



RUBY BRIDGES
WALK
TO SCHOOL DAY

Event Planning Guide



Safe Routes
PARTNERSHIP

Explore the Event Planning Guide



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What is Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day?



Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day honors the living legacy of civil rights activist Ruby Bridges. Every November 14th, we celebrate Ruby's courageous and historic act by encouraging students to walk to school and engaging in a day of dialogue about activism, anti-racism, and antibullying. The goal is to inspire kids to make positive changes in their school and community.

Explore the Life of Ruby Bridges

In 1960, six-year-old Ruby Bridges etched her name in history when she integrated all-white William Frantz Elementary School in New Orleans. Since then, Ruby has become a national icon for her courageous action and continues to inspire people to stand up to racism and bullying.

Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day has introduced her story to a new generation of young people and sparked meaningful conversations about transportation equity. We encourage you to learn about Ruby's story and share it with others.

// My message is really that racism has no place in the hearts and minds of our children.

- Ruby Bridges



Where is Ruby Bridges now?

Ruby Bridges, a living icon of courage and hope, continues to inspire as an author, speaker, and advocate for educational equity. Through her foundation and events like the Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day, she empowers youth, promotes inclusion, and reminds us of the enduring importance of justice. By sharing her story, she shows how one voice can create lasting change.

History of Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day

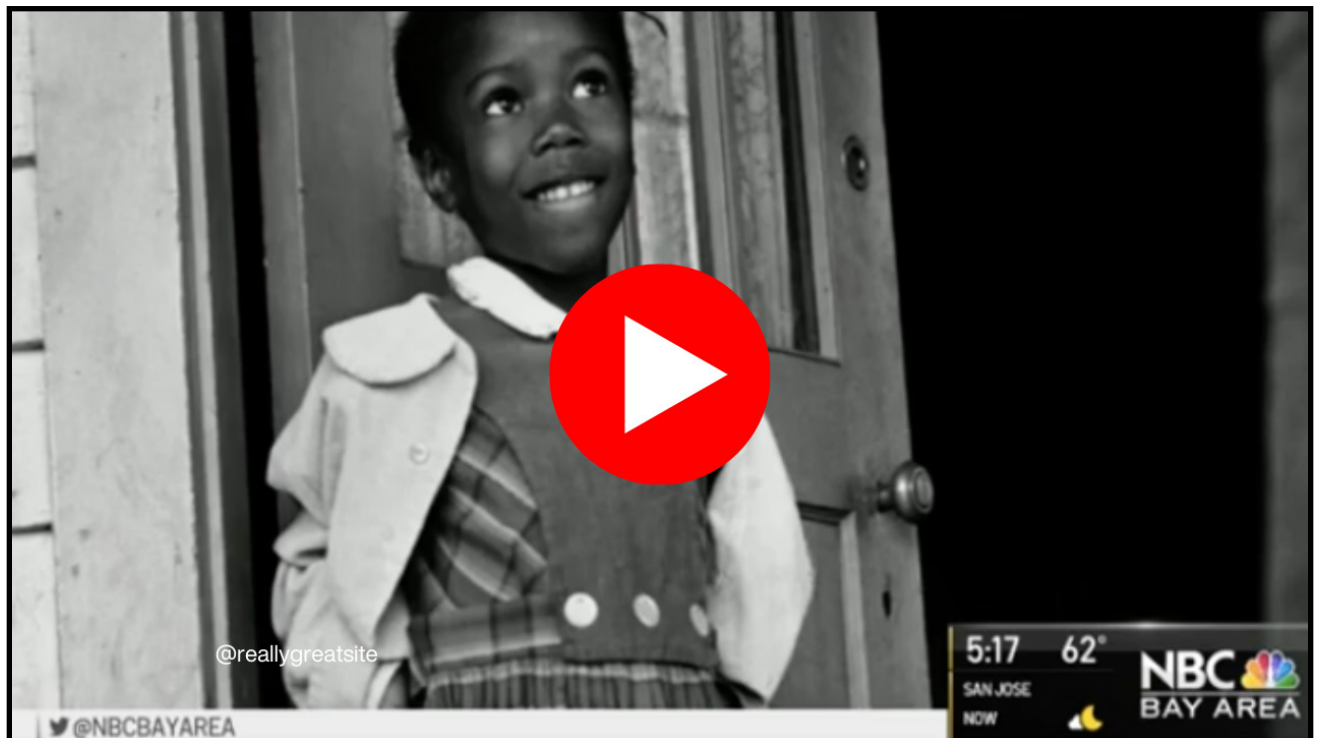
Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day began with a group of fifth grade students in South San Francisco. After learning about Ruby Bridges in school, the students wanted to create a special day to celebrate Ruby's courage. With support from the San Mateo County Safe Routes to School program, the students turned their idea into a Walk to School Day celebration. In 2021, the California State Senate passed an official resolution proclaiming November 14th as Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day.

