

School Engagement Toolkit

Inspire Kindness. Promote Unity.
Engage Your Students in Meaningful Service.



AmeriCorps



INTERACTIVE

What is 9/11 Day?

9/11 Day is the federally recognized September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, observed each year to honor those we lost—and all who responded—on and after September 11, 2001.

Inspired by the extraordinary unity and compassion shown across the country in the days following the attacks, 9/11 Day transforms a day of tragedy into a day of doing good. It is now the largest day of service in the United States, with more than 30 million Americans participating annually through acts of kindness, charity, and volunteerism.

K–12 schools across the country are part of this growing movement—encouraging students to reflect on the meaning of 9/11 and take positive action in their communities.

How Your School Can Get Involved

1. Plan a Service or Kindness Activity

Host a school-wide or classroom-based project—such as a campus clean-up, kindness campaign, letter-writing effort, or donation drive. Activities can take place any time in September.

2. Launch a Good Deed Challenge

Invite students to pledge to do one kind act in honor of 9/11 Day. Use printable or digital pledge cards and display them in hallways, classrooms, or online. Visit the Good Deeds Library at 911day.org/resources for age-appropriate ideas.

3. Share on Social Media (with School Permission)

Encourage your school community to share stories of kindness, service, and good deeds using #911Day and tagging @911Day. Share photos of classroom activities, bulletin boards, or student reflections.

4. Integrate into Classroom Lessons and Activities

Dedicate time for students to learn about 9/11 and its legacy of service. Discuss what it means to help others, and have students brainstorm or journal about ways they can be kind.

Visit 911day.org/teachers for free, grade-appropriate lesson plans, classroom activities, mini-assignments, and educator toolkits.

5. Encourage Student Fundraisers or Collection Drives

Support student-led efforts to give back—such as collecting food, hygiene items, or books for a local organization. 9/11 Day can serve as a launching point for year-round service.

6. Show 9/11 Day Ambassador Videos

These short, student-friendly videos explain the meaning of 9/11 Day and highlight how people across the country turn remembrance into action. Great for morning announcements or classroom use.

What Counts as a Good Deed?

Good deeds can be big or small. Some simple, school-appropriate examples include:

- Picking up trash around the school grounds
- Writing thank-you notes to first responders or school staff
- Donating gently used books or clothing
- Helping a classmate or younger student
- Leaving a kind note on someone's desk or locker
- Making kindness posters or art displays
- Creating care packages for local shelters or hospitals

Frequently Asked Questions

Does the activity have to happen on September 11?

No. Good deeds and service projects can happen anytime in September.

Does it cost anything?

No. Most good deeds are free. The goal is to teach kindness and compassion, not spend money.

Can students participate individually?

Yes! Students can complete good deeds on their own or with their family, or as part of a class, club, or school-wide activity.

How can we track participation?

Use classroom pledge charts, hallway displays, or digital forms to track student involvement. Encourage students to reflect or write about what they did.

School Activity Ideas

- "11 Good Deeds for 9/11 Day" Challenge – Create a school-branded list of 11 good deeds that students can choose from.
- Kindness Wall or Hallway Display – Post student pledges, kind notes, or drawings in a central location.
- Moment of Remembrance – Host a morning announcement, flag-raising ceremony, or moment of silence on September 11.
- Classroom Discussion or Writing Prompt – Ask students to reflect: "What does it mean to help others?" or "What is one way I can show kindness today?"
- Partner with a Local Organization – Collect items or create cards for a fire station, hospital, or nonprofit that serves the community.

Why Participate?

- Encourage empathy, gratitude, and community-minded values
- Offer students meaningful ways to connect with history through action
- Build school spirit and collaboration
- Join a national movement of positive change
- Help students feel empowered to make a difference at any age

Ready-to-Use Materials

Scroll down in this document for:

- Printable pledge cards
- Sample social media posts
- Suggested Book Lists
- Good deed ideas

Visit 911day.org/teachers for:

- 5 flexible lesson plans (PK–12)
- Quick bell-ringer / morning-meeting activities
- Grade-band packets aligned to Common Core, C3, & SEL
- Concise guide for introducing 9/11 with care

Need Help or Want to Share Your Impact?

