



# IMAGINE

A SCHOOL WHERE EVERY CHILD FEELS SAFE, LOVED,  
AND CELEBRATED. WHERE BULLYING, VIOLENCE, AND OTHER FORMS  
OF OPPRESSION ARE THINGS OF THE PAST. THIS IS THE WORK OF

# CHALLENGE DAY

The Challenge Day mission is to provide youth and their communities with experiential programs that demonstrate the possibility of love and connection through the celebration of diversity, truth, and full expression.



# VISION

Our vision is that every child lives in a world where they feel safe, loved, and celebrated.

# OUR WORK

For millions of young people, bullying, violence, and other forms of oppression are a part of a typical school day. Many students are afraid to walk down the halls for fear of being teased or humiliated. Others feel so alone and frightened that they cannot even pay attention in their classes.



Challenge Day is a day-long interactive workshop where teens, teachers, and community members experience for themselves that compassion and connection are indeed possible in our schools.

Through thought-provoking games, activities, and discussions, Challenge Day provides participants with tools to break down the walls of separation and isolation and build new levels of respect and communication. Trained Challenge Day Leaders expertly create a program environment of safety, trust, and full expression.

Students and adults leave Challenge Day inspired and empowered to become leaders in their schools and communities and to Be the Change they wish to see in the world.

## **THE CHALLENGE DAY PROGRAM:**

- Reduces teasing, stereotyping, social oppression, and bullying
- Teaches tools for peaceful conflict resolution
- Enhances skills for healthy emotional expression
- Increases students' self-esteem, sense of purpose, and integrity
- Builds empathy and community on campus

In studies conducted after Challenge Day, students report that they:

- Are more accepting of fellow students
- See students tease each other less
- Feel less lonely at school
- Ask others for feedback more readily
- Are comfortable being leaders

“For the first time in high school, I felt like I mattered. I felt like people cared about me and that was the best feeling in the world.”

– JOHN, STUDENT



# INSPIRE

# OUR HISTORY



Motivated by a vision that love and connection are possible in schools, Rich and Yvonne Dutra-St. John created the Challenge Day program in 1987.

Through their years of professional experience with teens and families, Rich and Yvonne recognized that

teasing, bullying, and other forms of social oppression are symptoms of a greater underlying problem: separation, isolation, and loneliness.

Rich and Yvonne designed the Challenge Day program to build connection and forgiveness between young people and to inspire youth to become positive forces of change in their schools and communities.

Challenge Day was formed as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in 2001. Today, our programs have reached hundreds of thousands of young people across North America and around the world.

“Powerful, professional, and necessary are my three words to describe a Challenge Day for today’s high school students.”

— BOB JOHNSON, FORMER MAYOR,  
ISLAMORA, FL

“This is the best experience  
I've had in my 28 years of  
education.”

– HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



# RESPECT

“Challenge Day not only  
touches lives, it saves lives!”

– BETTY MERRILL, TEACHER

## Media Highlights

- Channel One News, “Challenge Day,” 2007
- *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, “Oprah’s High School Challenge,” 2006
- *The Bully Solution*, Gold Ribbon Award, Canadian Circle of Broadcasters, 2005
- *Teen Files: Surviving High School*, Emmy Award-winning documentary, 2000
- *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*, 1997

## The Be the Change Movement

In 2002, Challenge Day Founders Rich and Yvonne Dutra-St. John and a team of dedicated staff members worked to launch the Be the Change Movement. Borrowing the words of Mahatma Gandhi, the Be the Change Movement challenges everyone to, “be the change we wish to see in the world.”

### MISSION

To inspire people to be the change they wish to see in the world, starting with ourselves, through compassion and service using the formula for change – **NOTICE, CHOOSE, and ACT.**

- **NOTICE** what’s happening in the world around us
- **CHOOSE** how we want things to be and to find our passion and purpose for living
- **ACT** by committing to do at least one intentional positive act of change each day with the goal of contributing to the betterment of the planet and its people

Challenge Day and the Be the Change Movement have a shared vision to create a world where everyone feels safe, loved, and celebrated. We believe this vision is completely attainable if we all have the courage to learn to love and accept ourselves, look through the eyes of compassion and respect, and to live our lives in service to others.

**What if we are all the heroes we’ve been waiting for?**







# CONTACT US

In addition to our school programs, Challenge Day builds connection, community, and inspiration in **businesses, organizations, places of worship, community centers, camps, and youth centers.** Contact us to learn more!

## CHALLENGE DAY

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