



Stand4Change Day 2026

Dear Educators, Administrators, Counselors, and Parents,

Thank you for bringing Defeat the Label's **Stand4Change** into your schools for this year's Stand4Change! Each year, this event empowers and celebrates young people around the world who are taking a stand against bullying, social labeling, and unkind behaviors in their schools and communities. **Stand4Change** raises critical awareness about these issues by driving attention, resources, and support to the communities that need it most, which has always been at the core of Defeat the Label's mission.

We are excited and inspired by the more than **6 million students, representing over 40 countries** globally, who are participating this year. We also extend a special welcome to the many homeschoolers and virtual learners joining us—knowing that learning looks different for everyone, we appreciate how inclusive this movement has become.

In 2024, we made an important change by moving **Stand4Change** from May to October. This adjustment was made for several reasons:

- **To allow schools to address bullying early in the academic year**, giving educators and students the chance to build a culture of kindness and respect from the start and make meaningful plans to tackle these issues throughout the year.
- **To honor PACER's National Bullying Prevention Day**, supporting a united front in the fight against bullying on a global scale.
- **To align Stand4Change with National Bullying Prevention Month**, ensuring that the conversation about bullying and inclusivity happens during

this critical time of awareness and action.

We are incredibly thankful for your commitment to this cause. The stories we hear from students, families, and educators about the impact you make in your schools are truly inspiring, and we are proud to stand alongside you.

Attached, you'll find the **Stand4Change** toolkit for 2026. As in previous years, we've included classroom activities that can help guide your discussions and bring students together in solidarity.

If you're receiving this toolkit from a colleague or friend, we kindly ask that you register at www.stand4change.org to ensure you receive all of our updates and resources throughout the school year.

Finally, we encourage you to visit www.defeatthelabel.org and share your experiences with us. Let us know how **Stand4Change** went in your school, and feel free to send feedback, ideas, or photos. We'd love to hear from you!

We are thrilled to have you join us for **Stand4Change 2026** and sincerely thank you for your continued support in standing against bullying and fostering inclusive, supportive communities.

Warm regards,
The Defeat the Label Team

Defeat the Label's Stand4Change 2026 Activities

Information about Defeat the Label

Defeat the Label's mission is to empower young people to take a stand against bullying in their schools and communities by promoting an inclusive and judgment-free society. **Defeat the Label** works with artists, athletes and celebrities to educate young people, parents and educators, and to provide resources and tools to help students take a stand against social labeling and bullying.

Defeat the Label considers all students that are willing to take a stand, **Upstanders**. **Upstanders** are able to recognize when a situation isn't right, and they take the power into their own hands to be agents for change and to make a difference.

Some statistics about Bullying:

- Over 37% of adolescents and teens report having been the targets or

victims of cyber bullying, via their cell phones and/or social media. (as reported by *The U.S. Department of Justice*)

- 41% of students who reported being bullied at school indicated that they think the bullying would happen again. ([*National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019*](#))
- The reasons for being bullied reported most often by students include physical appearance, race/ethnicity, gender, disability, religion, and sexual orientation. ([*National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019*](#))
- Students who experience bullying are at increased risk for depression, anxiety, sleep difficulties, lower academic achievement, and dropping out of school. ([*Centers for Disease Control, 2019*](#))
- 1 in 7 students is either a bully or a victim of bullying. (www.education.com)
- According to students in the United States, 42% of young people report having been bullied or harassed on Instagram, more than any other social media platform. (www.Dosomething.org)
- Approximately 45% of students admit to having participated in bullying behavior. (*NEA Today*)
- Only 30% of students, who report having experienced bullying, notified an adult in their lives about the bullying. (www.stopbullying.gov)

About this Toolkit

Stand4Change 2026 focuses on empowering students to take a visible stand against bullying, while also promoting kindness, empathy, and inclusion. This toolkit provides educators with structured activities, lesson plans, and resources to make **Stand4Change** meaningful and engaging. Each section is designed to be flexible, allowing schools to adapt the materials to their unique needs.