Email the 9/11 Day team at teachers@911day.org

We'd love to see your school's activities—and may even spotlight your good work nationally.

TOOLS AND TEMPLATES

9/11 Day Good Deeds Challenge

Social Media Toolkit for Schools

One Good Deed Can Inspire Another. Let's Show What Our School Can Do.

What is the 9/11 Day Good Deeds Challenge?

The **9/11 Day Good Deeds Challenge** is a national movement that invites students and families to honor the anniversary of September 11 by doing **one act of kindness or service**—and encouraging others to do the same.

Inspired by the unity, compassion, and resilience Americans showed in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the challenge helps turn a day of tragedy into a day of doing good. Just like the Ice Bucket Challenge, it spreads by word of mouth, classroom to classroom, and friend to friend—**one good deed at a time**.

How It Works

1. Do a good deed (big or small)
2. Share it (if appropriate)
3. Tag or encourage others to keep it going

Students can participate individually or through a classroom, club, or school wide activity. Schools can post approved photos, pledges, or impact stories to help amplify the movement.

Posting Guidelines

Important: Please only post student names, images, or work samples with prior parent/guardian permission and in accordance with your school or district's privacy policies.

Suggested Social Media Language for School Accounts

Before 9/11 – Promote the Challenge

Instagram/Facebook

- We're proud to join the **#911Day Good Deeds Challenge**—a national campaign encouraging students to do one act of kindness in honor of 9/11.
- This week, our students are pledging to help a friend, thank a community hero, donate to a cause, or simply be kind.
- Families, join us! Download the **Family Engagement Toolkit** at 911day.org/resources for ideas, printable pledge cards, and sample posts.
- #911Day #GoodDeedsChallenge
Tags: @911Day @AmeriCorps

X/Twitter

- Our school is taking the #911Day Good Deeds Challenge!
- One kind act. One ripple of impact.
- Families can take part too—visit 911day.org/resources to download the Family Engagement Toolkit.
- #GoodDeedsChallenge #911Day
Tags: @911Day @AmeriCorps

Suggested Posts for Teachers/Classrooms:

Always follow school policies and obtain required permissions.

Instagram/Facebook/X

- In honor of 9/11 Day, students in [Grade/Classroom] pledged to do a good deed this week.
- From writing thank-you notes to picking up litter, they're showing the power of kindness in action.
- #911Day #GoodDeedsChallenge
- Our 5th graders created a "Wall of Kindness," each sharing one good deed they've done or plan to do.
- It's amazing to see the creativity and care in their responses!
- #911Day #GoodDeedsChallenge

Student-Facing Language (for class or permission-based posting)

Social Post Template (with guidance):

- I'm joining the #911Day Good Deeds Challenge by [INSERT GOOD DEED].
- I'm doing this to honor the people who helped others after 9/11—and to do my part today.
- I challenge [@Friend1], [@Friend2], and [@Friend3] to do a good deed too.
- #GoodDeedsChallenge #911Day

Video Pledge Script (for in-class recording or journaling):

- Hi, I'm [First Name], a student at [School Name], and I'm taking the 9/11 Day Good Deeds Challenge.
- This year, I'm doing [INSERT GOOD DEED] to honor the spirit of unity and kindness that followed 9/11.
- I hope others will join me! Every act of kindness makes a difference.
- Visit 911day.org/resources for ideas.

For Families

Share This Message via School Social or Newsletter

- Want to honor 9/11 as a family? Join the 9/11 Day Good Deeds Challenge at home.
- Visit 911day.org/resources to download the **Family Engagement Toolkit**—featuring good deed ideas, printable pledge cards, and sample social posts.

