement is important! This event goes beyond the school walls and into the community. Anyone can wear orange and share an image with an online post. For so long, those who were bullied felt that no one cared—the simple act of wearing orange shows them that they are not alone and will hopefully empower them to speak out and reach out.

How can businesses and organizations get involved?

Go orange! Be creative! The iconic Green Giant statue in Blue Earth, Minn. wore an orange toga and lit up the night sky with an orange glow. You could make your business/organization logo orange for the day. Other ways to go orange include tying orange ribbons to a fence or around a tree, offering an orange item for sale with proceeds to the National Bullying Prevention Center, or creating a unity mural. Check out the "Activation ideas" section of this guide for more tips.

Is there an official T-shirt?

Yes! Every year there is a new, exclusive, custom-designed **t-shirt** available to order in time to wear during October and beyond. The 2026 t-shirt design features the words Kindness, Acceptance, Inclusion and an image of two hands uniting to form a heart on a white shirt with splashes of orange.

Are other products available?

In addition to the t-shirts, schools and individuals can order a **free Unity Day poster** in English and Spanish, and other print products such as bookmarks, additional posters, and more.

How has Unity Day changed?

In 2011, the event had a call to action to unite against bullying. Today, it has evolved to encourage participants to spread awareness at school, in their community, and on social media in order to put more focus on the positive behaviors that can transform schools, communities, and the online world into healthier communities.

GETTING STARTED

At what scale do you want to get involved?

The starting point is to simply wear orange—any orange, anywhere. Then, you can post a photo to share orange, tag it with #UnityEveryDay, and include your own message about preventing bullying and promoting kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Beyond that, there are no limits to what you can do!

We have seen everything including a local bench being painted orange, a major bridge lit up in orange, a community unity parade, and a school offering orange items on their lunch menu.

What does success look like?

You define your own success! The goal is to do something that fits for you, your school, your community, or your business. Think in terms of your strengths.

For instance, if you:

- **Have a large social media following**, share a post wearing orange and tag it with #UnityEveryDay
- **Are a teacher**, ask your administration if everyone can wear something orange, or share messaging ideas for morning announcements
- **Are involved with a school or community library**, distribute PACER's Kids Against Bullying and Teens Against Bullying bookmarks, display Unity Day posters, and have a featured table with books about unity
- **Like to paint**, ask to paint a landmark rock or small rocks in a garden at your school
- **Live in a city with an iconic landmark**, contact a decision maker (such as your mayor or city council member) about the landmark turning orange

As you plan for Unity Day, remember:

- For some, success is the act of wearing orange
- For others, it is planning a Unity Day event for their entire school
- For someone else, it is encouraging others to get involved, such as meeting with local and national politicians and asking them to take action or working with local businesses to spread intentional acts of kindness, acceptance, and inclusion

Available Resources

Be creative, but know that PACER has resources to help support you every step of the way! Within this guide, you will find activation ideas to bring to your school or community, templates to use when spreading the word, and examples of Unity Day success stories to inspire you. Looking for more resources? Check out our **Unity Day webpage** that has more promotional items and ideas.

Potential partners?

Unity Day is also about community and engaging everyone to understand that when we promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion we all do better. It benefits everyone! Think of schools, businesses, libraries, law enforcement, city government, daycares, and restaurants as your partners, encouraging them to think through how they can get involved.

ACTIVATION IDEAS

Student activities

- **Unity banner**

  Create a large banner with messages of unity and have the student body, faculty, and staff sign the banner, pledging their commitment to creating a world without bullying and building comm**unity**. A banner is a great way to display your school's support for bullying prevention—this is even something that can be left up all year long as reminder!

- **Unity Tree**

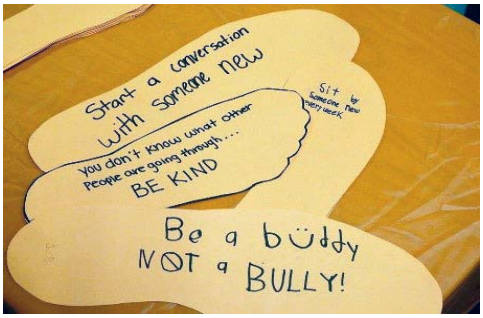
  The Unity Tree is a powerful symbol reminding everyone that bullying can be prevented when we all come together—united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Creating a Unity Tree is an interactive and hands-on activity. It's a shared experience in which anyone can participate and everyone can watch the tree grow. One idea is for each person to contribute their own unique experiences and creative ideas by writing positive messages on the leaves attached to the tree. As the number of leaves increases, it creates a visual reminder that when we are united, we can make a bigger impact. You can also create a tree with different colored leaves, allowing the Unity Tree to grow and grow and grow! Learn more about the **Unity Tree**.