This toolkit equips schools with practical resources, engaging activities, and actionable strategies to make **Stand4Change** impactful for students, educators, faculty, and families. Together, we are taking important steps toward a future where every student feels connected, supported, and safe.

Additionally, we recognize the critical connection between bullying and mental health, which is why our programming also integrates **UMatter mental health resources**. Students are encouraged to support one another, break down barriers of isolation, and prioritize emotional well-being as much as physical safety. Together, we are fostering a culture of kindness, inclusion, and respect for all students.

For questions about this toolkit or support with implementation, please reach out at info@defeatthelabel.org.

Suggested Additional Activities for Stand4Change 2026

Stand4Change Wall of Action

Create a bulletin board or banner where students and staff sign their names or add sticky notes pledging to stand up against bullying.

Positive Affirmation Day

Distribute small cards with anti-bullying messages or “Upstander shout-outs” for students and staff to share with one another.

Classroom Conversations

Use prompts to discuss the impacts of bullying, the importance of upstanders, and how bullying can affect mental health.

Decorate for Stand4Change

Fill hallways with posters, banners, and student artwork promoting respect, inclusion, and kindness.

Wellness & Resilience Breaks (UMatter Callout)

Host mindfulness sessions, short breathing exercises, or “reset corners” to remind students that mental health matters.

Speaker Series

Invite community leaders, survivors, or mental health professionals to share their perspectives on bullying prevention and resilience.

Gratitude & Kindness Wall

Encourage students to write positive notes to peers, staff, and community members.

Toolkit Resources

- **Sample Social Media Posts** – ready-to-use language to build awareness and encourage participation.
 - **Lesson Plans and Discussion Guides** – classroom-ready activities focused on bullying prevention, kindness, and resilience.
 - **Customizable Parent Letter Template** – a letter to inform families about **Stand4Change** and encourage support.
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Sample Social Media Posts for Awareness

- *“Kindness is power! Join us for #Stand4Change2026 on October 14 as we take a united stand against bullying.”*
 - *“Bullying impacts mental health. This #Stand4Change, we’re building schools where kindness, empathy, and inclusion thrive. #UMatter #DefeatTheLabel”*
 - *“Stand up, speak out, and support your peers. Be an Upstander this #Stand4Change2026 and every day. #NoMoreBullying”*
 - *“Every student matters. What will you do today to show someone they belong? #Stand4Change #Upstander”*
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Customizable Parent Letter Template

[School Letterhead]

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are excited to announce that [School Name] will be participating in **Stand4Change 2026**, a nationwide initiative by **Defeat the Label** to promote kindness, inclusion, and bullying prevention. This campaign will include engaging activities, classroom lessons, and a special **Stand4Change** Day event on **Wednesday, October 14, 2026**.

Highlights of **Stand4Change** at our school include:

- Daily activities encouraging kindness and upstander behavior.
- Classroom discussions on bullying prevention and mental health.
- Opportunities for students to take the **Upstander Pledge**.
- School-wide actions to promote inclusion and respect.

We invite you to join us in making **Stand4Change** a success by encouraging your child to participate and by discussing the importance of these topics at home. Together, we can build a school culture where every student feels safe and valued.

If you have any questions or would like to get involved, please contact [School Contact Information].

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]

ACTIVITY: Upstander Bingo

Grade Level: All Grades (customizable)

Objective: To reinforce everyday Upstander actions and celebrate small, meaningful choices that build inclusive communities.

Materials Needed:

- Printable Bingo cards (provided)
- Markers, pens, or stickers

Instructions (5 minutes)

Explain Upstander Bingo as a way to encourage kindness and anti-bullying actions.

Review examples from the card (e.g., 'Gave a compliment,' 'Invited someone to join').

How to Play (10 minutes)

Distribute cards to students.