Resource List

- [Kid-Friendly Ruby Bridges Biography – Britannica Kids Time for Kids](#)
- [The Ruby Bridges Foundation](#)
- [Book: I Am Ruby Bridges](#)
- [Book: The Story of Ruby Bridges](#)
- [San Mateo County Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day](#)

Learn more

Watch this short video from San Mateo about Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day, where students share why Ruby Bridges is more than an icon. They discuss the importance of celebrating diversity, understanding one another, and joining together to make the world a better place.



How to Plan Your Event

Define your purpose

The goal of Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day is to engage in constructive conversations about racism, bullying, and activism. These conversations will be different depending on where you are and what issues are most important to students. Before you plan your event, reflect on the purpose of Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day. Think about how the celebration can positively impact your community. Discuss your ideas with your Safe Routes team or with students.



Questions to Consider

- Why do you want to host a Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day celebration?
- What conversations do you want to have in your school/community about activism, racism, and anti-bullying?
- How can you use Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day to elevate these topics?
- Student question: What do you see that needs to be improved in your school neighborhood, or city/town?
- What is one change you would like to see in your community as a result of Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day?

How to Plan Your Event

Plan your activities

Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day weaves together history, activism, and transportation in meaningful and engaging ways. Activities can blend subjects, creative art forms, and hands-on learning, making them adaptable for different grade levels, learning styles, and school communities. This approach lets every student connect through storytelling, music, visual arts, or movement while reflecting on Ruby Bridges' courage and the importance of equity and inclusion.



Activity Ideas

- Organize a poster-making or banner-making session
- Create a [Ruby Bridges StoryWalk®](#)
- Organize a Ruby Bridges Storytime or Read Aloud – [I Am Ruby Bridges The Story of Ruby Bridges](#)
- Organize an art, photo, or essay contest
- Invite a guest speaker and presentation
- [Create a Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day song](#)
- Issue a Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day proclamation [like this example from New Jersey](#)
- Create a collaborative mural or chalk art display about courage, equality, and the power of friendship
- Launch a kindness or “good deeds” challenge among students
- Hold a student-led play, skit, or reenactment of Ruby Bridges’ story
- Make a video or digital presentation highlighting the history and impact of Ruby Bridges
- Plan a school-wide or community service project inspired by Ruby Bridges’ values
- [Check out our resource library for more ideas, templates, and more](#)

How to Plan Your Event

Activities around the country

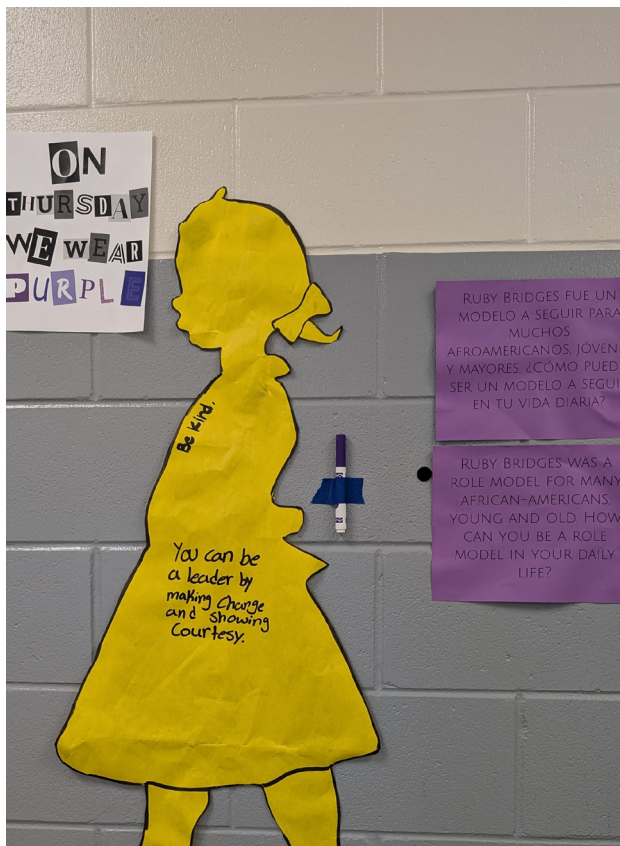
Here are just a few examples from previous Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day events. Communities across the country celebrated with StoryWalks®, book giveaways, themed dress-ups, and, of course, walking to school together. Many schools hosted art and essay contests, classroom discussions about diversity and inclusion, and student performances or skits inspired by Ruby Bridges' story. Some organized kindness challenges, collaborative murals, and musical activities, while others invited guest speakers or local leaders to join the celebration. Each event highlighted courage, community, and the joy of coming together to make a positive impact.



