



# Day of the Girl



# DAY OF THE GIRL

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most crucial aspects in the movement towards gender equality is action. How else will society change if no one is taking the steps needed for progress? There are tons of ways to get involved and take action, and the best ideas will be your ideas. But if you haven't yet had a flash of inspiration on how to get your community (or the world at large!) moving toward gender equality, we are here to help. We have a few ideas to get you started, or shall we say, acclimated to a life of social activism.

This Actions Toolkit will be your guide to taking action for the issues affecting girls that you are most passionate about. We hope that it serves you well! You have the power to make a change - seize it (and tell us all about it)!

Young, female activists are some of the most important people shaping our future. You are shaping the future. Thank you for not waiting on the world to get better, but rather making it better yourself. Never stop fighting for what you believe in!

Read up on all of the different ways you can take action and let us know how it goes! We want to be kept up to speed on all of your adventures and change-making, so we can spread the word and support.

We hope that this toolkit can serve as a vital resource to you in activist endeavors! Never stop fighting for what you believe in.

THIS TOOLKIT WAS PUT TOGETHER BY MEMBERS OF THE DAY OF THE GIRL-US ACTION TEAM.

- Make Noise on Social Media: Shraya C.
- Contact Famous People: Rosa B.
- Lobby for Legislation: Eliana S.
- Title IX at Your School: Julia F.
- Write about it: Julia F.
- Write to a Company: Kristina R.
- Start a Group: Shraya C.
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## Make Noise on Social Media

There are a ton of ways to get involved using social media; you can do everything from being a blogger to pinning and instagramming your artwork and ideas to us! If there's anything about girl's or women's rights that you feel passionate about, then rant about it in a blog or video! If there's anything that gets blood boiling and anticipation growing, it's showing people what you're passionate about and showing them how to get involved too! Tweet or post something about Day of the Girl; get your friends and community to hear what you say, the best part of this is getting everyone involved! We're looking to make this movement big, and the best way to help it catch momentum is getting these social media campaigns to be infectious.

Rant for us:

- The first thing that could use some love is our youtube channel. Is there anything that you feel strongly for? Do you see girls and young women being mistreated or trivialized in your community? Then address that problem in a video, and we'll post it on our youtube!
- If you're more of a words person, feel free to sign up as a staff writer for Day of the Girl with [joanne@dayofthegirl.org](mailto:joanne@dayofthegirl.org). You can write blogs about the issues that girls and women face everyday.
- If you really want to blog or vlog about something, but can't think of a worthy topic, check out some of the issue briefs. There are a wide range of topics, everything from negative images of females in the media to female mutilation and concern about human rights for women.

If blogging or vlogging aren't really your cup of tea, never fear! There are plenty of other social media outlets around, some very popular ones are: Facebook and Twitter. If there's one way to get a movement to be contagious, it's twitter and facebook campaigns; it's also the best way to get more people involved. There are plenty of great examples to use for campaigns too, and if one doesn't immediately come to mind, check out the news, listen to a radio, or read a magazine, you'll definitely catch ideas from them.

- You've probably noticed a lot of magazines including controversial pictures of women in them, get a campaign started about that! Tweet out to your followers about what you saw or heard and encourage them to give feedback and retweet what you said---the main point is to get people buzzing. Also don't forget to give your campaign a catchy name, something that will be catchy and memorable!
- One of the campaigns that Day of the Girl-US is pushing this year is #5am4Malala, a twitter campaign and support group for the possibility of Malala Yousafzai winning a Nobel Prize. So keep your eyes and ears peeled for anything that could possibly be a contagious campaign.

Express yourself artistically! Inspiration is probably the biggest factor in getting a movement to catch momentum.

- If you're artistically talented, post some of your art to the Day of the Girl instagrams, tumblrs, and pinterests! It can be anything that gave you inspiration---a poem, a book, a song on the radio, a quote in a passage somewhere---anything that can inspire change and get people buzzing. Don't feel shy about submitting artwork, poems, or original quotes to [girls@dayofthegirl.org](mailto:girls@dayofthegirl.org)!
- Even if its not posted to the Day of the Girl social media outlets, post them to your own boards and let your followers see what you believe in. Blogging and tweeting is great, but sometimes it takes a deep hearted poem, or an empowering picture to get people talking.