Decide timeframe: day, week, or longer.

Students complete actions to mark off squares.

Optional: reflection writing or discussion after completing a row.

Celebration & Wrap-Up (15 minutes)

Celebrate students who complete a row, column, or full card (certificates, shoutouts, prizes).

Discussion prompts:

- Which actions were easiest?
- Which were most meaningful?
- How can we keep doing them?
- Which square was the easiest?
- The hardest?
- Did this change the way you looked at how people treat each other?
- What action would you add to next year's Bingo board?

Sample Upstander Bingo Card

Name: _____

Date: _____

Picked up trash that wasn't mine to keep our school clean.	Took time to talk to someone who seemed upset	Wrote a kind note	Encouraged your friends to include someone new.	Reported or blocked inappropriate online behavior.
Helped someone pick up dropped items	Choose not to respond to negative comments in a group chat.	Held the door open for someone	Included someone sitting alone to sit with you.	Helped someone with schoolwork
Stood up for a classmate	Talked to a safe adult about bullying issues	Free Space	Celebrated someone's success	Said hello to three people I don't usually talk to.
Signed the Stand4Change Pledge	Asked a friend how they were really feeling.	Asked someone new how their day was going.	Changed the subject when a conversation was unkind.	Gave a compliment
Encouraged someone else to talk to an adult when they needed support.	Shared my supplies with someone who needed them.	Left positive post it notes in a bathroom or common area	Helped someone feel included	Thanked a teacher, bus driver, or staff member.

B I N G O

ACTIVITY: Ripple Effect Posters

Grade Level: Middle School / High School

Objective: Students will demonstrate how one act of kindness can spark broader change and reflect on the ripple effects of positive actions.

Materials:

Poster paper

Markers, colored pencils

Tape for displaying

Optional: Ripple Poster Template (printable circles layout)

Introduction (5 minutes)

Explain the concept of the ripple effect: how one small act of kindness can create a chain reaction of positive outcomes.

Share a quick story or example of kindness that spread to others.

Poster Creation (20–25 minutes)

Provide each student or group with a blank poster or ripple template.

In the center, have them write one kind act (e.g., 'Invited someone to sit with me at lunch').

Create ripple circles outward. In each ripple, students write a possible outcome (e.g., 'They felt welcomed,' 'They invited someone else,' 'School feels more inclusive').

Gallery Walk & Display (10 minutes)

Post the ripple posters around the classroom, hallway, or shared space.

Allow students to walk around, view each other's posters, and notice common themes.

Discussion & Reflection (10 minutes)

Facilitate a group discussion using these prompts:

