



WOW!
There are more than 88,000 pre-K, elementary, and middle schools in the US.

How to...



Make a difference at school

Simple steps can help you get involved and have fun working with others.

Besides being a great place to learn, school offers a great opportunity to make friends, try new things, and give back to others. At this point in the school year, there is plenty of time for you to take advantage of opportunities and activities that your school offers. It's also a good time to think of ways to make a difference and improve your school. Here's how to get started.

Reach out

One option for learning more about what happens around your school is to be involved in activities, clubs, and teams. All of these help you to meet more people, including teachers and staff, who can give you an idea of needs your school might have. For example, get to know your student council or government. Ask if you can attend meetings to share ideas and listen to what others want to change at school. (Maybe you'll even be inspired to run for a position in your school's next election!) If your school has a student newspaper, check it out or consider joining the staff to know more about what is happening at school.

Start something new

Your school may have a variety of clubs—from robotics to anime to chess. If you and some of your classmates have an interest that's not covered by a current school club, you could consider forming your own. Many

schools have a standard process for approving clubs, which may include asking a teacher to advise the club, filling out paperwork with an adult's help, and finding a place and time to meet.

Identify a need and take action

Think about what makes you feel happy at school. For instance, maybe you enjoy having lunch, playing soccer at recess, or taking an art class. Now think about ways those activities could be even better. You might wish there were more fresh food options in the cafeteria. Perhaps your school could use more soccer balls for students to use at recess or you would like to see more artwork on display. Once you have your idea, talk to an adult on staff to see if students could help. You could offer to organize a bake sale to buy sports equipment, develop a plan for a school garden that can contribute to meals, or launch a group project to paint a hallway mural.



Try painting a hallway mural.

Be kind

It may seem simple, but you can help create a positive atmosphere at school by being kind and respectful to others. This includes respecting a teacher's rules, saying thank you when a student helps you, cleaning up any mess you make, and saying hello to others in the hallway. A good attitude is contagious!

4 organizations that value learning

These groups ensure that teachers and students have the resources they need.

DonorsChoose

On this group's website, teachers can upload lists of classroom supplies they need. Donors can then help cover costs by contributing money so teachers can buy the supplies. donorschoose.org



Kids in Need Foundation



This group offers free resource centers that educators can

visit to get needed classroom supplies. Teachers can also get help with lesson plans for their classrooms. kinf.org

Operation Backpack

People who volunteer with this organization collect and distribute backpacks filled with essential school supplies to thousands of students in need every year. voa.org/operation-backpack



Teach for America



Many schools don't have enough

teachers. This group trains college graduates so they can become teachers where the need is greatest. teachforamerica.org