- **Unity mural**
  Create a mural for the classroom or school hallway that is symbolic of unity. Use the word UNITY and color in the mural, or create an image that is significant to your school, like a mascot.

- **Art projects**
  Create a project for a class that starts with the discussion of unity and how we treat others, and ends with an art display for the entire school to see. This is a great activity that can be facilitated with the help of an art teacher for a school-wide project.
  One example is a collaborative project developed by members of an art club where they installed a 1,000-piece unity origami peace cranes sculpture as a symbol of unity in diversity and a community of compassion. →

- **Sticky note mural**
  Create a theme or a question for students to ponder, such as, "What can you do each day to help build community?", "What does unity mean to you?", or "Why do you care about bullying prevention?" Write this question on a large sign to display in a prominent area. Then, ask students and staff to write their responses on sticky notes to be placed underneath the sign. A great location for this sticky note mural can include a large window (such as the front of your school) or on a row of lockers.

- **Every Step You Take**
  Cut out footprints by tracing your shoe on orange paper. Write messages that say what step you are going to take to promote unity in your school or community. An example prompt for students is: "What can you do to help someone feel welcome at school?" After individuals have shared their steps, line the halls of school with the footprints. Let everyone know that every step they take can help create a kinder, more inclusive, and more accepting world! Learn more about **Every Step You Take**.



- **Door decorations**
  Decorate classroom doors for Unity Day! Be creative and allow your students to share their ideas on how to decorate doors to share messages of kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Consider holding a school-wide door-decorating contest for most creative door, in which the winning classroom receives orange prizes to use on Unity Day or an orange treat item, like orange cupcakes. Your school could also hold a Unity Day parade so that all students can see the other classroom doors.

- **Interactive unity sign**
  As part of your Unity Day celebrations, hang up a huge poster that says, "If you knew my story, you would know that..." and give kids slips of paper to anonymously write what has happened in their life. This exercise can help students understand that they are unified by the success and the struggles they face. Additional questions to have students respond to could be, "To me, unity means..." or, "I care about bullying prevention because..."

- **Resource table**
  Create a space, such as a table in your school cafeteria or library, to engage and encourage students to take steps to help create a world without bullying. You can order bookmarks to give away, and you can order our **Build Community Kit** that includes posters, informational brochures, decals, and other resources. This could be in the lunch room in early October to promote National Bullying Prevention Month, in the school library during a book fair, or in a foyer during parent/teacher conferences. This is a great way to have student leaders talk with other students about how to make their school a safer and more inclusive environment.

- **Rock painting**

  Write words of unity on rocks and place them around the school courtyard, entrance, or playground. These colorful rocks will inspire unity throughout the school! This activity can be a great way to help students engage with new peers—think about pairing older students with younger students to paint rocks together.

- **Pep rally**

  Pep rallies are a great way to get a large group of students' attention and to unite students on a school-wide level. Think about having student leaders plan a pep rally to increase peer-to-peer engagement around the issue of bullying prevention. Students can create a poem, such as an acrostic poem (using the phrases WORLD WITHOUT BULLYING or KINDNESS) or a spoken word piece, and share that with the student body. The students could also bring in a speaker who talks about the effects of bullying or invite alumni of your school to share their experiences with bullying.

- **Engaging with younger students**

  Older teens make wonderful mentors for younger students. Unity Day is a great opportunity for leaders at your middle or high school to engage with younger students. One idea is to have older students read to younger students and host a discussion after. This type of engagement should be powered by students, with faculty guidance. PACER has a **book club** that features great book ideas, as well as accompanying discussion questions for some of the featured books. We also have **lesson plans** and **activities** ready to go for teens to use with elementary students. When these activities for elementary school students are led by older students, they have a strong impact on both age groups!

- **Debate team participation**

  If your school has a debate team, choose the question, "Can we create a world without bullying?" as your main theme. Work with students to use education and civil discourse to promote bullying prevention.

