

Give Out Smiles Smile Challenge

Teacher Guide • Step-by-Step

The Give Out Smiles Smile Challenge is a simple, joyful way to grow a culture of kindness in your classroom and school. Students create hand-drawn smile cards, give them to someone they care about, and invite recipients to return the cards to a Smile Station for a public display—the Wall of Smiles. This guide gives you everything you need to run it in your classroom, expand to families at home, and scale up to a school-wide campaign.

Objectives

- Encourage daily acts of kindness and inclusion.
- Build social-emotional skills: empathy, gratitude, and communication.
- Create a visible celebration of kindness with a Wall of Smiles.

Materials

- Printed Smile Card sheets (four per page template)
- Scissors
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils
- Tape or pushpins
- A decorated collection box (the “Smile Station”)
- Bulletin board or hallway wall space for the “Wall of Smiles”

Prep Checklist (Before Class)

1. Print enough Smile Card sheets for each student (one sheet per student recommended).
2. Choose a visible location for the Wall of Smiles and post a title sign.
3. Place the Smile Station box in your room or a shared space (library, office, hallway).
4. Notify staff that students may deliver smile cards to them as well (custodians, cafeteria, office).
5. Optionally, prepare a quick slide or poster with directions and examples.

Classroom Steps (30–40 minutes)

6. Welcome (2 min): Share that small acts of kindness make big differences. Today we'll create Smile Cards to brighten someone's day.
7. Cut (8–10 min): Students cut along the dotted lines to make four cards.
8. Create (12–15 min): In the square, students draw a smile or happy scene; encourage unique styles—no two smiles are the same.
9. Personalize (3–5 min): Students fill in the To/From lines and add a short kind note if they'd like.
10. Give (5–10 min): Students hand their cards to classmates, teachers, staff, or a trusted adult. Shy students may put cards in the Smile Station for later delivery.
11. Collect & Display (ongoing): Recipients drop cards at the Smile Station. You (or student leaders) post cards on the Wall of Smiles.
12. Reflect (3–5 min): Quick circle share—How did it feel to give? How might it feel to receive? What did you notice on the wall?

Wall of Smiles: Setup & Tips

- Title the board clearly: "Wall of Smiles."
- Arrange cards in a grid so every class can find their contributions.
- Rotate new cards weekly to keep it fresh; archive filled sections in a binder or photo album.
- Invite administrators and families to visit the wall and leave encouraging sticky notes.

Weekly Smile Challenge

Turn the Smile Challenge into a recurring routine that reinforces kindness and creativity. Each week, students create and deliver new Smile Cards with a simple, themed prompt. Use the same template or encourage students to design their own within the square.

How to Run It

13. Pick a day (e.g., Fridays) for a 20-minute Smile Session.
14. Introduce the week's theme with a short example or story.
15. Create, personalize, and deliver the cards as in the core steps.
16. Celebrate: Add new cards to the Wall of Smiles and do a quick shout-out.
17. Track progress with a class thermometer or sticker chart (e.g., 100 smiles shared).

Sample 8-Week Theme Plan

- Week 1 – Welcome & Belonging: Make someone new feel included.
- Week 2 – Gratitude: Thank a staff member you don't see every day.
- Week 3 – Teamwork: Appreciate a classmate who helped you.
- Week 4 – Bravery: Encourage someone trying something new.
- Week 5 – Kind Words: Compliment someone's effort, not just results.
- Week 6 – Helpers: Recognize a community helper at school.
- Week 7 – Friendship: Invite someone to play or sit with you.
- Week 8 – Pay-It-Forward: Give a card to someone and ask them to pass on a smile.

Student Leadership Options

- Smile Captains: Two students manage the Smile Station and Wall updates.
- Greeters: A rotating pair hand out blank cards during arrival once a week.
- Archivists: Photograph the wall each month and build a digital slideshow for assemblies.

Family Connection

Extend the challenge at home so families can share smiles together. Send home extra cards or a single sheet with directions. Encourage families to return completed cards or a quick note about who they shared a smile with.

Teacher Steps

18. Send 1–2 Smile Card sheets home with each student (or provide a printable link/QR code).
19. Include a short family note: What the Smile Challenge is, how to use the cards, and how to return them.
20. Provide a simple return option: students bring back a favorite card for the Wall of Smiles or write a one-sentence reflection.
21. Invite families to share stories and (optional) photos via the class platform or school contact page.
22. Remind families they are welcome to use the cards freely as long as they credit Give Out Smiles and respect the copyright.

Family Note (Copy-and-Paste)

We're participating in the Give Out Smiles Smile Challenge! Your child brought home Smile Cards to color, personalize, and give to people you care about. If a recipient would like to share the smile with our school, please send a card back with your child to add to our Wall of Smiles. You may also share your experience with the class or on social media with #GiveOutSmiles. Thank you for helping us grow kindness at home and at school!

School-Wide Campaign

Scale the Smile Challenge to reach every classroom and staff member. Use the plan below to launch, collect, display, and celebrate school-wide.

Roles

- Coordinator (counselor/teacher/admin): Oversees timeline and logistics.
- Classroom Leads: Run the activity with their classes and manage card flow.
- Student Smile Squad: Ambassadors who promote, collect, and help display cards.
- Office/Library Partners: Maintain a central Smile Station and answer questions.

Timeline & Steps

23. Week 0 – Prep: Choose dates, reserve a display area, place Smile Stations (front office, library, cafeteria), print templates.
24. Week 1 – Kickoff: Announce at morning assembly or via school video/newsletter. Share the purpose, show a sample card, invite everyone to participate.
25. Week 1–2 – Classroom Creation: Each class completes the core activity. Staff receive a small bundle of cards for peers and students.
26. Week 2–4 – Collection & Display: Student Smile Squad empties Smile Stations 2–3 times per week and updates the Wall of Smiles.
27. Week 3 – Mid-Challenge Boost: Share photos of the wall, celebrate milestones (e.g., 500 smiles), and remind families to join in.
28. Week 4 – Celebration: Host a short hallway walk-through or assembly. Recognize classes, staff, and student leaders. Invite a few student reflections.
29. Afterward – Archive & Repeat: Photograph the final wall, save favorite cards, and schedule the next round (monthly or quarterly).

Logistics & Display Tips

- Signage: Clearly label Smile Stations with “Return Smile Cards Here.”
- Equity: Provide time in class for all students to create and deliver cards; offer alternatives for students who prefer not to deliver in person.
- Privacy: Avoid posting full names or personal info on the wall; first names or initials only.
- Inclusion: Encourage cards for all members of the community—bus drivers, cafeteria staff, custodians, office team.
- Safety: Remind students to ask an adult if they want to deliver cards beyond immediate school spaces.

Communications (Editable Snippets)

Morning Announcement: "Today we're starting the Give Out Smiles Smile Challenge! Create a smile card, give it to someone who could use a boost, and invite them to return it to a Smile Station. Let's fill our Wall of Smiles together!"

Newsletter Blurb: "Our school is participating in the Give Out Smiles Smile Challenge. Ask your child about the Smile Cards they made and how your family can join in at home. We'll celebrate together when the Wall of Smiles is full!"



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