

# Lead the Way: A Monthly Unified Whole School Engagement Challenge Series



# Lead the Way: A Guide to the Challenges



**Focus: The core theme**



**Goal: What you're working toward & why it matters**



**Duration: How long the challenge runs (e.g., 1 week, 1 month).**



**How to Participate: Details on ideas for each month's challenge**



**Who Can Participate: Students, staff, Unified clubs, classes, etc.**



**How to Win / Earn Points / Be Recognized**



**Share the Action: Submit your photos, stories, or social media posts.**



# September 2025

## Opening Doors for Inclusion



### A Celebration Of Inclusion Through Art: Open Your Doors For Inclusion!



Making a bold statement about the power of inclusion—one decorated door at a time. This month's campaign challenges students with and without disabilities to help us open the door of inclusion!



Each school has the freedom to interpret inclusion in their own way. Join us for National Inclusion Week - September 15th to 21st.



Unified teams/clubs/classrooms.

How it Works:



Decorate ANY door to show us what "Inclusion" looks like to you!

What would we like to see? Hallways filled with stunning, heartfelt displays—each one a testament to the creativity, passion, and commitment to inclusion.

Bonus... if you can get other classes involved for a Whole School Engagement activity!



Photo submissions accepted until September 25th from students, teachers, coaches, administrators, family members, and beyond!

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**"Open Your Doors, Open Your Hearts—Create for Inclusion!"**

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Special Olympics New Hampshire staff members will cast their votes to determine which school created the most powerful visual representation of inclusion and winners will be announced Oct 3rd!



# October 2025 Disability Awareness Month

 **Inclusive Fitness Challenge: "Move for Awareness"**

 Promote disability awareness and inclusion through adaptive and accessible fitness activities.

 **4 Weeks** - Each week focuses on a theme that raises awareness and encourages participation from all ability levels. 😊

 **Week 1: "Know Your Limits, Celebrate Your Strengths"**

Do 10 minutes of mindful stretching (seated or standing).  
Share an inspiring story or fact about a person with a disability



**Week 2: "Move Your Way"**

Track 20 minutes of movement (walking, wheeling, dancing, swimming, etc.) on 3 days this week.

Try an adaptive workout like yoga or explore inclusive activities in PE, like wheelchair basketball, goalball, or blindfolded games that build empathy and understanding.

**Week 3: "Partner Up for Inclusion"**

Do a fitness activity with someone of different abilities.  
Host or join an inclusive group walk, or virtual event with a neighboring school.

**Week 4: "Break Barriers, Build Empathy"**

Try a mobility-limited workout (e.g., blindfolded walk, chair-only workout)  
Attend or host a disability awareness talk or event.

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**"Fitness should be for everybody — when we move together, we grow stronger together."**

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 Snap it, share it, show it off! We want to see your "Moving for Awareness" moments — highlight inclusion, teamwork, and fun for a chance to be featured by SONH!



# November 2025

## Thankful Together Story Share Challenge



### Building Unity by Sharing Stories of Gratitude



Help every student and staff member feel seen, valued, and appreciated by sharing stories of gratitude and connection throughout the month of November.



Students, teachers, staff, families.....anyone!

### How it Works:



Throughout the month, your school should collect and share gratitude stories from across your community.

Students, staff, and families are invited to reflect on:

- A **person** they are thankful for in the school community
- A **moment** when someone made them feel included
- A **lesson** they are grateful to have learned this year

Each week, selected stories can be shared school-wide through:

- Morning announcements
- Social media posts
- A “Thankful Together” bulletin board or hallway display
- Short videos created by students and staff



We encourage Unified Pairs, classes, and teams to submit quotes, stories, photos and videos together, highlighting inclusion and teamwork.

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**“Everyone has a story worth sharing—and someone to be thankful for.”**

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Winners will have their submissions shared in SONH's newsletter and across our social media platforms!



# December 2025

## Walking in a Winter Wonderland



### Winter Wonderland Weekly Fitness Challenge



Stay active, strong, and mindful all month long—by building healthy habits, embracing the outdoors, and making movement part of your holiday season.



#### Week 1: Snow Much Movement

Goal: Get outside and move for 30+ minutes, 4 times this week.

Ideas: Walk, shovel, sled, skate—whatever gets you moving in the cold!

#### Week 2: Holiday Hustle

Goal: Do a 10–15 minute workout, 5 days this week.

Ideas: Try a dance break, holiday yoga, or a quick bodyweight circuit.

#### Week 3: Strength in the Season

Goal: Complete 2 strength sessions this week.

Ideas: Use resistance bands, bodyweight moves, or light weights—your pace, your space.

#### Week 4: Reflect & Reboot

Goal: Do 3 calming sessions of stretching, yoga, or mindfulness.

Ideas: Breathe deeply, stretch gently, take a gratitude walk—even in the cold!



Students, teachers, staff, families.....everyone!

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**“Move your way this winter—stronger together every day!”**

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Share your winter movement moments with SONH for a chance to be featured in next month’s newsletter—let’s celebrate every step together!



# January 2026 Winter Water Sports Challenge



One month, one plunge, one purpose!



Join the movement to support SONH all month through fun, fundraising and team spirit!



**Recruit & Rise - Get Cold for a Cause** - Launch the campaign and share the mission behind the plunge.

- Get a wave of sign-ups by holding an assembly or launch kick-off on the announcements.
- Recruit 5 friends!
- Teacher Bonus: Get a teacher to join or promote you!



**Team Takeover - Squad Up & Show Off** - Hype up the challenge and do some team building

- Plan your team costumes + name - Most Spirited Team will be recognized by SONH!
- Social Blitz - Post your link, tag 3 friends to join/donate
- Have a hype table during lunches!