  As an example, the Pepperdine University debate team partnered with Woodlake Elementary School in March of 2019 to debate this question. Over 315 students attended this event and 77.8% of attendees shared that the event "...expanded my understanding of what bullying can look like." →

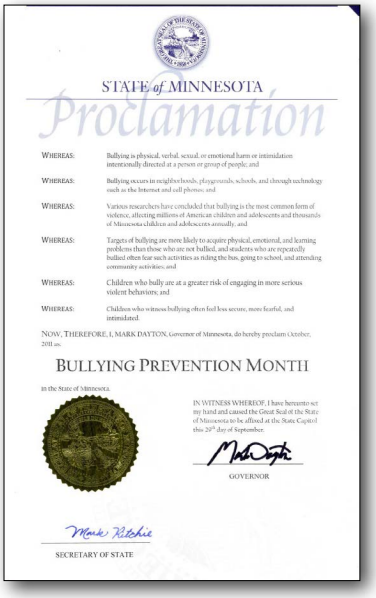
Community-wide

- **Unity Day proclamation**

  Show that your community cares by requesting a Unity Day proclamation to be signed by your local mayor. Check out the Templates section of this guide on pages 15 and 16 for a sample Unity Day proclamation that can be sent to your mayor or governor to show your community's involvement in Unity Day.

- **Library-hosted reading campaign**

  Are you looking to get involved with Unity Day at your local library? Consider hosting a Unity Day campaign, with featured books about bullying prevention, kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. PACER has a great book club for Pre-K through 12th grade students that features books with messages about bullying prevention. Many of the books featured in the book club have accompanying discussion guides or activities. Set up a table with these featured books, PACER's Unity Day posters and bookmarks in your local library, and consider hosting a community event that involves activities related to these books. Find the full list of books in **PACER's book club**.



STATE of MINNESOTA

Proclamation

WHEREAS: Bullying is physical, verbal, sexual, or emotional harm or intimidation intentionally directed at a person or group of people; and

WHEREAS: Bullying occurs in neighborhoods, playgrounds, schools, and through technology such as the Internet and cell phones; and

WHEREAS: Various researchers have concluded that bullying is the most common form of violence, affecting millions of American children and adolescents and thousands of Minnesota children and adolescents annually; and

WHEREAS: Targets of bullying are more likely to acquire physical, emotional, and learning problems than those who are not bullied, and students who are repeatedly bullied often fear such activities as riding the bus, going to school, and attending community activities; and

WHEREAS: Children who bully are at a greater risk of engaging in more serious violent behaviors; and

WHEREAS: Children who witness bullying often feel less secure, more fearful, and intimidated.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MARK DAYTON, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim October, 2011 as:

BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

in the State of Minnesota.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Minnesota to be affixed at the State Capitol this 29th day of September.

GOVERNOR

SECRETARY OF STATE

- **Community fundraiser**

  Holding a fundraiser in your community is a great way to get others involved and raise money for bullying prevention. Ideas include selling orange baked goods, holding an event and charging a small entrance fee, or creating Unity Day accessories to sell. Consider donating the proceeds to your local school's bullying prevention efforts or to PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. For more ideas, check out our **Fundraising page**.

- **Turn landmarks orange**

  Think about landmarks in your community that can be turned orange to show your community's support for Unity Day. Ideas include the lighting on local bridges or buildings, your school or business logo, or an iconic symbol in your community. Be creative! If you don't have a specific landmark to turn orange, create your own iconic symbol in your school or community, such as a tree or bench, and decorate it orange.

- **Share orange photos to social media using the hashtag #UnityEveryDay**

  Add your Unity Day efforts to the larger conversation using the hashtag #UnityEveryDay. Share any photos of those wearing orange, your day-of events, and other Unity Day activities to Instagram, Facebook, or TikTok. This is also a great way to check out what others are doing around the country!

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH TIPS

The call to action for Unity Day is to wear and share orange. When it comes to sharing orange, communication and outreach play a big role in spreading the word about this day. Unity Day is all about promoting kindness, acceptance, and inclusion to prevent bullying and build comm**unity**. Think about who you can involve (such as key decision makers) and the best way to use your school or community's voice to spread the word.

Influence decision makers

Unity Day—and all of National Bullying Prevention Month—is a great time to talk with education and public policy leaders about their roles in bullying prevention. Show them your community cares about bullying and let them know what you want them to do about it. Focusing this effort around Unity Day is a great way to start the conversation.
Two effective ways to reach out to decision makers are letter writing campaigns and in-person meetings.

1. **Letter writing:** A template letter is included below, which can be customized to fit your audience. One great way to strengthen your case is by adding a personal story or sharing information about what your school or community is doing to help create change. Mailing your letter is the most effective method to get your policymakers' attention, but you can email it if you prefer.

   [Date]

   [First and last name]
   [Organization, if applicable]
   [Street address]
   [City, State, and Zip]
   [Email]
   [Phone number]

   Re: Take action to ensure all students are safe and supported at school

   Dear [Lawmaker's name],

   More than one in every five students experiences bullying. Chances are this could be happening to someone you know and care about. Students who are bullied may avoid school and experience a decreased ability to focus, a loss of self-confidence, and an increase in anxiety and depression. This can no longer be considered a childhood rite of passage; we must create change in our community.

