

# Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day

## Lesson Plan **LOVE**



For ages 8 - 13



# 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.



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

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.

Though the spotlight will shine particularly bright on one day, the values and the activities that drive EKS Day must continue throughout the year. We must carry on Eunice Kennedy Shriver's commitment to improve and transform the lives of the 200 million people worldwide with intellectual disabilities that still live with diminished opportunities and social disrespect and who are often neglected and hidden away.

*“Where there is love,  
there is life.”  
— Mahatma Gandhi  
(human rights leader)*

# 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.

“Certain things catch your eye, but pursue only those that capture your heart.”  
— American Indian saying



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., Eunice Kennedy Shriver 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 love. Help them to see how their individual acts of love 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.

# LOVE

*"In Special Olympics, we know that love and caring are the only forces fully capable to overcome division, fear and sadness. And we know that if we follow the power of love we can change the world."*

— Eunice Kennedy Shriver

**Love** is an EKS Day value because Eunice Kennedy Shriver deeply loved her sister Rosemary and she loved sport. Her combined love of the two led to the formation of Special Olympics, an act that embodies yet another kind of love — "love of humanity" as shown through community service.



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

## Age Group: 8 – 13 year-olds

### Lesson Objectives:

- + To broaden understanding of the term and value love, particularly love of humanity, unconditional love and devotion to a cause
- + To provide concrete examples of acts of love and people who modeled love for humanity and important causes
- + 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:** Two 50-minute class periods  
Note: *These time allowances are only suggestions. Please use your discretion in allocating the actual times, 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:

- EKS video "Eunice's sister Rosemary," which is accessible online at <http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/videos/video/16>
- Old newspapers, magazines, colored paper
- Multiple pairs of scissors (one for each participant or a pair shared by every 2 – 4 participants)
- Assorted crayons and/or colored markers
- Sheets of plain paper or poster board (one for each participant)
- Non-toxic glue, glue sticks, and/or double-sided tape
- EKS Acts Handout

*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)

# LOVE

## 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)

“Everyone has inside of him a piece of good news. The good news is that you don't know how great you can be! How much you can love! What you can accomplish! And what your potential is!”

— Anne Frank (young writer)

# LOVE

## 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.



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.

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

Overview: Students explore the meaning and message of a quote or passage that illuminates the value (love). The teacher guides discussion by posing questions to that help students uncover the message.

### Procedure:

1. Before students begin the lesson, write on the blackboard or another prominent place the following quote:

**"The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched — they must be felt with the heart."** – Helen Keller

2. Begin the lesson by having a student read the quote aloud and invite to students to share their thoughts about the statement.

3. After the responses of a few students, pose the question: What does the speaker mean by "felt by the heart"? Solicit responses and discuss.
4. Next, pose the question: Why does the speaker mention "the heart"? What does that mean? What does the heart represent? Again, solicit responses and discuss.
5. Finally, ask your students to name some "beautiful things" that "cannot be seen or even touched."
6. Wrap up this activity by informing your students that the quote is from Helen Keller and that it describes an aspect of the value "love." Inquire whether students have ever heard of Helen Keller or are familiar with her life story. If no one knows of Helen Keller, inform the class that she is a famous educator who was blind and deaf and became an advocate for people with disabilities.
7. Engage students further about how love is represented in the quote. Ask your students if they think this quote applies only to a blind or deaf person or if they think that quote holds true for people with sight and hearing. Encourage students to explain their responses.

**"Fear less, hope more, eat less, chew more, whine less, breathe more, talk less, say more, love more, and all good things will be yours."**

— Swedish proverb

# LOVE

## II. Mining Meaning

Rationale: This segment of the lesson is designed to further establish what the value is and what it means. The aim is to allow students to explore the meaning of “love” as in the “love of humankind,” as well as to 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 of “love,” intentionally expanding students’ thinking from romantic love to concepts of love of humanity, unconditional love and devotion to a worthy cause. (10 – 15 minutes)

Procedure:

1. Call on a few students, one by one, to share what “love” means to them.
2. Write on the board or another prominent place a commonly accepted definition of love.
3. Explore synonyms and parallel concepts of “love” such as *affection, caring, kindness, and enthusiasm*.
4. Continue to explore the term’s meaning with your students, until you are confident that they have a firm grasp of multiple meanings beyond romantic love.
5. Segue from the discussion of the value’s meaning to introducing students to Eunice Kennedy Shriver.
  - Announce that “love” is a classroom focus in honor of EKS Day. Explain to students how Eunice Kennedy Shriver became famous as a result of how she acted on the love she felt. She deeply loved her sister Rosemary. She loved sport. She then combined both loves to establish Special Olympics, which equals another kind of love — “love of humanity” as shown through community service.