Let's make this movement huge on social media. For all the bloggers and vloggers, get ready to write and rant about all the issues that girls face, and get your readers and viewers buzzing. To the Instagrammers, Tumblrs, and Pinners, share your beautiful and moving work about gender issues with us, post it to your boards and move hearts. And to Facebook users and Tweepers, start coming up with those catchy campaigns that draw and hook people in. So lets get this to become viral, with these actions we can get hundreds of people involved, and get the social media community buzzing!



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## Contact the Media

Charities and nonprofits are always looking for ways to spread the word about their message and how they are making the world a better place. Getting media coverage or someone “famous” guarantees that more people will learn about your organization and potentially support you in the future. While contacting them might seem overwhelming, it can be done in a few easy steps.

- Determine what message you want to distribute. Has your organization recently had an event? Want them to promote Day of the Girl-US? Once you've determined that you can move forward.
- Write a press release or media advisory about your chosen topic. You will send this to media outlets and reporters or famous individuals to let them know about your message. Make sure to make it clear what your goal or topic and include what you want them to do.
- Determine who you would like to send your press release or media advisory to. Look through local and national papers to see which reporters have covered similar stories in the past. If you want contact a famous individual look for their representative's information so you can contact the representative first. When choosing a famous individual try to look for someone who has done similar work as what you are doing or activist to changing the world. Write down the individuals' names, outlets and contact information. (You can usually find an email address in the reporter's byline, and try to find a phone number as well). Ask the communications staffer at your organization for help; they may have contacts within newspapers that you can use. Pay special attention to neighborhood and community newspapers. They are usually very receptive to stories about local people and organizations and might be easier to contact than bigger papers. Also, make a list of local television and radio stations that you can send your press release to, especially those that regularly highlight nonprofits on air.
- Send an email to your print media contacts. Make sure the subject line has a catchy headline. Open your email with a paragraph introducing yourself and your organization. Also include a phone number and email address where the reporter can contact you. Copy and paste the press release below the introductory paragraph. Make sure that your email is professional and grammatically correct; have someone else edit it if necessary. Some media outlets will have a submissions page on their website – send your press release there too!
- If you haven't heard back in a few weeks, send a follow up email or call their office if you have their phone number. If you're sending an email, introduce yourself again in the first paragraph and then state that you are resending a press release for their consideration. Don't forget to copy and paste the press release into the body of the email! As always, be polite and professional. If you're making a phone call, the procedure is the same; introduce yourself, say that you had sent a press release to them earlier, and ask if they have any questions or would like for you to send it again.
- Help the reporters craft their story. They may ask you for photos, quotes, or more information than what you provided in the press release. Be prompt and thorough in your responses so they can write the best piece possible. Make sure if they set a deadline to turn in photos etc, you meet the deadline or they might think you are not serious about your work.



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## Lobby for Legislation

Having your elected officials championing your causes is an incredibly important step to making change in your country, and ultimately throughout the world. Policy supporting girls rights is an often neglected issue in our government, and it is our job to bring it to the forefront of discussion in Congress!

### Making it happen:

- Find your U.S. Senator or Representative. This generator from RESULTS will automatically provide you with your members of Congress.
- Call at least a month in advance to schedule a day for you to come in and speak face-to-face with their staff. Do a quick internet search on your elected official and find their contact information. Make sure to check the Congressional calendar about whether they will be in Washington or back in your district when you want to meet with them!
  - Make sure that you have all of the information you need before you call! Not just available dates and times, but also:
    - All the compelling arguments you need for your issue (refer to our issue briefs for help with that!)
    - Any information you can find on your lawmaker's history with girl-related issues
    - Approximate amount of people you will have with you - just you, you and a partner, or a whole group?
- Remember that it is very unlikely that you will meet with the actual official. You will probably be setting up a meeting with their staff person. Don't be discouraged! They play a large role in the decisions made by the officials.
- If you are feeling too many butterflies before your call, role play with someone else so you can get used to saying what you want to say out loud.