**Fundraising Frenzy : The Money Meltdown** - Mid month push for support!

- Local Business Shoutouts: Ask local businesses to sponsor or share your plunge page.
- Cold Call Challenge - Text or DM 10 people in one day. Tip: Share progress: I'm \$20 from my goal - can you help?

**Final Freeze : Finish Strong** - Celebrate success and excitement!

- Final Fundraising Push - Top 3 fundraisers = swag
- Start a countdown clock with reminders and and thank yous
- Recognize your Plunge Ambassador Most energy + most signups!

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**"Inclusion isn't just something we support — it's something we plunge into."**

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Complete as many as you can — the more you do, the more chances you have to win prizes, VIP status, or just major bragging rights.



# February 2026

## American Heart Month



### Healthy Heart Month Fitness Challenge



February is American Heart Month, a great time to focus on heart health and physical fitness!



This month we present our Weekly Fitness Challenge plan tailored to promote cardiovascular wellness, build healthy habits, and keep things fun and motivating!



#### Week 1: Move More, Sit Less

Goal: Get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 days this week.

Challenge Ideas: Take 3 brisk 10-minute walks per day, set an alarm every hour to stand/stretch for 1–2 minutes or try a new activity like dancing, jump rope, or hiking.

#### Week 2: Cardio Boost Week

Goal: Get at least 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 days this week.

Challenge Ideas: Do a Zumba class, do a HIIT workout (20–30 minutes). Bonus: Record your resting heart rate before and after the week.

#### Week 3: Strengthen Your Heart

Goal: Add 2 strength training sessions this week.

Challenge Ideas: Do a bodyweight circuit (squats, push-ups, lunges, planks) 3 sets of 10. Bonus: Do 3 sessions instead of 2.

#### Week 4: Stretch, Breathe, Recover

Goal: Practice active recovery and mindfulness 3 times this week.

Challenge Ideas: Do a 20-minute yoga or stretching routine, take a mindful walk without distractions (Put away those phones. If you are walking with a friend – have a great conversation) or practice 5 minutes of deep breathing or meditation.

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**"Get your heart pumping and your smiles jumping — let's make fitness fun this February!"**

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**"Show us how you're keeping hearts healthy and habits strong!  
Share your photos or videos of this month's fitness fun — you could  
be featured in the SONH newsletter or on our social media!"**



# March 2026

## Spread the Word



Spread the Word - Inclusion Starts With Us



March 4th is Spread the Word Day.

Creating a more inclusive world starts with a single action: yours.  
Here's a one week plan to Spread the Word!



Students, teachers, staff, families.....everyone!



**Monday: Make It Visible**

ES: Kind-message hearts in hallways · Wear your brightest color

MS: Design inclusion posters · Chalk the walk

HS: Post with #SpreadTheWord · Decorate lockers with “You Belong” notes

**Tuesday: Learn It, Live It**

ES: Read a book or watch a short inclusion video

MS: Watch a video + journal · Do an empathy mini-lesson

HS: Attend/facilitate a discussion · Share podcast/TED Talk takeaways

**Wednesday: Words Matter**

ES: Color an inclusion pledge · Practice compliments

MS: Write & sign a pledge · Make a “Kindness Chain”

HS: Sign the pledge · Read poems/speeches during lunch

**Thursday: Make a Connection**

ES: Mix up recess · Buddy lunch or storytime

MS: Unified lunch or recess · Play team games with new peers

HS: Join/start a Unified Club · Attend a peer-led inclusion café

**Friday: Celebrate Inclusion**

ES: Parade of Kindness · Kindness Champion awards

MS: Spirit Day · Play inclusion trivia or scavenger hunt

HS: Hold an assembly or highlight video · Give shout-outs or certificates.

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**“Inclusion isn't just a goal—it's something we build every day, together.”**

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**Do at least 1 activity per day—or all for extra recognition!**



# April 2026

## Autism Awareness & Acceptance Month



### From Awareness to Action



This month, build understanding, celebrate neurodiversity, and promote everyday inclusion.



#### Awareness Activities



- **Wear Blue Day (April 2 – World Autism Awareness Day):** Encourage students and staff to wear blue and decorate halls with blue ribbons or handprints.
- **Morning Announcements:** Share daily facts, bust myths, and spotlight inspiring autistic individuals.
- **Video Spotlight: Amazing Things Happen (YouTube)**
- **Autism Book Display:** Create a resource table in the library or front office.

#### Student Voice & Expression

- **Student Spotlights:** Share stories, quotes, or interviews from students with autism (with permission).
- **"I Am Me" Art/Poetry Showcase:** Invite students to create work about identity and uniqueness.
- **Classroom Discussions:** Use prompts like "What is neurodiversity?" or "How can we support others' differences?"

#### Inclusive Environment

- **Sensory-Friendly Day:** Dim lights, lower noise, and explain sensory sensitivities.
- **Inclusive Pledge Wall:** Students write pledges to support inclusion on sticky notes or handprints.
- **Peer Buddy Challenge:** Encourage students to connect with new peers or participate in Unified activities.

#### Community & Celebration

- **Spirit Week Ideas:** Monday: Light It Up Blue, Tuesday: Mismatch Day (Different Abilities, Same Hearts), Wednesday: Pajama Day (Sensory Safe), Thursday: Random Acts of Kindness Day, Friday: Be You Day (Favorite outfit or color)
- **Unified Games or Inclusive Recess:** Celebrate inclusion through play.
- **Class Reflection:** Create a poster, collage, or video about what was learned and how to stay inclusive year-round.

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**"Different minds make the world brighter. Inclusion means everyone belongs."**

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Email your highlights this month to show off what acceptance looks like in your school

