



Grant Application Language to be used for submitting applications to fund Challenge Days

OVERVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATION

Challenge Day's mission is to provide youth and their communities with experiential workshops and programs that demonstrate the possibility of love and connection through the celebration of diversity, truth and full expression. Challenge Day's vision is that every child lives in a world where they feel safe, loved, and celebrated.

Getting its start in Northern California, Challenge Day has been serving pre-teens and teenagers in public and private schools around the world since 1987 when it was created by its founders Yvonne and Rich Dutra St. John of Martinez, California. The organization serves teenagers from every gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious background, and socioeconomic level. Its programs are presented in 47 states in the United States and six international communities including the Czech Republic, Japan, Canada, and Germany, Australia and The Netherlands.

The program has proven results which demonstrate that schools that participate in Challenge Day see **a reduction in violence, bullying, and substance abuse and an increase in school safety and emotional connections among peers.** The number of incidents of violence also decreases for schools that participate in Challenge Days and the follow-up program.

In 2011-12, Challenge Day will be serving 90,000 teens and 20,000 adults during 900 program days. In fact, since 1987, we have presented the program to more than 1 million teenagers. Based on our internal survey data, more than 50% of the students and faculty we serve are minorities including, American Indian (5%), African American (14%), Hispanic (15%), Chinese (2%), Japanese (2%), Filipino (1.5%), Korean (.5%), Pacific Islander (1.5%), other race or ethnicity (10.5%) and White (48%). We serve males (49%) and females (51%).

THE PROGRAM

Challenge Day is a one-day experiential program designed to build connection and empathy and to fulfill the vision that every child lives in a world where he or she feels safe, loved and celebrated.

Evidence-based research has shown that Challenge Day helps remove impediments to student success by developing leadership in high school students through its day-long programs, including intellectual flexibility, emotional control, self-confidence and social

competence. After our programs, the support network of teachers and administrators can expect the youth participants to:

- Increase their skills in noticing oppression and isolation
- Practice safe and effective intervention tools in the midst of conflict
- Perform acts of change in their schools and communities

During the program, Challenge Day Leaders invite youth to make at least one conscious, positive contribution (also known as an act of change) each day in their communities and schools. The acts of change youth most often did after a Challenge Day are as follows:

Helped peers and family	Resolved conflict
Connected and reached out to peers	Took care of self
Gave hugs and expressed love	

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Before the Challenge Day program occurs, students, teachers, and administrators build a “School Team” and they submit a report that answers questions about the school’s demographics (race, ethnicity, gender, for example) and cliques. The data from these reports help school teams choose which 100 teens from various “cliques” will participate in the day-long program. Since teens often feel isolated and separated from both peers and adults, the program includes 25 adult participants consisting of principals, parents, teachers, police officers, clergy, nurses, and other community members.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

At the end of every Challenge Day, the goal is that schools feel safer for teenagers and faculty and that they feel more connected and accepted by their peers and community. Several goals are accomplished at every Challenge Day, including:

- Equipping students with new communication tools, including tools for sharing emotions and feelings and empathetic listening
- Demonstrating through the activities and share time that acceptance and being yourself at school are possible
- Discussing gender roles, body image, bullying and violence and the oppression that occurs in our communities and world
- Challenging students and teachers to step into leadership roles on campus and make a positive contribution in their community and the world
- Teaching teenagers and adults about emotional intelligence and the negative effects of not sharing feelings and how that can hurt friends, family, themselves and others
- Asking teenagers to examine the costs of “acting out” behaviors (substance abuse, violence, and bullying) that have been destructive in their lives and helping them to seek support to end those behaviors
- Helping participants to remember and ask the question, “will my behavior/actions leave the other person (or myself) feeling safe, loved and celebrated?”

Table: Challenge Day Program Costs

Challenge Day provides direct services to schools throughout the nation and world. Much like hospitals whose main providers are nurses and physicians, the majority of our “services” are offered through trained Challenge Day leaders and professionals. The curriculum we use at Challenge Days is licensed intellectual property which is provided to schools during the

program. The school pays a \$3,200 fee that covers the preparation, the program day and the follow-up care and provides:

- Full school day program for 100 youth and 25 adult participants
- Pre-training program for adult leaders
- Two trained Challenge Day Leaders to facilitate the Challenge Day
- In-person consultation to deal with issues specific to the school (e.g., sensitivity around issues such as substance abuse or violence or any other issues that needs pre-programming)
- Pre-program survey and needs assessment
- Unlimited phone consultation with Challenge Day Evaluation and Client Relations staff

Breakdown of School Program Costs to Participate in one Challenge Day in 2011-12*	Associated Costs
Six-hour program for 100 youth and 25 adult participants (teachers, administrators, parents, community members)	\$2,300.00
Curricula and pre-training program for school coordinator	\$600.00
Curricula, including videos and guides for follow-up program	\$300.00
Total cost for one program day	\$3,200.00
*This includes program supplies, audio/visual systems, and two trained Challenge Day leaders for the program day	