### Before the Meeting:

- Do your research - write an agenda! Write out a list of talking points, going beyond statistics. Why should they want to support this cause? How will promoting gender equality help them both in the short and long run? The answers to these questions vary based on which issue you are lobbying for, and you can consult our issue briefs or action team members if you need preparation assistance.
  - Don't forget to point out how important these things are on a local level - in their district, amongst their constituents!
  - Think of counter-arguments and rebuttals, in case you aren't met with unrelenting support (spoiler alert: you almost surely will not be met with unrelenting support)
- Create a "leave-behind" sheet. Make sure that they have material reminding them of who you are what you want them to do, just in case! You will leave this with them.
- Confirm your meeting. A week before you are supposed to go in, call and make sure that your meeting is confirmed.
- Practice! Meet with the people you are supposed to go lobbying with, or practice on your own if you will be rolling in solo, and simulate the lobbying experience. Role play as the staff people and as the lobbyists, and make sure you are prepared for any situation that might come your way.
- Assign responsibilities. Every person should be responsible for a certain talking point - it is their job to make sure that it is said during the meeting. In addition, one person should be responsible for taking notes (don't forget to write down what is discussed about the official's position on your issue are!)
- Re-inspire yourselves. Watch a movie on your issue, do an activity to reignite that flame of activist passion you want to burn so brightly during your meeting. You are young and fiery and you don't want them to forget it!



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## At the Meeting:

- Be on time. They might not be, but you better be.
- Right before, review everyone's roles again. You don't want to forget them and then lose something important during your meeting.
- Make sure your purpose is clear. State why you are there - be polite, but don't beat around the bush.
- Do your part. Don't miss any of your important points - make sure that your part is said and if the meeting seems to be wrapping up and not everything was hit, try and get in that point while you still can.
- Be respectful. They might not agree with your position. Breathe deeply and remember to treat them with the utmost respect.
- Find a way to follow up. Get the contact information of the staffer or aide you're meeting with or someone else who can keep you updated on your Congressperson's actions. Make sure your "leave-behind" stays with them!
- Take a photo. Because it's fun. Unless it feels like it's too tense to ask it's a wonderful way to remember this important visit!

For more tips on lobbying, check out all of the resources provided by RESULTS ([http://www.results.org/skills\\_center/activist\\_toolkit/](http://www.results.org/skills_center/activist_toolkit/))



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## Title IX at your School

Your school is a great place to effect change! School gives you immediate access to a group of youth and a platform to spread your message.

There are many different ways to take action at school-- here are just a few

- Did you know that because of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, your school has to provide equal funding for both girls' and boys' sports? Unfortunately, that is not the case! Talk to your Principal/Athletic Director and ask to see the budget, as well as Booster club donations. If this is not equal, inform them/others! You can do this by contacting your superintendent/Board of Education and inform them on your findings. Also inform your Title IX coordinator, whom you can find here. Title IX also applies to equipment, playing time, and coaching, so do some research on whether or not your school is following the law! For more on Title IX, check out our issue brief!
- There is no federal law stating that school districts must report their Title IX equity data. Write to your legislator to encourage them to pass the 2013 High School Data Transparency Act, which would require them to disclose sports' expenditures. More information here.
- A common misconception of Title IX is that it only applies to sports. While it has had a huge impact in sports (increasing the participation of girls in sports from 1/27 to 1/3), Title IX affects other arenas as well. Your school is **REQUIRED** to protect you from harassment and rape. Is your school not doing that? Stage a protest! Take Back the Night has awesome resources on how to plan an event against staying silent in matters of rape and abuse.
- Title IX also deals with many other arenas: discrimination against pregnant students, career education, and scholarships. Talk to your Title IX coordinator to find out more .
- Use your school's media as a platform to get the word out! Does your school have a newspaper? Write a letter to the editor about sexism you see in your school. (Read "Write About It" for more information) Post flyers around the school advertising a cool girl-powered, feminist event in your area! Go on your school's morning announcement to talk about gender-issues!



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## Write About It

If you don't make your voice heard, nobody will listen to what you have to say. And one awesome way of making your voice is already write at your fingertips. We don't mean to sound like your English teacher when we say writing is one great way to get people to listen.

Media is all around us-- every day, we see stories on the news, read statuses on our Facebook, get google updates to our email. Become a part of the media so that YOU can dictate the message you present.

The first step to writing it out is picking an issue. The amazing thing about the Day of the Girl is that there are so many issues that you can write about for Day of the Girl! To get an idea of all the different topics there are, check out our issue briefs. Pick what issue you care about, research it, and write your own opinion piece on it.

When you are writing a piece, you have to think about your audience-- do you want girls to be your audience? Or adults? Or boys? Your tone really matters, and you need to tailor it to your audience. We always like to start with a hook, something catchy or clever that will draw the reader in, and end with what actions people can take-- what good is spreading awareness about an issue if no action is taken to combat it? (Okay, there's some good, but let's not get into it now).