   [Optional: Insert a brief personal story here that illustrates how bullying has directly affected you or other students in your school.]

   I am [We are] [describe who you are, e.g., a high school student] writing because bullying is an issue that has been accepted in our schools for too long. The time to take action is now. I [We] want to see key decision makers like yourself support bullying education and prevention (in the schools, communities, etc.). One way my [or our] [organization, school, community, club, etc.] is taking action during National Bullying Prevention Month this October is by celebrating Unity Day on Wednesday, October 21st. This is a time where we can all come together to send a united message that we are against bullying and united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. [Share more about how your organization, school, etc. is celebrating.] I [We] hope that you will participate in Unity Day with us by wearing and sharing orange on October 21st.

   I [We] would like the opportunity to speak with you about this important subject to determine what can be done in our community to build bullying prevention education and raise awareness of this issue. I [We] can be contacted at [phone number or email].

   Sincerely yours,

   [Signature(s)]
   [Insert your name(s) here]

2. **In-person meeting:** In-person meetings are a great way to connect with local policymakers to discuss the importance of bullying prevention. Here are 5 easy tips for meeting with policymakers:

   - **Determine who represents you**

     To find out who the elected officials are in your area, use these resources:

     Federal
     - U.S. Senators
     - U.S. House of Representatives
     - Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121

     State
     - Do an internet search for your state legislature's name (for example, "Minnesota State Legislature")
     - Visit the National State Conference of Legislators to find your state liaison.

   - **Schedule a visit**

     Contact the legislative assistant and request a meeting. For state legislators, allow at least two weeks before you want to visit; for federal legislators, allow three to four weeks. Be flexible. If you schedule a visit when legislators are not in a busy legislative session, they will have more time to focus on you.

   - **Prepare for your visit**

     If you are going as a group, determine who your group spokesperson will be and who will bring up which points. Bring copies of any fact sheets or personal stories with contact information on them for you to leave with the legislator or a staff person. Consider bringing the signatures of those who might have signed PACER's pledge about bullying prevention. Another option is to create a mural in which the student body writes why they care about bullying prevention. Visual demonstrations of widespread support are very powerful.

   - **Conduct the visit**

     Be prompt for the meeting, introduce yourself (and your group), and explain the reason for the visit. Be prepared for questions and never make up an answer when you aren't sure. Instead, tell the person you will do some research and provide the answer after the meeting. Ask the legislator if he or she supports your issue, and be sure to say thank you!

   - **Follow-up**

     Promptly send a thank you note to the legislator or staff person you met with, along with any additional information you promised to answer following the meeting.

Key messages and talking points

National Bullying Prevention Month and Unity Day facts

- PACER created National Bullying Prevention Month in 2006 with a one-week event that has now evolved into a month-long effort that encourages everyone to take an active role in the bullying prevention movement. PACER offers a variety of resources to use during October—and throughout the year—to inspire, educate, and involve others in the movement and to prevent bullying where you live.
- The signature event of the month is Unity Day, which is held on the third or fourth Wednesday of October.
- The call to action on Unity Day is simple: wear and share orange
- Unity Day is all about sending the supportive, universal message that bullying is never acceptable behavior. This is a time where we unite for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion to prevent bullying.

Bullying prevention and awareness facts

- We must recognize that bullying has gone on too long and too many have suffered as a result.
- More than one out of every five students will be bullied this year; chances are this is happening to someone you know and care about.
- Bullying is a community-wide issue that we can't continue to ignore or think of as a harmless rite of passage.
- Bullying isn't about resolving conflict; bullying is about control.
- Every child has the right to feel safe and supported.
- Bullying directly affects a student's ability to learn. Students who are bullied often do not want to go to school. They often have difficulty concentrating, show a decline in grades, and suffer from low self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth.
- Students who are bullied report more physical symptoms, such as headaches or stomachaches, and mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, than other students.
- Bullying affects witnesses as well as targets. Witnesses often report feeling unsafe, helpless, and afraid that they will be the next target.
- Students who bully are also negatively affected, showing higher rates of physical and emotional health issues.
- Bullying is not only devastating while it's happening—research shows that the negative effects last a lifetime.
- Silence is no longer an acceptable response to bullying. Adults, students, and educators can no longer look away when they see bullying. Ignoring it won't work. Everyone needs to be empowered with options to respond.
- Bystanders can be powerful allies.
- Every person's actions matter and we all have a role to play. Create a world without bullying by uniting for kindness, acceptance and inclusion.

