

Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day

# Lesson Plan **COURAGE**



For ages 14 - 19



# ABOUT EUNICE KENNEDY SHRIVER DAY

Eunice Kennedy Shriver devoted her life to fighting for the rights of those with intellectual disabilities. To inspire new fans to experience the impact of her legacy and embrace the movement she started, Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day is an annual celebration of her life and her ideals. It is a global call for people to commit actions of inclusion, acceptance, and unity for and with individuals with intellectual disabilities.

EKS Day's call to action begins with you.

And driving EKS Day are the same values that drove Eunice Kennedy Shriver:

- + **Love** – She deeply loved her sister and she loved sport;
- + **Social Justice** – She became furious about the neglect and indifference she saw toward her sister and others with intellectual disabilities;
- + **Faith** – She strongly believed that everyone counts;
- + **Hope** – She believed in the possibilities of persons with intellectual disabilities, which fuels hope in all of us to make a difference; and
- + **Courage** – She demonstrated an unrelenting indomitable spirit in action that one person could change the world.

EKS Day is about action across the globe — activities that demonstrate the impact of these values to those unfamiliar with Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her revolutionary movement. The world will actively celebrate EKS Day on the fourth Saturday of every September.

There are three components to EKS Day:

- + **Play:** A day of sports, training clinics, and Unified Sports to commemorate Eunice Kennedy Shriver's belief in building greater equality through organized athletics.
- + **Join:** An effort to educate people about the Special Olympics and Best Buddies movement and the urgent needs of people with intellectual disabilities, and to solicit their support and involvement with persons with intellectual disabilities.
- + **Build:** A regional effort to dedicate new or renovated athletic facilities in Eunice Kennedy Shriver's honor in the poorest communities.

We invite you to PLAY ON by joining the athletes of Special Olympics and buddies of Best Buddies, the real heroes of a movement to unify communities, and to honor Eunice Kennedy Shriver by becoming an agent of acceptance and action throughout the world.



Eunice Kennedy Shriver's very special relationship with her sister, Rosemary (right) who had intellectual disability inspired her lifelong work to create a more accepting and inclusive world for people with intellectual disabilities.

# ABOUT EUNICE KENNEDY SHRIVER

Eunice Kennedy Shriver (1921-2009), founder of Special Olympics, used athletics to change the world for people with intellectual disabilities. You are invited to reflect on her legacy and then choose and chart your own.

As founder and honorary chairperson of Special Olympics and executive vice president of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, Eunice Kennedy Shriver was a leader in the worldwide struggle to improve and enhance the lives of individuals with intellectual disabilities for over 40 years.

Born Eunice Mary Kennedy in Brookline, Massachusetts, she was the fifth of nine children of Joseph P. and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy. Eunice Kennedy Shriver's older brothers included the late John F. Kennedy, who served as President of the United States, and the late Robert F. Kennedy, an American statesman. She married Sargent Shriver and was the mother of five children.

With a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology from Stanford University, she worked as a civil servant and then as a social worker. In 1957, she became head of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, which works to transform perspectives of people with intellectual disabilities. The Foundation was inspired by her eldest sister and established in memory of her eldest brother.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver received many honors and awards during her lifetime and is recognized around the world for her efforts on behalf of people with intellectual disabilities. She is known worldwide for establishing Special Olympics, after championing the 1st International Special Olympics Summer Games in 1968 at Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois. One thousand individuals with intellectual disabilities from 26 U.S. states and Canada competed in track and field and swimming.

Today, more than three million Special Olympics athletes are training year-round in all 50 states and 181 countries. They run races, toss softballs, lift weights, ski moguls, volley tennis balls and pirouette on skates. The oath from the inaugural Special Olympics Games in Chicago is still recited by Special Olympics athletes:

Let me win,  
but if I cannot win,  
let me be brave  
in the attempt.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver died on August 11, 2009 at the age of 88. She is a sterling example of what one person can do to make a difference in the lives of others. Her values and determined spirit are accessible to each of us as we strive to fulfill our potential and contribute to improving the world.



## Sources:

"Honoring Eunice Kennedy Shriver's Legacy in Intellectual Disability," David Braddock. American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Vol. 48, No. 1: 63-72, February 2010.

<http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/bios/eks>

<http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/bios/si>

<http://www.specialolympics.org/history.aspx>

# ABOUT THE LESSON PLANS FOR EKS DAY

Teachers, facilitators, and leaders of youth groups can choose from this series of lesson plans, developed to engage young people in character building and community service as part of the EKS Day celebration and ongoing effort to honor Eunice Kennedy Shriver's legacy. These lessons focus on the five key EKS values and are designed for two age groups: 8 – 13 years old and 14 – 19 years old.

