



No Running Required!

SCHOOL DISTRICT & TEACHER'S GUIDE

"We are each other's harvest; we are each other's business; we are each other's magnitude and bond."

Gwendolyn Brooks

Founded by Cheryl Rice, MS, CAPP

www.YouMatterMarathon.com



What is the You Matter Marathon?

The **You Matter Marathon** (YMM) is a program to create and enrich positive connections between people and within communities by sharing 10,000 **You Matter cards** during November, the month of Thanksgiving.



Why the You Matter Marathon?

We're living in a world where people crave connection, yet feel more isolated than ever. Every one of us is here for a reason. We are all essential. We need, and are needed by, each other.

Always.

Especially now.

Why School Districts and Teachers are Being Asked to Participate

Because you are uniquely committed to building citizenship, character, and compassion within your students and the greater community.



How the You Matter Marathon Can Work for Your School

It's a matter of taking 5 simple steps.

Step 1: Determine the sponsoring organization within the system to run the YMM in your school community. Sample sponsors include:

- Parent Teacher Association
- Student Government
- Diversity and Inclusion Club

Step 2: Choose the groups or communities within your school district to participate in the YMM. Sample groups include:

- All students K-12, faculty, and staff
- All students K-12
- Middle school or high school students only
- Faculty and staff only

Step 3: Designate a **You Matter Marathon** Ambassador to serve as a conduit between your school and the **You Matter Marathon** organization. Have this person sign-up at www.YouMatterMarathon.com.

Step 4: Determine the total number of You Matter cards you will need in November:

Suggested minimum # of cards per person is 4, and maximum # of cards per person is 30. Those numbers may vary if you involve your entire school district. For instance, you may choose to have K-5 students share 4 cards during the month and 9-12 students share 30.

Step 5: Order your You Matter Cards:

When the Ambassador signs up for the YMM they are immediately sent an email with instructions for either printing the cards themselves or ordering the cards through Vistaprint.com. (Approximate price for 1000 cards is \$40.00 but if you use the discount code TV500 you can receive up to a 50% discount.)

For the integrity of the YMM, You Matter cards may not be customized.



Suggested Curriculum Ideas

The **You Matter Marathon** is an ideal program to reinforce the essence of gratitude, inclusion and connection as a way to honor the spirit of Thanksgiving.

Grades K – 4

Give each student one card to share each day the week before Thanksgiving. Use the card to facilitate a discussion on what it means to “matter” to someone else and what it means to “matter” to yourself? “Who are the people and animals that matter to you?” On Day 1 they can give a card to a classmate who matters to them. On Day 2, they can give a card to someone they see in the school who matters to them. On Day 3, they can give a card to someone in their family that matters to them. Day 4, they can give themselves a card!

Grades 5 – 8

Give each student 10 cards to share during the month with family, friends and acquaintances. Perhaps this will yield a discussion about people who can be marginalized in the school, in the community, and in the world. This is also an opportunity to share cards with people we take for granted and want to express gratitude to.

As a writing exercise they can tell a story of what transpired in one of their card shares and the impact it had on them and the other person.

Grades 9 – 12

Give each student 20-30 cards to share and use it to facilitate a similar discussion on issues of inclusion and gratitude.

- Week 1: They can give a card a day to family or friend
- Week 2: They can give a card a day to someone in their school or larger community they see regularly but who aren't a “friend.” Like a cafeteria worker or the barista at their favorite coffee shop.
- Week 3: They can leave a card a day for someone in a random place. Like in a library book you are returning.
- Week 4: They can give a card a day to a stranger



Benefits of Participating in the You Matter Marathon

The key benefits of the **You Matter Marathon** are:

- It will broaden and build micro moments of positive connection between people in your school community.
- It will broaden and build positive emotions in and between students, faculty, staff and the greater school community.
- It will build agency in those who participate.
- It will form a virtual superorganism of goodness in your community. A smattering of mattering!
- It will foster strengths of kindness, compassion, gratitude and inclusion.
- It will contribute to the You Matter Marathon goal of letting as many people as possible know that they matter in this world. Additionally,
- Every Ambassador will be invited to join the private **You Matter Marathon** Facebook page where they can share their experiences and also connect with hundreds if not thousands of other YMM participants.
- If interested, there may be an opportunity to have your school featured on the local television news.

For More Information

Contact Cheryl Rice at 484-557-8846, CherylRice@comcast.net or go to www.Youmattermarathon.com.

It is not what you gather, but what you scatter, that tells what kind of life you have lived.

Anonymous