Outreach to local media

Reaching out to local media is a great way to spread the word about Unity Day and how your school, community, or business is taking action. Use the template below to contact your local newspapers and TV, or radio station about your Unity Day efforts!

> *Bullying is a community-wide issue that we can't continue to ignore or think of as a harmless rite of passage. Today, on October XX, my(insert your name here: school/organization/community group) is coming together to celebrate Unity Day. This is a featured event during National Bullying Prevention Month with a simple call to action: wear and share orange to send a visible message of building community through kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Along with wearing orange, we are also spreading awareness by (describe any additional activities you're doing: school rally, speakers, proclamations, etc.) to show that we care about safe and supportive communities for all students. We invite you to cover our event and help us spread this important message that together, we can create a world without bullying! Unity Day is part of PACER's National Bullying Prevention Month. For information and resources, visit pacer.org/unityday.*

TEMPLATES

These templates are **free** resources you can use to support your Unity communications, whether it's with parents, other school officials, students, or your local government!

Parent letter

This is a letter that you can send home to parents on school letterhead to share more with them about your school's Unity Day efforts. This is an awesome opportunity to expand parent involvement and to continue the conversation about this important topic at home.

[Date]

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers:

We are excited to share with you that our school community will be celebrating Unity Day on [insert date here] this year. Unity Day is an annual event occurring during National Bullying Prevention Month in October that promotes joining together to create healthier communities through kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. It was started by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center in 2011 and is now celebrated around the world.

[List any events scheduled (assemblies, presentations, etc.) here and make sure to note any events that parents and caregivers can attend.]

We hope you'll take this opportunity to talk to your children about bullying prevention and all the positive things we can do to make healthier communities.

Sincerely,

[Principal, other school official's name, or another title]
[School name]

School or district administration letter

Looking to get other schools or your entire district on board with Unity Day? This template is a fantastic resource to send to your colleagues, encouraging them to spread the word and get involved in their own way.

[Date]

Dear Colleagues [or other title here]:

We are excited to share that our school community will be celebrating Unity Day on [insert date here] this year. Unity Day is an annual event occurring during National Bullying Prevention Month that promotes joining together to create healthier communities through kindness, acceptance of difference, and inclusion. It was started by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center in 2011 and is now celebrated around the world.

We hope you'll join us by creating your own Unity Day event so that we can show the children of our district that the larger community around them cares about bullying prevention. We will have a tremendous impact on their young lives when we demonstrate our unity on this important topic. Let's all unite and talk about the positive things we can do to make healthier communities. Visit **pacer.org/bullying/nbpm/unity-day** for ideas, lesson plans, activities, and more that you can incorporate into your celebration.

[List any scheduled events (assemblies, presentations, etc.) here, and make sure to note any events where adults from outside the district are invited to attend.]

Sincerely,

[Principal, other school official's name, or another title]
[School name]

Morning announcements

Get your students excited about Unity Day with these sample morning announcements to be read over the P.A. system or at the morning assembly. Customize these with your school's mascot name!

[For 2-4 weeks before]

"Good morning, Cougars! [or other mascot name]

Unity Day is coming up this year on [date here] and our school is getting ready to celebrate kindness, acceptance, and inclusion in a united effort to prevent bullying! We want everyone to think about kind actions they can do for others, to include those who are feeling left out, and to accept people's differences. We're going to have games, activities, and more on Unity Day and we are all going to wear orange. Stay tuned for more information about Unity Day from your teachers!"

[For 2-4 weeks before]

"Hellooooo, Cougars! [or other mascot name]

Just a reminder: we are going to be celebrating Unity Day on [date here]! We'll all be wearing orange—if you have orange shirts or pants, that's great, but it could also be an orange hair tie, belt, or bracelet. Many of your classrooms are making things you can wear on that day, too. Remember: Unity Day is about everyone being kind, including others, and accepting that people are different and that's great. Your teachers have all the information about the day and will be sharing that information with your class."

[For 1 week before]

"Good morning, Cougars! [or other mascot name]

Unity Day is coming on [day/date] next week! Yay! Classrooms have been working on posters, songs, their leaves for the Unity Tree, and lots of poems and stories about kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. We're going to have a big display of everything in the quad on Unity Day and each class will have a chance to go around the tables to see everyone's contribution and sign the Unity Pledge. We'll also put the Unity Tree together and that will be in the cafeteria, where it will stay all year! Don't forget to find something orange to wear!"

[For the week before]

"Happy Friday, Cougars! [or other mascot name] This is your Unity Day countdown!