## EKS Values

Each lesson focuses on one of the five values. By explicitly addressing one value within a lesson, students are better able to engage in deep exploration of the term and concept and then connect that lesson to Eunice Kennedy Shriver's life and legacy as in support of EKS Day.

- + Love
- + Justice
- + Faith
- + Hope
- + Courage

## Overview and Purpose

Use Eunice Kennedy Shriver's life and legacy to:

- + Teach character lessons;
- + Introduce and explore words and concepts;
- + Inform student about world figures and their accomplishments;
- + Develop skills in critical thinking, brainstorming, collaboration and reflection; and
- + Inspire youth to act with hope, faith, courage, social justice, and love.

"The ordinary man is involved in action, the hero acts. An immense difference."

— Henry Miller (novelist)



Eunice Kennedy Shriver with Young Athletes participants and Professor Zhou at 2007 Special Olympics World Games, Shanghai, China

## How to Use the Lesson Plans

The EKS Lesson Plans provide a step-by-step guide for teachers, facilitators, and leaders of youth groups worldwide. Each plan details a specific set of approaches and activities to lead students in the exploration of an EKS value. The lessons are adaptable and allow for adjustments based on group size, age, time allowances, instructional goals, cultural context, and teacher discretion.

It is recommended that teachers review the lesson plan as well as supplemental content and resources developed for EKS Day (e.g., EKS biography, background on Special Olympics, suggested videos) and then craft and deliver a learning experience to both excite and educate students.

Each lesson is intended to inspire students to action and is designed to culminate in their committing to "EKS Acts" of inclusion and acceptance for and with persons with intellectual disabilities. Begin the lesson with this end goal in mind. Review the EKS Acts with your students and help them to choose an act they want to commit to and execute after learning more about Eunice Kennedy Shriver's incredible life and acts of courage. Help them to see how their individual acts of courage can help to improve and change someone else's life.

Teachers can implement these lesson plans on EKS Day or as part of a week-long or even month-long observance of the EKS legacy – or, ideally as a recurring discussion with corresponding activities and projects for students.

# COURAGE

*"What you are winning by your courage is far greater than any game. You are winning life itself and in so doing, you give to others a most precious prize...faith in the unlimited possibilities of the human spirit."*

— Eunice Kennedy Shriver

**Courage** is an EKS Day value because Eunice Kennedy Shriver's legacy shows that one person can change the world. She found within herself relentless drive and spirit that transformed her life and the lives of others.



Eunice Kennedy Shriver congratulating athlete at the 2006 Special Olympics US National Games in Ames, Iowa.

## Age Group: 14 – 19 year-olds

### Lesson Objectives:

- + To broaden understanding of the term and value: courage
- + To increase awareness about the different types of and relative nature of courage
- + To provide concrete examples of courageous acts and valiant people
- + To sustain the Eunice Kennedy Shriver legacy by sharing her story and celebrating her values
- + To provide a direct call to action for students by inspiring them to commit to acts that advance the values and mission of Eunice Kennedy Shriver and EKS Day

### Time Required:

One 50-minute class period  
*Note: These time allowances are only suggestions. Please use your discretion in allocating time, based on the number of students participating, your judgment about their level of familiarity with the featured value and learning activities, and their responses and engagement during the lesson.*

### Resources Needed:

- Online tribute video found at <http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/videos/video/51>
- 150 or more tokens (e.g., popcorn, raisins, dried beans, M&M candies, jellybeans, grapes, pennies or marbles), enough for each participant to be allocated a set of exactly ten.
- Several baskets or some other sort of receptacles
- EKS Acts Handout

Note: The Core Activity in this lesson breaks students into small groups of 5 – 6 participants each. If your class includes 18 students, for example, you will need 180 tokens and 3 baskets.

*Supplemental K-12 lessons and interactive student activities may be found at the new Get Into It curriculum: [www.specialolympics.org/getintoit](http://www.specialolympics.org/getintoit)*

### Standards Alignment

This lesson is aligned to the service learning standards from "The K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice" from the National Youth Leadership Council. [http://www.nylc.org/objects/publications/Standards\\_Oct2009-web.pdf](http://www.nylc.org/objects/publications/Standards_Oct2009-web.pdf)

# COURAGE

## Meaningful Service

Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning experiences are appropriate to participant ages and developmental abilities.
2. Service-learning addresses issues that are personally relevant to the participants.
3. Service-learning provides participants with interesting and engaging service activities.
4. Service-learning encourages participants to understand their service experiences in the context of the underlying societal issues being addressed.

