

**ACTIVITIES**  
**— FOR —**  
**EVERYONE**

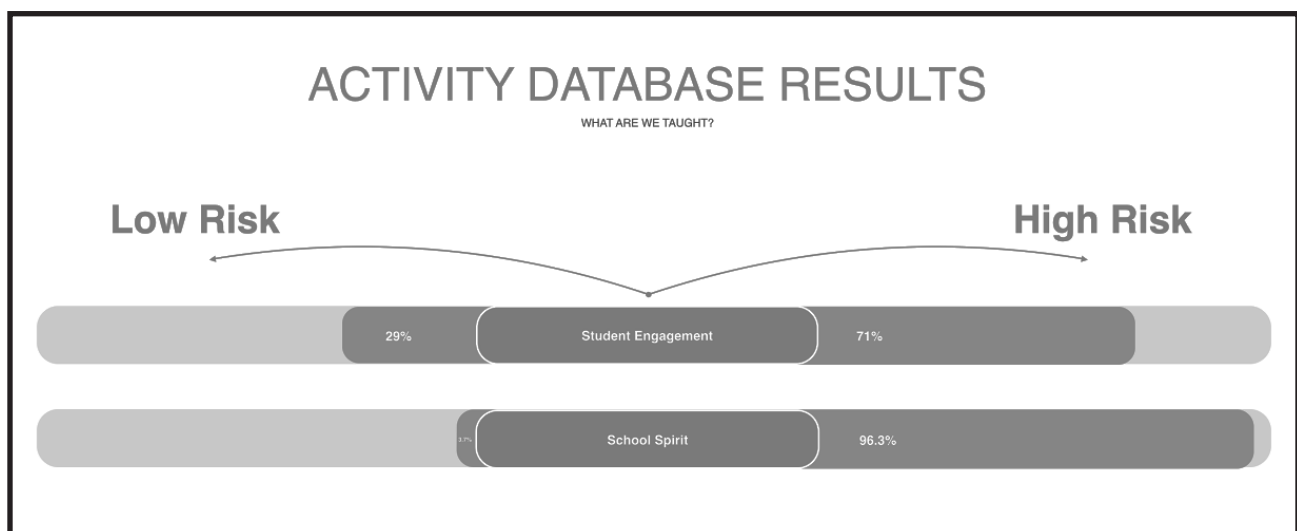
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Successful activities programs are great at following three simple, yet powerful, rules:

1. Always seek to meet students **exactly as they are.**
2. **Give** more than you **ask.**
3. Actively gain and celebrate **trust.**

Want an activities program that engages everyone? **Let's get to work.**

Question: What activities can we use to generate trust?



Answer: Not many.  
**Let's change that.**

## **“You belong here.”**

1. At Your Service: During back-to-school season, organize a list of new transfer students. Create a menu of treats for them to choose from. While dressed as Starbucks baristas, have 2-3 student leaders approach new students and take their orders. Finally, deliver the orders toward the end of the day with welcoming notes attached!
2. Spirit Stations: During the first few weeks of the school year, organize “Welcome Stations” for students near major entries to campus. At these stations, leaders can help students find classes and answer any necessary questions. During back-to-school football games, organize the same station with your student leaders. The more we can do to make incoming students comfortable, the better!
3. Bookmarks of Belonging: Create dozens of small, compassionate notes on bookmark-sized paper. With the permission of your school’s librarian, place the bookmarks in various popular books for students to find!
4. “Hey You!” Posters: Generate a list of “Hey You!” messages to encourage students on campus. Examples can include “Hey You! Keep your head up”, “Hey You! We think you’re awesome”, and “Hey You! Have an amazing day today”. Write these messages on a large number of small flyers—the more you create, the better. Finally, tape these flyers around campus for students to see!
5. Intentional Invitations: With the help of your staff members, generate a list of students on campus who rarely participate in activities. Before your next event, create personal invitations to each student on your list. This is a simple, yet effective way to welcome all students into your community!