I know everyone is excited about Unity Day and it's going to be here in [x] days. I've seen students, teachers, and parents caring for one another and reaching out with kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Keep it up! Can't wait for next week!"

[For the day before]

"Hellooooo, Cougars! [or other mascot name] Guess what tomorrow is? That's right—UNITY DAY.

Here are some things we want you to remember for tomorrow. First, wear orange, either something from home or something you made in class. Your teachers and staff will, too. Extra points if you can get your parents to wear orange! The most important thing to remember is that we are celebrating kindness, acceptance, and inclusion tomorrow. Every day is a new opportunity to wake up and ask yourself, how am I going to be kind today? How am I going to include others in my games or at lunch today? How can I show others that they are wonderful just the way they are? That's what Unity Day is all about. See you in your orange tomorrow!"

[For Unity Day!]

"Happy Unity Day, Cougars! [or other mascot name]

Today's the day! We are coming together to celebrate kindness, acceptance, and inclusion—our whole school community of students, teachers, staff, and parents—so that we can make a school that's happier and healthier, a school where you can be all that you want to be. Each of us can make our school a better place and I know I'll see you reaching out to say hello to someone new, including a new friend in your game, and many other positive actions from now on. Your teachers have the schedule for all the fun things we are doing today. I can't wait to see all the orange around school—I've heard that there's even a few orange things in the cafeteria. Happy Unity Day, Cougars!"

[For the day after Unity Day]

"Hellooooo Cougars! [or other mascot name]

What an incredible day we had yesterday! Everyone had orange on them somewhere, our Unity Tree has over 400 [# of your school community] orange leaves, and I saw so many acts of kindness, acceptance, and inclusion all over school. Everyone was smiling. I saw people letting others get in front of them in line. I saw students including others in their games and introducing themselves to new friends. I saw such wonderful things! So, what are we going to do now that Unity Day is over? Are we going to stop being kind? Including others? Making new friends? No. We are going to make every day Unity Day at our school. We aren't going to stop doing our part to create a world without bullying, and kindness, acceptance, and inclusion are the ways we do it. We're going to keep doing our partwith you so that we can keep Unity Day in our hearts all year long!"

Sample social media posts

- Today is Unity Day! We are wearing orange to show that we are united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Together, we can create a world without bullying! *#UnityEveryDay*
- Why are we wearing orange today? For Unity Day! The color orange provides a powerful, visually compelling expression of solidarity for bullying prevention. By coming together and wearing orange, we hope to send a unified message to kids that they aren't alone. #UnityEveryDay
- October is National Bullying Prevention Month and a featured event is Unity Day on Wed., October XX! These events were started by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. I'm wearing orange to show my support for bullying prevention and to unite for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. #UnityEveryDay
- Unity Day, sponsored by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, has a simple call to action—wear and share orange to support bullying prevention. This day provides a visual spotlight to the energy of National Bullying Prevention Month, focusing on kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. #UnityEveryDay
- Show your support for bullying prevention by wearing orange and sharing the hashtag #UnityEveryDay on Wed., Oct. XX! Sponsored by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center #UnityEveryDay
- Show your support for students who experience bullying by wearing and sharing orange for Unity Day on Oct. XX. This is a time to unite together against bullying! #UnityEveryDay
- Together against bullying and united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. We are excited to be celebrating #UnityEveryDay!
- Today, we are wearing orange to support #UnityEveryDay. Join us to support bullying prevention!

Note: Many individuals personalize their posts with a response to a statement such as:

- "I'm wearing orange today because . . ." or
- "I support Unity Day, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center, and the bullying prevention cause because . . .

Sample Unity Day proclamation

To show your community the importance of Unity Day, why not get a proclamation from your city government? A proclamation is a document that declares certain periods of time (days, weeks, or months) in honor of an event or activity promoting the health, welfare, or the heritage of the community (e.g., American Red Cross Month, Ride to Work Week, Arbor/Earth Day). Your city or town will usually have a request form you can fill out online and send in with the relevant information about Unity Day and why it's celebrated. If there is no form, the sample in this guide can be sent in with the request. Make sure to allow plenty of time for city staff to process the document if you want to show it at an assembly or other event. You can even tag us in a photo of your town's signed proclamation **@pacer_nbpc** for both Facebook and Instagram.