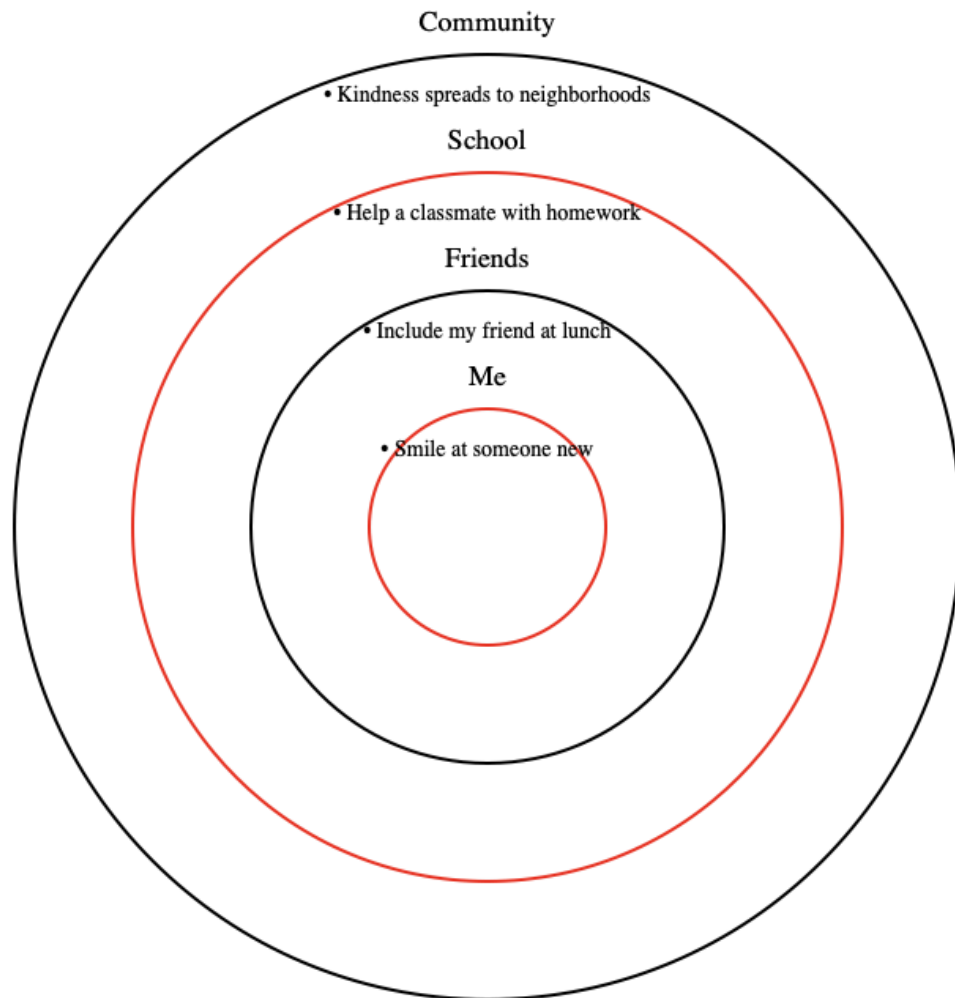
What inspired the act you chose?

Have you ever seen a ripple effect in your own life?

How does one small action lead to bigger change?

