

# GREEN APPLE DAY OF SERVICE

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## Communications Toolkit

### What is Green Apple Day of Service?

Green Apple Day of Service is a unique moment to join schools across the world to celebrate the central role that schools play in preparing the next generation of leaders in sustainability. A school's event is an opportunity to give students hands-on experience with sustainability, strengthening civic leadership, environmental literacy, and project management skills. Each school names the date of their Day of Service during the school year and registers it at [greenapple.org](http://greenapple.org)

### Transforming Our Schools

Green schools teach students about global sustainability through the curriculum, the school culture, and through the learning environment around them. Unfortunately, in the U.S., many of our school buildings are showing students the exact opposite message: 46% have maintenance problems that lead to unhealthy air quality, 50% have no written plan to handle air quality problems, at least 20% have air that is stagnant and scientifically proven to be unhealthy, and the average age of buildings is about 44 years old. With 15,600 hours of a child's life spent in a school building, we think schools should make learning, breathing, seeing, thinking, and being a kid better, not worse. Green Apple Day of Service is your chance to make a difference.

### The Power of Volunteers

Since it began in 2012, the Day of Service has inspired almost a million people in over 70 countries to act in support of sustainability at their schools. Volunteers are essential to our movement: educators, parents, grandparents, students and community members everywhere can work toward greener schools through the Day of Service.

### What Makes a Green Apple Day of Service Project Unique?

A Day of Service project is a day of action that makes measurable change on one or more of the three pillars of a green school: environmental impact, health and wellness, and environmental and sustainability literacy. It makes this impact at a school in a way that directly and positively affects the students.

### Worldwide Impact

With more than 700 million children in a school building each day - 1 in 8 people globally - there is no questioning the enormity and urgency of the task before us. The Day of Service will bring together individuals and communities to make changes in their schools, and there are plenty of ways for you to get involved with this effort. From South Africa to Canada, Korea to Brazil, every school can be better served by our commitment to days of action.

# Media Outreach

Got success stories and tangible results from your Green Apple Day of Service project? Want to publicize your planned Green Apple Day of Service event? Showcase your progress on your project by sharing results with your community, stakeholders, policy makers and more! Engaging the local media will help you reach your community and beyond.

## Pitch Perfect

Want to announce big news about your service project? Draft up both a press release and a media alert. A press release is an announcement distributed to targeted media to communicate something newsworthy. It should go out immediately after an event on the day of the announcement. A media alert, on the other hand, is a quick, at-a-glance summary of an event encompassing the 5Ws: who, what, when, where, and why. The intention of a media alert is to invite media to attend and cover the event. This should go out no more than two weeks before the event, with follow-up during the week leading up to the event and morning of event.

Take it a step further by directly calling journalists who cover education and/or the environment to “pitch” your story. Be concise - have quotes, interesting data, and links to share, and be sure to follow up with phone calls or emails that give the writer more information. In addition to local media, look for publications like your community newsletter or paper where you can make announcements and encourage your community members to join you.

## A Picture’s Worth a Thousand Words

Create a photo opportunity for the local media that shows your project in action. If you want media to attend or see your project, draft a media alert or invitation with the five “W’s” (who, what, where, when, and why) and let them know that there will be photo and interview opportunities. Be sure to send this at least two weeks in advance and again the week of the event so they have it on their calendars.

If you can’t get the media to come to you, go to them: recruit a local photographer to take pictures of your group in action that you can send post-event to make the local paper’s job easier. Post your event photos on Flickr, Facebook, Instagram and other social media outlets, and be sure to tag the schools social media accounts and those of any community leaders or well-known people who were involved in the project.

## Greenapple.org

The Center for Green Schools team will be scouting projects all year to highlight with national media. As soon as you have photos and information about your project, be sure to update your project’s profile on [greenapple.org](http://greenapple.org) so that we can share your good work! All the credit will go to you and your school, and we may even be able to attract some extra support for future projects.

## Is This a Story?

Check out these ideas on how to make news in your community:

- Tie in with today’s headline: Did your project make headway on a topic that people are talking about right now?
- Create a data-rich case study on your service project, and be sure to connect it directly to what impact it has had on the school’s students.
- Join forces with another local or national organization.
- Create an award or hold a contest: everyone loves to win, and the media love to write about winners
- Invite a local celebrity or political leader, and ask them to join in a fun, high-energy project with students at the school.