[Sample proclamation request and format for Unity Day]

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, our community is composed of people who are all different, yet all live, work, and reside together in our town,

WHEREAS, in the course of living and working together there is sometimes conflict and even behaviors like bullying that cause strife and hardship,

WHEREAS, many children and adolescents are affected by bullying annually, causing pain and health repercussions that can last for years,

WHEREAS, targets of bullying are more likely to acquire physical, emotional, and learning problems and students who are repeatedly bullied often fear such activities as riding the bus, going to school, and attending community activities,

WHEREAS, the presence of bullying in our community creates an environment that may hold our children back from being all they can be,

WHEREAS, research has shown that promoting and modeling the prosocial behaviors of kindness, acceptance of difference, and inclusion creates healthier communities for all people with fewer incidences of bullying; and

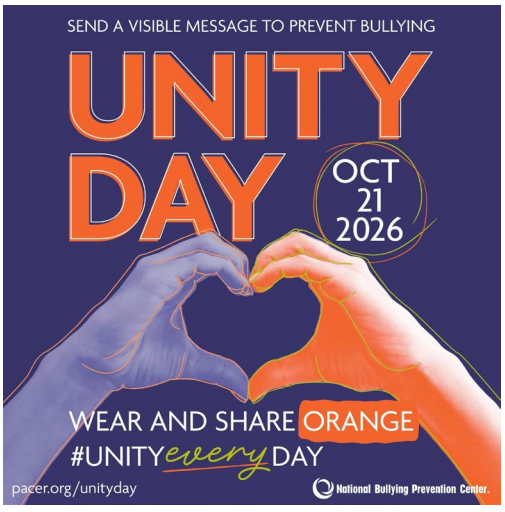
WHEREAS, coming together, united in our desire to create a healthier community for all,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Mayor (name of Mayor) proclaims (date) as (name of city/town) Unity Day; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that (name of city/town) schools, students, parents, recreation programs, religious institutions, and community organizations be encouraged to engage in Unity Day, bringing all citizens together to celebrate kindness, acceptance of difference, and inclusion to protect our town from bullying and create a healthier community.

PROMOTIONAL RESOURCES

Along with wearing orange for Unity Day, another important aspect is to SHARE orange! To support your efforts in promoting Unity Day—whether on your organization's website, social media, or in a physical location—we created promotional resources for your use. These **digital assets** include badges, Facebook banners, social media images, and activities for all ages.



SUCCESS STORIES

Each year, we hear from many schools, communities, businesses, and individuals who celebrate Unity Day in their own unique way! In this section of the Unity Day guide, we wanted to feature four groups who have started creative and unique Unity Day celebrations in their school, business, or community. We interviewed the organizers of their celebrations and asked for the scoop on what helped make their Unity Day so successful. Hopefully, their stories provide inspiration and ideas for your own Unity Day celebrations.

Burton Tech High School | California | Shared by Allison Levine, Educator

1. Tell us more about how you have celebrated Unity Day.

We began to hold a Celebration of Unity Day in 2015. Our school usually held a Celebration of Learning Day so we combined the two. The first year, there was a lot of confusion from the administration and I explained what we wanted to do a million times. I think on the million and first time, they started to get what we wanted for that day, especially when Maxine Waters, a California Representative, accepted our invitation to speak at the event. During the festival over the past three years, we've had guest speakers such as Councilman Marquise Harris Dawson, Alejandro Carpio (blind ex-gang motivational speaker), as well as talent shows and poetry slams. All of the school clubs and advisories have booths to sell food as a fundraiser and we also have a free game or activity that features the event theme. We had bands, celebrities, singers, performers, and YouTubers who all attended via student invite.

2. What was your process like for planning Unity Day and ensuring it was successful?

The process still remains the same. My MAPs student advisory (The Mentors and Protectors of Burton Tech) break into planning groups for entertainment, booths, publicity, student council rep, social media, community involvement, etc. The After School All Stars program co-hosts the event with us, although we do most of the planning. Ever since the first one, my principal tends to say, "Do whatever you'd like!!!!" We have parents who donate food for the booths and some of them volunteer for the event, but the students and I do most of the heavy lifting.

3. Were there any obstacles you encountered when planning Unity Day?

My favorite obstacle was the first year when we were just about to order 500 orange bullying prevention t-shirts, a parent complained it was a local gang color. We then had the most absurd conversation about which colors we couldn't use—that turned out to be all of them! We ended up making a shirt that said 'mean people' with a red circle and a line through it.

4. What impact do you think Unity Day made in your school or community?

Each year we have more and more community involvement and the local politicians are taking notice. The local stores post our flyers and we hope to get them more involved.

5. What tips would you share with someone planning Unity Day in their school or community?

Make a lot of lists! Delegate to the students and put them in charge. Have a co-host (club or advisory at the school) and don't stop reaching out to politicians and local stores. Get others included with talent shows and performances. When our cheer team started performing, all of their families came so there were 100 more people. If the students are excited about the day, they will work hard for you!