Now we're at the next step-- getting people to actually read your piece. What you might not realize is that there are almost INFINITE amounts of places willing to publish your writing. Submit to your school newspaper or literary magazine. Submit it to your local newspaper or your favorite online site, like RookieMag or Hello Giggles. Start your OWN blog to publish your writing. Send your writing to your favorite feminist/girl-powered blog as a supplement. Submit your blog to Day of the Girl-US (email [joanne@dayofthegirl.org](mailto:joanne@dayofthegirl.org)).

Using your writing as a way to make your voice heard and create change is SO powerful! We look forward to reading all your articles!



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## Write to a Company

Companies such as Go Daddy and American Apparel are known to use sexually suggestive images of female models in their television commercials and magazine ads. Therefore, the organization Miss Representation has started a Twitter campaign called Not Buying It to let companies like the ones mentioned above know that their advertisements are sexist and offensive.

In order to participate in the campaign pick a company that you think misrepresents women in some way and Tweet them with the hashtag #notbuyingit. If you aren't sure what companies to Tweet at check out the [NotBuyingIt](#) page to see the worst offenders.

If you don't have a Twitter account here are some other suggestions on what you can do:

- Check out the Women's Rights page on [Change.org](#) to find petitions having to do with sexist advertising and company policies.
- If you see a magazine filled with sexist and degrading images rip out the subscription card, write a complaint on it, and send it in to the magazine. See if you get a reply back. This approach works especially well in groups.
- Send a collage of sexist images to magazines and companies that misrepresent women. If you can, try to collect images to use that are from the specific magazine or company that you're campaigning against. In the case of a company, use images from their advertisements.
- Start girlcopping with your friends! Stop shopping at stores, subscribing to magazines, and buying products from companies that misrepresent girls and women. Spread the word about your girlcott on social media to let people know that you're #notbuyingit.



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## Start a Group

If your school doesn't already have one, a girls specific club or group is the best way to get awareness out there--it's also pretty fun to hang out and discuss girl-related issues with others. It's also a great way to show your community that you care; you can also end up giving tons of help to underprivileged girls in the community. Most of the time girls clubs are often service clubs, they're designed to go out there and help the community and try to achieve a certain goals; girls clubs and groups are also all about discussion and awareness, getting others to know that gender issues pertaining to females are very real and very prevalent in society.

The best part about these clubs and groups, is that they give back to the community; a lot of them will focus on specific goals for the club to achieve in a semester or year. Some of the groups focus on domestic and sexual abuse in the community or state, others focus on raising money to stop a global issue like human trafficking.

A great example of a girls club is the Junioresettes chapters in high schools. Starting a Junioresettes chapter is super easy, and it's a fun club to be apart of! Most cities and sometimes even counties have a local branch of a Women's Club, if you can't find one, go to google and search up GFWC (General Federation of Women's Clubs). GFWC is national federation and even a global federation that creates Women's Clubs. The Junioresettes are their junior chapters in high schools, and each Women's Club of a town will adopt a Junioresettes club in a local high school if they haven't done so already. Additional groups include Girls for a Change, GirlUp, Amnesty International and many others.

You don't even have to start up a specific club like the Junioresettes; if you know a lot of people in your school that are interested in issues surrounding girls and women, all you need is: permission, a club advisor, and a location and you can get the group rolling. You can even let boys join too, if you know they are serious about the topic.

Once you get the club started, identify a gender crisis involving girls in your community or in the world and try to get started on events for it. A great place to look for ideas on events would be the Day of the Girl Events toolkit ([link](#))! Its filled with fun ideas that can raise awareness and funds for the problems you want to address or for celebrations during the Day of the Girl and throughout the year.

Here are some ideas of what your club could do:

- Host a seminar about domestic abuse and how it affects the lives of girls of all ages and why doing so, you can help to raise awareness.
- Officialize your club or group as a sanctuary for girls to go to; make your group a resource for girls to go to when they need someone to talk to or someone to rally behind them.
- Get your club together to create a moving video about rape victims and sex labourers and launch it online to let people know what really happens.
- Of all the things you could do with your club at school, celebrating Day of the Girl is probably the best! It's a great way to kick start your club, and you could also host one of your own social media campaigns are out reach for more members!

Overall, create a girls club or group that helps girls and raises awareness. We promise you that they are a ton of fun, and a great way to support what you believe in!