Template Media Advisory

Contact

[Name]

[Email]

[Mobile Phone]

[SCHOOL NAME] Students to Participate in September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance

[CITY/STATE] Students Join Nation's Largest Day of Service by Supporting [INSERT EVENT DETAILS]

What

On [DATE], students and staff at [SCHOOL NAME] will participate in a service or kindness activity as part of the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (9/11 Day). More than [XX] students will take part in [INSERT ACTIVITY], supporting [INSERT LOCAL CAUSE, CHARITY, OR COMMUNITY GROUP].

9/11 Day is one of only two federally recognized National Days of Service. Each year, more than 30 million Americans take part, turning the anniversary of 9/11 into a day of unity, kindness, and positive action. Students at [SCHOOL NAME] will join this national movement to honor the lives lost and the spirit of service that followed the tragedy.

When

Date: [INSERT DATE]

Time: [INSERT START/END TIME]

Where

Location: [INSERT SCHOOL OR VENUE NAME]

Address: [INSERT STREET ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Interview Opportunities

- Student participants
- Teachers or school leaders organizing the effort
- Representatives from participating community organizations
- National 9/11 Day representatives (available remotely upon request)

About 9/11 Day

The September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (9/11 Day) was established in 2009 to honor those who lost their lives, were injured or became ill as a result of the events of 9/11, as well as the many who rose in service in the days, weeks, and months that followed. Inspired by the remarkable spirit of unity and compassion that brought people together in the aftermath of the tragedy, 9/11 Day encourages Americans each year to transform the anniversary into a day of kindness, service, and reflection. Learn more at www.911day.org.

About [SCHOOL NAME]:

[INSERT BOILERPLATE — A short description of your school, grade levels served, student population, or relevant programs, such as character education or service learning.]

SAMPLE EMAIL TO FAMILIES

Subject: Join Us in Honoring 9/11 Through Service and Kindness

Dear Families,

We invite you to join our school community in recognizing the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, also known as 9/11 Day, by participating in activities that promote kindness, unity, and service.

9/11 Day was created to honor those who lost their lives or were affected on September 11, 2001. It was inspired by the extraordinary spirit of unity, compassion, and resilience that brought people together across the country in the days that followed. Today, 9/11 Day is the largest annual day of service in the United States, with more than 30 million people taking part each year.

At [School Name], we want to help students learn the value of helping others—and to encourage a spirit of kindness in our classrooms and beyond.

How You Can Participate:

Schoolwide Activities

Throughout the week of September 11, students will take part in age-appropriate activities to learn about service and kindness. These may include [insert brief details, such as: writing thank-you notes to first responders, participating in a donation drive, or creating a “kindness wall” of good deed pledges].

Take the 9/11 Day Good Deeds Challenge as a Family

We invite you to join us at home by participating in the Good Deeds Challenge:

- Do something kind—big or small
- Talk about it together as a family
- If you wish, share your act of kindness online using #911Day and #GoodDeedsChallenge to inspire others

Need ideas? The Family Engagement Toolkit at 911day.org/resources includes good deed suggestions, printable pledge cards, and sample posts.

By working together, we can honor the spirit of 9/11—not only by remembering, but by doing good.

Thank you for your support in helping our students grow into kind, compassionate members of their community.

Warm regards,

[Name]

[Title]

[School Name]

Good Deeds for School-Wide and Club Activities (Grades K–12)

1. Host a Schoolwide Day of Service

Plan a day for students and staff to participate in service activities like cleaning the school grounds, making kindness posters, or planting flowers on campus.

2. Partner with a Local Organization

Work with a food bank, animal shelter, or senior center to support their needs—such as organizing a collection drive or making greeting cards.

3. Organize a Donation Drive

Collect gently used books, school supplies, warm clothing, or hygiene items to donate to local shelters, classrooms, or hospitals.