Anne Arundel School District | Maryland

1. Tell us more about how you have celebrated Unity Day.

Last year was our first undertaking with Unity Day, and we could not have been more pleased with the results. Virtually every one of the 128 schools in our district took part in one form or another. Many offices also took part. We did not want to "box in" schools, so we emphasized the need to plan or create things that were genuine and applicable to their communities. That resulted in a great variety of expressions of unity.

2. What was your process like for planning Unity Day and ensuring it was successful?

Given our strategic plan goal to elevate all students and eliminate all gaps and our ongoing #AllMeansAll campaign, Unity Day was a natural fit for us. It came about as a system-wide effort in a meeting in which it was just casually mentioned as part of another conversation. Several people, our superintendent included, immediately had the same thought: Why can't we make it system-wide? From our standpoint, that was relatively easy. School Counseling worked on advisory lessons for students, we used posters from PACER and distributed them to schools, and we promoted it through our social media channels and automated notification system. To add to the event, our superintendent challenged the county executive to have county employees wear orange for the day in support of our school system and students. We created a hashtag for folks to use and let each school/office take it from there. We asked schools/offices to tweet photos with the hashtag and we put the best photos in a slide show to be put online AND shown at our Board of Education meeting that night. Our superintendent told the board about the event and asked them to wear orange. All did.

3. Were there any obstacles you encountered when planning Unity Day?

Our biggest obstacle was lack of time. We got into it as a system-wide event rather late, and that caused some minor crunch issues. However, the enthusiasm of our entire team, led by our superintendent, made the day just awesome. We have plans to expand it this year (but I won't spill the beans just yet)!

4. What impact do you think Unity Day made in your school or community?

It focused us all on a single message of acceptance and inclusion. The fact that the County government was involved helped in that, but the efforts of our offices—in addition to our schools—and the enthusiasm and creativity are what really made it work. Creativity can be simple and does not have to be time-consuming.

5. What tips would you share with someone planning Unity Day in their school or community?

Don't forget any aspect of your organization. For us, Food and Nutrition Services put orange chicken on the menu. Technology changed the background of all computer screens to orange for the day. Principals had contests to see who could dress in the most outlandish orange outfit (within reason). It can be as fun as you want it to be, so don't hamstring people.

UNITY DAY HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights, selected from thousands of activities over the years, include:

- **2011:** Ellen DeGeneres participated in Unity Day in 2011 by wearing orange on her TV show, *Ellen*, and posting about the event on her website. Tristan McDonald, who went on to become an *American Idol* finalist, performed the first Unity Dance.
- **2012:** Anderson Cooper wore orange on his TV show, Anderson Live, and promoted the event.
- **2013:** Several national partners supported the event, including Disney/ABC Family and Cartoon Network, through public service announcements (PSAs) and social media promotion. In addition, the 55 foot tall statue of the Green Giant in Blue Earth, Minnesota wore an orange toga for the day.
- **2014:** Australian motivational speaker, author, and PACER partner Nick Vujicic, who was born without arms and legs, held a press conference in Mexico and posted videos for his millions of followers on Facebook about Unity Day. Along with celebrity involvement, the momentum continued to grow with a free promotional poster provided to schools and individuals.
- **2015:** YouTube sensation Bethany Mota kicked off Unity Day with a media tour and an event at the Mall of America on Oct. 20. The tagline of Unity Day was rebranded to focus on positive behavior: "Together against bullying—UNITED for kindness, acceptance and inclusion.
- **2016:** Talent from the TLC network, including Jazz Jennings, Busby Quintuplets from *Outdaughtered*, Whitney Waythore, and Jarling Perez from *Sweet 15: Quinceanera* shared their support by wearing orange. Along with celebrities wearing and sharing orange, over 12,000 Unity Day posters were distributed to schools and individuals.
- **2017:** The hashtag #UnityDay2017 was promoted and hundreds posted their images. TLC and Georgetown Cupcake were among involved partners, and they celebrated Unity Day with delicious orange cupcakes. Georgetown Cupcake sold the cupcakes on Unity Day and TLC hosted a corporate event to distribute treats as they united for kindness, acceptance, and inclusion.
- **2018:** Unity Day 2018 was celebrated across the world by schools, students, community organizations, businesses, and media, with over 2,000 posts shared to #UnityDay2018. Highlights included cartoonists uniting for Unity Day, as well as entire states getting involved, like Hawaii Governor David Ige and his staff, who created a video.
- **2023:** Messaging for Unity Day continues to evolve with "Uniting to build comm**unity** through kindness, acceptance and inclusion to prevent bullying.

National Bullying Prevention Center®

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