## Link to Curriculum

Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning has clearly articulated learning goals.

## Reflection

Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society.

Indicators:

4. Service-learning reflection encourages participants to examine their preconceptions and assumptions in order to explore and understand their roles and responsibilities as citizens.

## Diversity

Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.

Indicators:

1. Service-learning helps participants identify and analyze different points of view to gain understanding of multiple perspectives.
4. Service-learning encourages participants to recognize and overcome stereotypes.

### Lesson Steps:

- I. Grounding
- II. Mining Meaning
- III. Core Activity
- IV. Reflection
- V. Extensions (optional)

“Throughout history it has been the inaction of those who could have acted, the indifference of those who should have known better, the silence of the voice of justice when it mattered most, that has made it possible for evil to triumph.”

— Haile Selassie (Ethiopian emperor)



# COURAGE

## I. Grounding

Rationale: This foundational segment of the lesson aims to bring students quickly into the mindset of the value, before explicitly labeling the value or delving into its definition and relevance in Eunice Kennedy Shriver's life.

The intended outcome is for students to tap into their personal connections and current understanding of the value courage, however basic or advanced.

Snapshot: Before naming the value, open a conversation among students by inviting them to consider a series of quotes. While the quotes do not include the word courage, each one references a type of courage. As students explore the quotes, the teacher leads them in comparing and contrasting the personal traits that are described or required. The teacher also guides students to reflect on their own fears, challenges and courage. (20-30 minutes)

Procedure:

1. Select three famous quotes or passages that describe different types of courage (e.g., physical courage, moral courage, and personal courage). You can either draw from the list provided or use your own examples.
2. Write the selected quotes on the blackboard or post prominently in the room.



3. Focus on one quote at a time and invite students to explore the message, prompting the conversation with such questions as:
  - What is the writer/this person saying?
  - What do you think the writer wants us to know or do, based on this passage?
  - What is most striking about this statement?
  - Do you agree with this message?
  - Have you ever felt that way? When? What did you do?
  - Have you ever faced a similar situation? When? What did you do?
4. After reviewing each of the selected quotes, wrap up this grounding activity by informing students that the quotes describe different types of courage. Transition to the Mining Meaning step.

“‘Come to the edge.’  
‘We can’t. We’re afraid.’  
‘Come to the edge.’  
‘We can’t. We will fall!’  
‘Come to the edge.’  
And they came.  
And he pushed them.  
And they flew.”  
— Guillaume Apollinaire  
(poet and philosopher)

President Hu Jintao of the Peoples Republic of China greets Special Olympics athlete Jia Surai while Special Olympics Chairman Tim Shriver and Eunice Kennedy Shriver look on.

# COURAGE

## II. Mining Meaning

Rationale: This segment of the lesson is designed to establish what the value is and what it means. The aim is to allow students to explore the term courage as well as generate a list of terms that carry the same or similar meaning. Labeling the value at this point will enable students to connect the concept to culture and place.

Overview: Teacher leads students in process to probe the meaning and facets of courage. (15 – 20 minutes)

Procedure:

1. Call on some students, one by one, to share their definition of the word courage.
2. Write on the board or another a prominent place a commonly accepted definition for the word and see how the student opinions of the definition compare and contrast to the accepted definition.
3. Guide students in noting the different types of courage. Draw on the learning and comments from the grounding activity. Write their responses on the board (Do not erase or transcribe their responses for reference later; this list will be used in the Core Activity). Note that commonly cited types of courage include physical courage, moral courage, and personal courage, but your students may generate a different, broader set of categories.
4. Continue to explore the term's meaning with students until you are confident that they have a firm grasp of what it means.
5. Transition by introducing students to Eunice Kennedy Shriver by providing a brief biographical sketch of her extraordinary family, values, and legacy and discussing the different ways that she exemplified courage in her life. Explain briefly why the class is celebrating her values, in this instance courage, and recognizing her achievements on EKS Day.

- Introduce “courage” as a value lifted up in honor of EKS Day and explain how Eunice Kennedy Shriver was widely regarded as a courageous advocate of the rights and dignity of people with intellectual disabilities.
- Use the EKS biographical summary (found on page 3) to introduce students to Eunice and her legacy. Distribute a printed summary and/or select a few students to share in reading her bio aloud.
- It was one woman’s courage who changed the world....Show the tribute video, which gives a fast-paced overview of Eunice’s life and pioneering accomplishments, as told by her family, a Special Olympics athlete, and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela. (Video found at <http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/videos/video/51>)

**Courage** (n): a value characterized by an ability to accomplish a deed that benefits a person or society despite fears, dangers, doubts and pain

*Synonyms and supporting concepts:*

- Bravery
- Boldness
- Fortitude
- Valor
- Heroism
- Guts
- Nerve
- Intrepidity

*Types of courage:*

- Physical courage
- Moral courage
- Personal courage

*Antonyms and incompatible concepts / behaviors:*

- Cowardice
- Gutless
- Intimidated



# COURAGE

## III. Core Activity: I Wish that I Could...

Rationale: This segment provides hands-on learning through interactivity. Your students will continue to attach personal meaning and importance to the value, exploring courage in a way that demonstrates its role in personal life, family life, community life, and in our society as a whole.