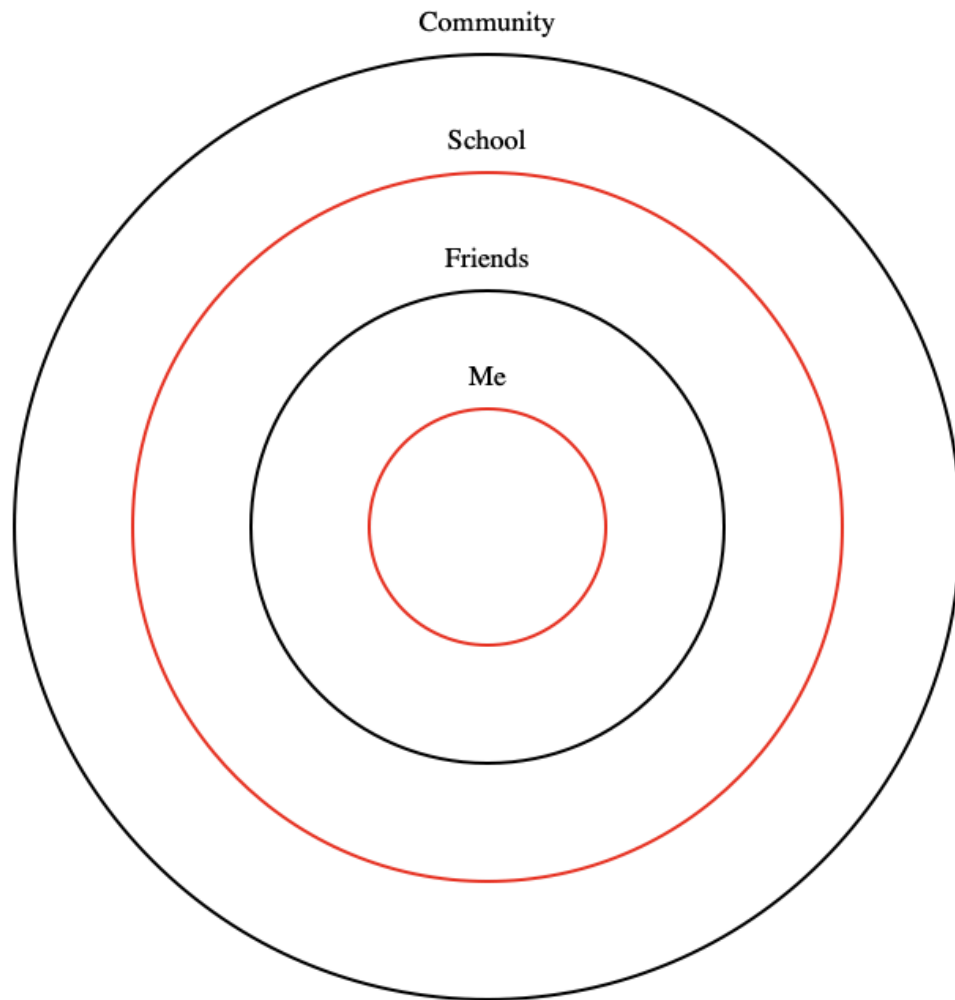
Ripple Effect of Kindness

Defeat the Label | Stand4Change



Ripple Effect of Kindness

Defeat the Label | Stand4Change



Activity: Kindness Graffiti Wall

Grade Level: All Grades

Objective: Students will contribute to a collective space that publicly celebrates kindness and peer support.

Materials:

Large sheet of butcher paper

Bright markers

Optional: sticky notes

Setup (5 minutes)

Title your wall: 'Kindness Graffiti,' 'Words that Matter,' or 'Say Something Nice.'

Post paper in a hallway, lunchroom, or classroom.

Participation (15–25 minutes)

Students add anonymous notes of kindness or shoutouts.

Markers and sticky notes available for easy participation.

Sharing & Wrap-Up (5–10 minutes)

Read highlights aloud during announcements or advisory.

Discussion prompts: How did it feel to see your name?

What kinds of praise do we need more often?

How does public kindness shape school culture?

Activity: Labels vs. True Identity

Grade Level: Middle School / High School

Objective: Students will reflect on the impact of labels, recognize the harm caused by stereotypes, and celebrate their authentic identities.

Materials:

Index cards or half-sheets of paper (one per student)

Markers or pens

Wall space, bulletin board, or windows with tape/pins

Icebreaker (5 minutes)

Ask: 'What are some labels you've heard people use to describe others?'

Write examples on the board (e.g., 'quiet,' 'class clown,' 'nerd').

Transition: 'Labels don't tell the full story of who we are. Today we're going to explore who we really are beyond labels.'

Step One – The Label (10 minutes)

Give each student an index card.

On one side, students write a label they've been given (e.g., 'weird,' 'lazy').

Step Two – True Identity (10 minutes)

On the other side, students write words that reflect their true identity (e.g., 'loyal friend,' 'artist,' 'good listener').

Step Three – Posting the Cards (5–10 minutes)

Post cards label-side out on a wall or board.

Silent gallery walk to view the labels.

Step Four – The Reveal & Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

Flip the cards to reveal true identities.

Discussion prompts:

How did it feel to see only labels?

How did it feel when the truths were revealed?

What does this teach us about how we treat others?

ACTIVITY: Scenario Circle

Grade Level: Middle School / High School

Objective: Students will practice safe, effective Upstander responses to real-life social challenges.

Materials:

Pre-written scenario cards

Chairs in a circle

Setup (5 minutes)

Arrange chairs in a circle.

Give each group a scenario card.

Scenario Sharing (15 minutes)

One student reads the scenario aloud.

Go around: each student shares what they would do, then what an Upstander would do.

Role-Play (10–15 minutes)

Select scenarios to act out.

Encourage use of Upstander language.