4. Create and Distribute Kindness Cards

Have students design cards with positive messages and deliver them to neighbors, first responders, or leave them in library books and lockers.

5. Hold a Remembrance or Gratitude Assembly

Invite local first responders or veterans to be honored at a school assembly or morning meeting focused on gratitude, kindness, and remembrance.

6. Make Thank-You Packs for Community Helpers

Assemble snack bags, drawings, or notes of appreciation to drop off at fire stations, police departments, hospitals, or bus depots.

7. Lead a Kindness Challenge Week

Each day during the week of 9/11 Day, promote a different good deed theme—like “help a friend,” “say something kind,” or “clean up your space.”

8. Collaborate with Other Classrooms or Schools

Pair younger and older grades to work together on a shared service project—such as reading together or making decorations for a community center.

9. Create a Kindness Wall or Bulletin Board

Invite students to write down good deeds they’ve done or seen and post them in a central hallway to inspire others.

10. Host a Storytime or Video Viewing

Show an age-appropriate 9/11 Day Ambassador video or read a book about kindness and lead a classroom discussion or writing activity.

11. Track and Celebrate Your School’s Impact

Display how many good deeds were pledged or completed across the school using stickers, graphs, or a large visual tracker.

Good Deeds Younger Students Can Do on 9/11 Day (Grades K-5)

1. Pick Up Trash Around the School or Playground

Help keep your space clean by picking up litter safely with gloves or a grown-up's help.

2. Make a Thank-You Card for a Community Helper

Write or draw a note for a firefighter, teacher, nurse, or bus driver to say thanks for all they do.

3. Help a Classmate

Sharpen someone's pencil, share school supplies, or offer to help a friend clean up after an activity.

4. Say Something Kind to 3 People Today

Tell a friend, teacher, or sibling something kind. Kind words make a big impact!

5. Donate a Book or Toy

Pick out a gently used book or toy to donate to a classroom, school library, or charity drive.

6. Make Kindness Rocks

Decorate small rocks with cheerful words or pictures and place them around the school garden or walking path.

7. Give Compliments During the Day

Write sticky notes with compliments and place them on lockers, desks, or a classroom kindness board.

8. Make a "Good Deed Coupon"

Create a coupon offering a good deed (like helping with chores) to give to a family member.

9. Hold the Door Open for Someone

A simple, kind gesture that helps others feel seen and appreciated.

10. Wave or Say Hello to Someone New

Make someone feel included by greeting a classmate you don't usually talk to.

11. Draw a Picture to Make Someone Smile

Create a cheerful drawing to give to a classmate, teacher, or someone in the front office.

For more ideas, visit 911day.org/resources and visit our [Good Deeds Library](#) and/or Individual Engagement Toolkit!

Books About Kindness and Good Deeds

Recommended by Grade Level (K–12)

Grades K–2 (Ages 5–7)

Simple, heartwarming stories that model kindness and helping others

1. Have You Filled a Bucket Today?

by Carol McCloud

Introduces the concept of “bucket filling” as a metaphor for kindness and positive behavior.

2. Kindness is My Superpower

by Alicia Ortego

A relatable story about a child learning to be kind through small everyday actions.

3. Be Kind

by Pat Zietlow Miller

Gently explores what it means to be kind and the impact one act can have.

4. What Does It Mean to Be Kind?

by Rana DiOrio

A visually engaging book that helps children understand and practice kindness.

5. I Walk with Vanessa

by Kerascoët

A wordless picture book about how one small act of kindness can inspire an entire community.

Grades 3–5 (Ages 8–10)

Books that encourage empathy, responsibility, and everyday good deeds

1. Because Amelia Smiled

by David Ezra Stein

A charming story that shows how one child’s smile triggers a chain reaction of kindness across the globe.

2. Ordinary Mary’s Extraordinary Deed

by Emily Pearson

A simple good deed multiplies into a worldwide wave of kindness.

3. A Bike Like Sergio’s

by Maribeth Boelts

Explores honesty and generosity through a boy’s difficult decision to return a lost dollar bill.