Overview: The teacher divides class into small groups of 5 – 6 students each. Each student receives ten “tokens” (e.g., popcorn, raisins, dried beans, M&Ms, pennies). Each small group receives a basket. Within their small group, students share something beneficial or admirable that he or she never mustered the courage to do but would like to. Anyone that has overcome a fear or accomplished a deed that has been shared places a “token” in a basket or bowl. The first person in each small group to place all of his or her tokens in the basket wins the game. (30 minutes)

### Procedure:

1. Instruct your students to prepare a written list of at least ten things they want to do but presently lack the courage to try. Advise them to focus their list on things that are beneficial and admirable and to be sure to list an example for every “type” of courage the class identified during the Mining Meaning segment.
2. If examples are needed to prompt their thinking, here are a few: overcoming a fear of flying, standing up to someone who is a bully, accomplishing a goal despite personal challenges. Urge students to be specific with their list, while avoiding naming names or revealing others’ personal concerns.
3. While students are preparing their lists, allocate and distribute ten “tokens” per student. If you use candy, remind them not to eat any until the activity is complete.
4. Divide students into small groups made up of 5 – 6 students each. Cluster the small groups so students are seated in a circle (in chairs or on the floor).
5. Place a basket, box, or some sort of receptacle in the center of each group. The receptacle should be easily accessible to all participants.
6. Review the goal of the exercise and establish basic ground rules for participants (e.g. one person at a time; listen attentively; be courteous, respectful, and supportive as your fellow students share).
7. Begin the exercise by having students — one-by-one, going in order around the circle — share one thing from their list that he or she never mustered the courage to do but would like to.
8. Immediately after a student expresses one thing from his or her list, other game participants place one “token” in the basket, if they have overcome that same fear. The “honor system” is in effect.
9. Have students continue one by one, revealing one fear from their list each time around. After each revelation, the others place a token the basket, if warranted.
10. The first person on each team to place all his or her tokens in the basket wins the game — an indication that the winner has overcome a variety of fears and demonstrated many types of courage. If the one team wraps up quicker than the other teams, that team can resume the activity until a “winner” emerges on all or a majority of the teams.
11. When the exercise is over, discuss with your students that it takes courage to share things that they haven’t found the courage to try yet. They should feel proud of themselves and hopefully inspired to accomplish those things that they shared with the group.

# COURAGE

## IV. From Reflection to Action

Rationale: This segment centers on reflection and processing to help reinforce the importance of the value and the ways in which courage can be embodied.

Overview: Guide students in further discussion of courage, as a value in their lives going forward and as an influence on society. (15 minutes)

Procedure:

1. Engage your students in a discussion with the following points/questions as a guide:
  - Name some important times in our country's history when courage mattered most.
  - Name some situations where you've witnessed a courageous act. How did it make you feel?
  - If each of us were more courageous, how could we improve our school? Our lives? Our communities?
2. As students respond, encourage them to identify the type of courage their example represents and why they see it that way.
3. Ask students to name people — global luminaries, fictional characters, national figures, and everyday citizens — who have shown courage and to detail why they believe these individuals to be courageous. (e.g., Helen Keller, Harriet Tubman, Anne Frank, the Cowardly Lion from *The Wizard of Oz*, Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, and Eunice Kennedy Shriver)
4. Invite students to share a change in thinking or an action that they will do individually or as a group, after exploring the meaning, types, and significance of courage.
5. Distribute the EKS Acts handout and/or refer students to the online version (found at <http://www.specialolympics.org/eks-day-overview.aspx>) Review and discuss the EKS Acts, either as a class or with students in groups 2-4. You may also consider reviewing the Acts with each of your students individually.
6. After discussing the EKS Acts with your students, help them to choose at least one Act that they can lead or get involved with in their communities. Reinforce the idea that their courage and dedication can change a person's life!
7. Close this segment by encouraging students to: (a) share what they learned with others, (b) take time to learn more about the EKS legacy and (c) follow through on their personal pledges to take action in small or big ways. Encourage your students to share their stories and the ways that they made a difference in their communities at <http://www.specialolympics.org/community/index.html>.