- Use the biographical summary to introduce students to Eunice and her legacy. Review her most notable accomplishments and share anecdotes and highlights from her life that young students would find interesting (e.g., one of nine children, older brother was an American president).
- Show the video entitled “Eunice’s sister Rosemary,” narrated by Eunice Kennedy Shriver’s brother, the late Senator Ted Kennedy. It provides a poignant example of how Eunice exemplified love in her life. This EKS video can be found at: <http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/videos/video/16>

**Love** (n): a value characterized by strong positive emotion, caring, kindness and concern.

*Synonyms and supporting concepts:*

- Caring
- Kindness
- Warmth
- Friendliness
- Enthusiasm
- Charity
- Love of humanity
- Unconditional love

*Antonyms and incompatible concepts / behaviors:*

- Dislike
- Uninterested
- Selfishness

# LOVE

## III. Core Activity: Clip, Paste, Love

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

Overview: Students create collages depicting an issue they care deeply about or something they love and post their creations around the room. The class conducts a “gallery crawl” to view the collection of collages. Following the gallery crawl, pairs of students engage in one-on-one conversations about the collage they each created. For the benefit of the whole class, several pairs share what they learned about and from their partner. (40 minutes)

### Procedure:

1. Ask students to select an issue that they care deeply about – in this context, what they love. Students may require prompts to guide their thinking; a few examples include: family, friendship, sports, rescuing animals, protecting nature, recycling, feeding the hungry, housing the homeless. (*Note that their individual selections should somehow represent a “cause” and in some way promote a good and beneficial thing in the world.*)
  2. Instruct each student to create a collage using cutout images, depictions, and drawings that support or speak to his or her issue.
  3. When students have completed the assignment, collect and post the collages around the room.
  4. When everyone’s collage is posted and visible to everyone, lead students in a “gallery crawl” by strolling the room and viewing each collage.
  5. When the class has completed the gallery crawl, divide students into pairs, seated side by side.
6. While paired, instruct students to take turns sharing their inspiration for their collage — that is, their thoughts, feelings, and experiences represented by the collage.
  7. Wrap up this segment by inviting all or a few of the pairs to share with the whole class highlights from their one-on-one conversation, including what new they learned about their partner and what they love.

“To a family wondering  
how to stay hopeful,  
she is a symbol of  
the ultimate gift  
that sustains us all:  
love itself.”

— Eunice Kennedy Shriver  
on her sister Rosemary



Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Sargent Shriver, and their children, Bobby, Maria, Tim, Mark and Anthony on her 85th Birthday. Born into a family that has come to symbolize public service and sacrifice, Eunice Kennedy Shriver and her husband, Sargent Shriver, have instilled that commitment in their own children and grandchildren.

# 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 love can be embodied.

Overview: Following the Core Activity, explore how love is an important value for humankind and how it translates into friendship, generosity, charity, and mutual respect for people, animals, and other cultures. (10 - 15 minutes)

Procedure:

1. Guide students in further discussion of love, as it relates to the real world and their lives.
2. Lead students in naming people — global luminaries, fictional characters, national figures, and everyday citizens — who show love for their neighbor and/or humanity. (e.g., Mother Teresa and Eunice Kennedy Shriver)
3. Encourage students to share a change in thinking or an action that they will do individually or as a group, after learning new meanings of love and its significance.
4. 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.
5. 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 love and dedication can change a person's life!
6. 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>.

“Every time you smile at someone, it is love in action, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing.”  
— Mother Teresa (humanitarian)



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 love. These are activities you can undertake to tie this value to other EKS Day values as well as extend your classes value-based learning activities over a longer timeframe.

- Assign students reading and research to learn more about Eunice Kennedy Shriver's legacy and values, particularly as it pertained to her love for her sister, her love of competitive sport, and her love of humanity. Play the online EKS tribute video (found at <http://www.eunicekennedyshriver.org/videos/video/6>), which highlights these examples of her love with a fast-paced overview of her life and pioneering accomplishments, as told by her family, a Special Olympics athlete, and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela.
- Narrow your instructional focus to one facet of love and probe deeper. For example, select community service (the love of humanity) to explore and tie directly to the EKS Acts. Teams of students or the entire class can initiate and lead their own "acts" to promote inclusion or acceptance for and with persons with intellectual disabilities. Your class might also consider partnering with a business or community group to collaborate on a community service project.

- Guide your class in exploring how love interacts and overlaps with another of Eunice Kennedy Shriver's core values (e.g., faith, courage, hope). Build on the approaches outlined in this Lesson Plan (e.g. Mining Meaning) to introduce students to the significance of these and other EKS values. Also, consider implementing the EKS Lesson Plan on social justice, which complement the love lesson.

"Kindness in word creates confidence. Kindness in thinking creates profoundness. Kindness in giving creates love."

— Lao Tzu (philosopher)

# 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 Eunice Kennedy Shriver's legacy and impact.



For more than 40 years, Eunice Kennedy Shriver has attracted the support of many athletes (such as Pele shown here), entertainers, and celebrities who act as public ambassadors for the Special Olympics movement.