Students dress up like Ruby



Children walk to school



Interactive prompts and art in hallways



StoryWalks® tell the Ruby Bridges Story

How to Document Your Event

The big day is here!

Assign people to take pictures and videos, and encourage sharing on social media to highlight your celebration. This is a great time to partner with a communications person at your local government or school district to amplify your reach. You can also include interactive elements that invite students to share their thoughts, reflections, or artwork. Consider hosting a mini-interview station, a “reflection wall,” or a digital gallery where students can express what courage, inclusion, and community mean to them. [Our resource page has more ideas on capturing student’s thoughts and artwork!](#)



Collecting Media Suggestions

- Collect photos and videos in accordance with your district’s photo release protocol
- Gather quotes from students, school staff, and community members
- Create a photo gallery or highlight reel
- Record short video interviews
- Capture behind-the-scenes moments, such as preparation and set-up
- Film the walk from different perspectives (student, caregiver, teacher)
- Take group photos of classes, walking groups, or volunteers
- Document creative elements like posters, banners, costumes, or chalk art
- Ask students to write reflections or thank-you notes
- Collect and share news articles or media coverage of the event
- Invite a student photographer or videographer to help document the day
- [Share your media with us!](#)

How to Share your Event

Celebrate with the community

One of the best ways to build momentum around Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day is by sharing your celebration with the public.

Inviting local press, posting on social media, and engaging community members increases visibility and elevates student voices. Sharing photos, videos, and stories keeps the excitement going, inspires others to join, and helps highlight the positive impact your school is making in the community.



Sharing the Celebration Suggestions

- Create a primer on Ruby Bridges to share with students, families, and community members
- Download Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day social media graphics to share on district, school, or PTO social media
- Post about the event in a school newsletter
- Create posters and flyers
- Issue a press release to local media
- Encourage your local government to get involved
- Partner with a local business like a restaurant or coffee shop
- Send home a sheet to caregivers and parents to explain Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day
- Announce the event during morning announcements or at a school assembly
- Reach out to local radio or TV stations to promote the event
- Add event details to your school or district website calendar
- Invite local leaders or community members to walk with students
- [View the Safe Routes Partnership's resource library for ideas, templates, designs, and more](#)

How to Keep Up the Momentum

Year-round positive impact

Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day aims to make long-lasting, positive change. After your event, think about how to continue conversations about racism, bullying, and activism throughout the year. Incorporate these ideas into future Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day celebrations, and look for opportunities to connect them to other school or community events so the message stays alive year-round.



Next Steps Suggestions

- Share highlights with the Safe Routes to School team, local media, elected officials, and the Safe Routes Partnership
- Reflect on successes and opportunities for improvement
- Host a discussion with your Safe Routes to School committee and partners about ways to make your program more equitable
- State partners: Create a Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day toolkit for local practitioners
- Join classroom discussion about improving the school, neighborhood, or city/town – see prompts and activities [on our resource page](#)
- Plan a follow-up event or activity to continue conversations about equity, safety, and community
- Invite families and community members to share their reflections and stories from the day
- Integrate Ruby Bridges Walk to School Day themes (friendship, anti-racism, anti-bullying) into other school or community programs throughout the year
- Recognize students, staff, and volunteers who made the day successful with a small celebration or newsletter feature
- Start planning next year!

What is the Safe Routes Partnership?



The Safe Routes Partnership is a national nonprofit organization working to advance safe walking and rolling to and from schools and in everyday life, improving the health and wellbeing of people of all races, income levels, and abilities, and building healthy, thriving communities for everyone.

The Safe Routes Partnership provides helpful resources for schools, local groups, and communities to make walking and biking safer. This includes training, guides, and support to set up programs that get more kids moving safely every day. They work with city planners, school leaders, health experts, and lawmakers to make streets safer for everyone. Their work helps communities create safer streets, healthier kids, and better ways to get around.