## Using Social Media

Why should you use social media? It's the best way to communicate your message, information, news, pictures or successes about the Green Apple Day of Service to your friends and networks.

### How Do I Tweet About Green Apple Day of Service?

- Every tweet should contain a link relevant to Green Apple Day of Service updates or your own project. Only use one link per tweet. The link always goes last – after text, after hashtags. And always condense links using a bit.ly account – this reduces the character count.
- Text should be punchy and direct. Get in the habit of cutting unnecessary language.
- If needed, condense text characters by using abbreviations and shorthand in order to meet the 140-character limit.
- When referencing USGBC, the Center, or another organization, news outlet or person, be sure to use the correct Twitter handle, if applicable. For USGBC, use [@USGBC](#), and for the Center, use [@mygreenschools](#).
- Don't forget to include #greenappleday in your posts to promote your project or event!

### How Do I Create an Effective Facebook Post?

- Craft your message and determine what you want to say in your post.
- Create a tag for the Center for Green Schools or USGBC, if applicable. Use the @ symbol, then begin typing either organization's name. As you're typing, you will see various pages appear. Select one of ours and you will have successfully tagged us.

## Keep in Touch With Us

### Find Us Online:

Contact us: [schools@usgbc.org](mailto:schools@usgbc.org)

Website: [greenapple.org](http://greenapple.org)

Twitter: [@mygreenschools](#)

Facebook: [facebook.com/centerforgreenschools](https://facebook.com/centerforgreenschools)

### About Green Apple

Green Apple Day of Service is a unique day of action to join communities across the world to celebrate the central role that schools play in preparing the next generation of sustainability leaders. Since 2012, over almost one million volunteers in 73 countries have participated in events. Each school's project makes an impact on one or more of the three pillars of a green school: environmental impact, health and wellness, and environmental and sustainability literacy. The Day of Service is an opportunity to give students hands-on-experience with sustainability, strengthening environmental literacy, project management skills, and civic leadership.

### About the Center for Green Schools at USGBC

The Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council works with school decision makers, community volunteers and thought leaders in the public and private sectors to drive progress at the intersection of sustainability, education, public health and the built environment. We believe that all students should have the opportunity to attend schools that sustain the world they live in; enhance their health and well-being; and prepare them for 21<sup>st</sup> century careers.

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## Sample Social Media

### Twitter Messaging

- Kickoff #GreenAppleDay with us in Sept! Joining thousands around the globe bc the environment matters at our #school! <http://greenapple.org>
- #GreenAppleDay: global movement, reminding us #wherewelearnmatters! Register your event & be part of something BIG! <http://greenapple.org>
- #GreenAppleDay is about sustainability & schools: Nothing is more important for our #students futures <http://greenapple.org>
- Here's a #GreenAppleDay idea! Bring plants into every #classroom & take care of them together! Find more at <http://greenapple.org>
- Since 2012, #GreenAppleDay has mobilized 790,000+ volunteers in 70+ countries, thanks to you! Join the fun! <http://greenapple.org>
- Join us in partnership w/ @mygreenschools for a #GreenAppleDay takeover you can't miss! We'll be out there on [fill in your date]! <http://greenapple.org>
- #DYK? An avg-sized tree produces enough oxygen/yr. to keep a family of 4 breathing. What's your #GreenAppleDay idea? <http://greenapple.org>

### General Messaging

- Kickoff #GreenAppleDay with us on in Sept! We're joining thousands around the globe bc the environment matters to our school! <http://greenapple.org>
- #GreenAppleDay is a growing global movement that reminds us #wherewelearnmatters! Register your event today & be part of something BIG! <http://greenapple.org>
- Seeing where our fruits & veggies come from encourages good eating habits—plus, it's fun to play with your food! What are YOU doing for #GreenAppleDay? <http://ow.ly/MQ6x3028kpy>
- Since 2012, #GreenAppleDay has mobilized 750,000+ volunteers in over 73 countries, thanks to you! Come on out again this year and continue this impt movement! <http://greenapple.org>
- #DYK? By the time most students reach 6<sup>th</sup> grade, they will have spent the equivalent of 257 days in the schoolyard. What are you doing for #GreenAppleDay? <http://greenapple.org>