Discussion & Wrap-Up (10 minutes)

Prompts: Which responses were hardest?

What makes it easier to step in?

How can we help others feel safe speaking up?

Middle & High School Scenarios

In the Cafeteria: A student is excluded from a table every day	On Social Media: A group chat shares embarrassing pictures of a peer	During Group Work: A student's ideas keep getting ignored	In the Locker Room: A teammate is mocked for how they look	At Practice/Rehearsal: Someone is left out of a partner activity
In Class: A student is called a cruel name	Group Chat: Classmates are gossiping about someone who isn't there	On the Bus: An older student teases a younger one	Online Gaming: A player is targeted with mean messages in the chat	School Event: A student is excluded from a spirit day or pep rally

Elementary Scenarios

At Recess: A student is sitting alone on the swings	In the Hallway: You see someone's books fall and other kids laugh	In Class: A classmate gets teased for their clothes	At Lunch: A new student doesn't know where to sit	On the Bus: Kids start chanting a mean nickname at someone
Online: Someone posts a mean comment about a classmate	Group Project: One student is left out of decisions	Playground Game: Kids won't let someone join their game	Art Class: A student's drawing is laughed at	Library: You hear whispered rumors about a classmate

Stand4Change 2026 Wrap-Up

Grade Level: All Grades

Objective: Students will reflect on their participation in **Stand4Change**, commit to future Upstander actions, and leave with a lasting message that bullying prevention and kindness extend beyond a single day.

Materials:

- Optional: Sticky notes, large paper/banner, or whiteboard space
 - Optional: School intercom/announcement system for a collective closing moment
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Activities:

Option 1 – The Stand4Change Pledge (5 minutes)

- Invite students to stand and say together:
“I stand against bullying. I stand for kindness. I stand with my peers. I will be an Upstander.”
 - Schools can create a banner or wall for students to sign as a permanent reminder.
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Option 2 – One Word Reflection (10 minutes)

- Ask each student to write **one word** that captures what they’re taking away from today (e.g., “courage,” “respect,” “inclusion”).
 - Collect words on sticky notes, in a digital form, or as a quick share-out.
 - Display them in a visible school space.
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Option 3 – Ripple of Commitment (10 minutes)

- Each student writes down **one Upstander action** they will commit to doing.
 - Place notes on a wall in a circle or ripple pattern to symbolize how small actions spread change.
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Option 4 – The Empty Chair (5 minutes)

- Place one empty chair in the classroom. Teacher says:
*“This chair represents anyone who has ever felt left out, alone, or bullied.
Stand4Change means no chair stays empty—because everyone belongs here.”*
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Final Reflection Prompts (Optional, 5 minutes)

- *What’s one thing you learned today that surprised you?*
 - *How can our class keep the **Stand4Change** spirit alive tomorrow?*
 - *If you see bullying or exclusion, what’s one way you can step in safely?*
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Points to Ponder

- **Stand4Change** is not just a day; it’s a commitment we make every day.
- Small actions—kind words, inclusion, speaking up—have a lasting impact.
- Bullying affects mental health, but kindness and connection can heal and prevent harm.
- Each student has the power to make someone feel seen, safe, and valued.

Closing Letter from Defeat the Label

Dear Students, Educators, and Families,

Today, you stood together. Whether your school tried one activity or filled the day with many, you were part of something bigger — a movement where students, educators, and communities across the country said clearly: **we will not accept bullying.**

Stand4Change is more than a single day. It's a reminder that every moment counts: the word of encouragement, the choice to include, the courage to speak up. These actions ripple outward, building safer, kinder schools for everyone.

Thank you for showing up, for participating in your own way, and for committing to make a difference. Every signature, every sticky note, every conversation matters — because it tells someone else, *"You are not alone. You matter."*

On behalf of our entire team, thank you for standing with us. Together, we are Defeating the Label.

With gratitude,

The Defeat the Label Team

www.defeatthelabel.org