“Great acts are made up of small deeds.”

— Lao Tzu (philosopher)



Eunice Kennedy Shriver meeting Mother Teresa. Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Mother Teresa shared a similar vision and passion to change the world.

# COURAGE

## V. Extensions (optional)

Below is a menu of optional activities within this lesson on courage. These are activities you can undertake to tie this value to other EKS Day values, as well as to extend your classes value-based learning activities over a longer timeframe.

- Assign students reading and research to learn more about Eunice Kennedy Shriver's life, legacy, and values as it pertained to her ability to bring about true change in the world through the Special Olympics. The website <http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org> offers multimedia resources to assist with the research. Once students complete the assignment, allow time for them to report what they learned about her and to update the class on how they fulfilled their personal pledges and EKS Acts.
- Narrow the focus of your class to one or a few specific aspects of courage and probe deeper. For example, select one type of courage such as personal courage to explore further. The individual lists generated in the Core Activity can be used to steer your focus for the overall class, or each student can select an example of personal courage of his or her own choosing to delve into and report on.
- Invite students to select one of the quotes on courage highlighted in this EKS Lesson Plan and to use the quote and/or the person(s) to whom it is attributed as a basis for a personal essay or project about courage. Building on a selected quote as inspiration, individual students research and profile a famous world figure, a community of people, and/or a historical period. You can also require additional learning activities as well as community service related to the selection.



Eunice Kennedy Shriver giving swimming lessons at Camp Shriver in her backyard, 1963. Eunice Kennedy Shriver started her life's work in her own backyard by hosting Camp Shriver, a summer sports camp for people with intellectual disabilities.

- Help your class to explore how courage interacts and overlaps with another of Eunice Kennedy Shriver's core values (e.g., faith, hope). Use some of the approaches outlined in this Lesson Plan (e.g. Mining Meaning) to introduce students to other EKS values. You also can link correlate this lesson directly to the EKS Lesson Plan on social justice by delivering lessons back to back.

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear."

— Nelson Mandela  
(anti-apartheid activist and former South African president)

# HANDOUT:

## EUNICE KENNEDY SHRIVER ACTS (EKS ACTS)

Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day is intended to share her story and impact and inspire new fans to join the movement and to commit acts of inclusion and acceptance for and with people with intellectual disability with a goal of reaching 100,000 Eunice Kennedy Shriver Acts.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver Acts (EKS Acts) are actions or activities of inclusion or acceptance for and with persons with intellectual disabilities. Individuals, schools, and businesses can commit to EKS Acts and will be able to go online ([www.eksd.org](http://www.eksd.org)) to post their commitment. Here are several individual Acts that one person or a small group of people can do to celebrate Eunice Kennedy Shriver's values and mission, and experience the joy and increased understanding that comes from interacting with people with intellectual disabilities.

### Eunice Kennedy Shriver Acts for Students and Schools/Universities:

- + Become a Special Olympics Unified Sports partner or sign up to be a Best Buddy.
- + Collect and donate fun supplies and games to special education classrooms or learning centers.
- + Run a Public Service Announcement (PSA) in morning news or announcements at school or editorial in student newspaper about the EKS vision.
- + Set up an EKS awareness table on your school campus in library, hallway, lunchroom, media center, or student union.
- + Take one or more people with an intellectual disability with you to a sports event.
- + Invite a classmate with an intellectual disability to sit with you at lunch.
- + Ask someone with an intellectual disability to play tennis, kick a soccer ball, shoot basketballs, or play another one-on-one game.
- + Fight prejudice in your school by launching a campaign against use of the "R-word."  
([www.r-word.org](http://www.r-word.org))

- + Change your Facebook profile to a photo of Eunice Kennedy Shriver and share one of her iconic quotes as your status.
- + Tweet about the EKS legacy and impact.

### Eunice Kennedy Shriver Acts for Businesses or Associations:

- + In the week leading up to EKS Day, dedicate one day as "bring a Best Buddies chapter or Special Olympics team to work day" when participants can visit corporate offices and shadow employees.
- + Give employees one day off that week to volunteer for Special Olympics or their favorite nonprofit organization or NGO related to the disability field.
- + Volunteer at a special education classroom or learning center and donate supplies.
- + Add a PSA or video related to EKS or disability to your website.
- + "EKS Day at the Office" – Arrange an hour, afternoon, or day of onsite activities involving people with intellectual disability.
- + Place a story or article in the company newsletter about the EKS legacy and impact.



During the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Ireland, Eunice Kennedy Shriver enjoys her favorite sport of sailing with an athlete.