4. The Invisible Boy

by Trudy Ludwig

Illustrates how a small act of kindness can help someone feel included and seen.

5. The Smartest Kid in the Universe (Book 1)

by Chris Grabenstein

A fun, lighthearted chapter book that blends humor with themes of doing the right thing.

Grades 6–8 (Ages 11–13)

Middle-grade fiction and nonfiction that emphasize personal growth through kindness and service

1. Pay It Forward (Young Readers Edition)

by Catherine Ryan Hyde

A boy's idea to create a movement of kindness turns into something much bigger than expected.

2. Wonder

by R.J. Palacio

A moving novel about empathy, courage, and choosing kindness in the face of difficulty.

3. The 7 Habits of Happy Kids

by Sean Covey

Short, practical stories that build character and reinforce the value of kindness and responsibility.

4. Kindness Counts

by Bryan Smith

Part of the “Without Limits” series—teaches middle graders how kindness impacts others in school settings.

5. Just Kidding: Laughing with, Not at Others

by Trudy Ludwig

Teaches about kindness through understanding boundaries and being aware of how words affect others.

Grades 9–12 (Ages 14–18)

Accessible and meaningful reads that promote kindness, leadership, and service

1. Make Your Bed

by Admiral William H. McRaven

Short, inspiring lessons about discipline, character, and making a positive impact through everyday actions.

2. The Power of Kindness

by Piero Ferrucci (Young Adult Edition or excerpts)

Backed by psychology, this book explores how kindness enhances our lives and communities.

3. A Year of Living Kindly

by Donna Cameron

A reflective look at the transformative impact of choosing kindness intentionally.

4. The 6 Most Important Decisions You'll Ever Make

by Sean Covey

A practical, teen-friendly guide to making positive life choices—including how to treat others.

5. 29 Gifts: How a Month of Giving Can Change Your Life

by Cami Walker

A real-life story of how small daily acts of giving helped the author find purpose and healing.

ABOUT 9/11 Day

In 2002, a group of 9/11 family members and leaders joined together to form the nonprofit “9/11 Day,” with the goal of transforming the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 tragedy into a day of doing good.

Today, 9/11 Day has become a National Day of Service and Remembrance, recognized under federal law, and the largest annual day of service in America.

More than 30 million people participate each year by volunteering, supporting charities, and performing other good deeds in tribute to those impacted by the 9/11 tragedy, and in a spirit of unity and peace.

9/11 Day Programs

9/11 Day organizes large-scale volunteer service projects focused on hunger relief that mobilize tens of thousands of volunteers in cities across the nation. At these [9/11 Day Meal Packs](#), volunteers pack millions of nutritious, non-perishable meals for Americans at risk of hunger, in partnership with local Feeding America-affiliated food banks.

In 2023 and 2024, 9/11 Day also collaborated with colleges and universities across the United States to help organize service projects on college campuses, in partnership with the federal agency AmeriCorps.

In many schools across the nation, K-12 teachers are now utilizing [free lesson plans](#) and other materials provided by 9/11 Day to engage America’s younger generations in the 9/11 Day program, inspiring millions of students to plan their own good deeds in observance of the anniversary of the 9/11 tragedy, and in recognition of the national spirit of unity that arose in the aftermath of the attacks.

Millions of other Americans participate in 9/11 Day through the organization’s annual pledge campaign, in which individuals plan their own “good deeds” for 9/11 Day and share their plans on social media using the hashtag #911day.

For more information, toolkits and other resources, visit 911day.org, or contact 9/11 Day at info@911day.org

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9/11 DAY

GOOD DEED PLEDGE






For 9/11 Day this year, I will:

My Name _____

My Grade _____ My State _____ My Country _____

School/Teacher _____

Share your pledge on social media and tag us!

✉ @911day  @911day  @911day  911day.org #911day



9/11 DAY

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