## **“You’re appreciated here.”**

1. Kindness Clothespins: Purchase a few bags of regular clothespins and write a kind compliment on each one. Compliments can include (but are not limited to): “I love your outfit today”, “You’re amazing!”, and “You make people smile”. Finally, challenge your student leaders to secretly pin as many clothespins as possible to backpacks throughout the week.
2. Whiteboard Gratitude: Campus custodians regularly clean classrooms before the start of the year. Just before the cleaning has started, write kind messages to your janitorial staff on teachers’ whiteboards. This is a simple way to spread joy to all who make our school special!
3. Coffee and Encouragement: Make personalized coffee cups for each bus driver that serves your school. One day during the week, have your leaders wait on the curb with coffee in hand. When your drivers drop-off students for the day, they’ll be surprised with some warmth and kindness!
4. New and Important!: New teachers are often the most stressed on campus during the early portion of the school year. About 5 weeks into your academic calendar, provide “thank you” baskets with hand-written notes and snacks for each educator. This simple activity is a phenomenal way to build trust with everyone you serve!
5. Band Booster: Band members are often incredibly stressed during football season. Not only do they have plenty of games to attend, but they also put in countless hours of practice. During a stressful week during the fall, hand out personalized water bottles with compassionate messages written on them. While this might seem like a basic activity, we promise this will create waves of positivity at your school!

## **“You’re supported here.”**

1. First Monday: The first Monday of the second week during the school year is one of the toughest days for students to show up. Why not make it better? Make this day exciting by planning a fall clubs and sports assembly. The more we can get students plugged in, the better!
2. “You Matter” Week: For your first spirit week of the year, celebrate students for exactly who they are. Rather than asking students to dress up in embarrassing clothes, ask them to wear their favorite outfits. Rather than counting spirit points, instruct your leaders to spend the week complimenting others on their style!
3. Pick-Me-Up Stations: During finals or other mandatory testing, establish “pick-me-up stations” around campus. These stations can be filled with free snacks, pens/pencils, and words of encouragement.
4. Spirited Comfort: Have finals coming up? Sounds like the perfect time for a spirit week! Rather than outlandish outfits, encourage students to wear sweats, sweatshirts, and beanies. After all, the best activities meet students exactly where they are!
5. Self-Care Suites: Have a meeting room on campus that is rarely used? During stressful times of the year, transform it into a self-care room! These “self-care suites” can include blankets, tea, soft music, and good company.

## **“You’re heard here.”**

1. My Hero: During the second half of the school year, set up a table during lunch with pens and paper available. Encourage students to write a short letter to a staff member who has made a positive impact on their high school experience. Finally, deliver these notes to the staff members toward the end of the week!
2. “We Are \_\_\_\_\_”: Create a list of adjectives you would use to describe the best parts of your community. Using your group’s social media account, post at least 2 pictures per day highlighting students who personify those characteristics. Additionally, use poster paper to create signs that read “We are [ADJECTIVE]! We are [SCHOOL NAME]! This simple and quick activity promotes incredible campus culture.
3. I Want You to Know...: Use poster paper to create a large canvas on campus. Using simple poster paint, write the words “I Want You to Know...” at the top. During lunch each day during the week, encourage students to write kind messages and words of inspiration to their peers. By the end of the week, your mural will be FULL of compassion and kindness!
4. Community Wall: Establish a wall on campus to celebrate and recognize various clubs at your school. After creating a grid of even squares, allow each organization to decorate and paint their space with what makes them unique and special. This simple activity is an incredible way to show students just how special your campus community is!
5. Memory Lane: Towards the end of the school year, create a poster-filled walkway throughout your entire campus. These posters should be filled with positive memories, highlights, and accomplishments from the school year. You’ll be amazed at the joy such a simple activity provides!

## **“You’re a part of something special here.”**

1. Final Stretch: On the first day of finals spring semester, place an encouraging note from your staff on each students’ desk. The more personalized these notes are, the more encouraging they will be!
2. The Best Day of the Year: The first day back-to-school after winter break is the toughest day of the year for both students and staff members. Want to make this day better? Let’s get to work! Offer free hot chocolate at the door, welcome students with signs/posters, and even hold a spirit rally centered around encouragement. The more intentionally encouraging the day becomes, the better it will be for everyone!
3. Our Bucket List: Before graduation/promotion, have each outgoing student electronically submit a “bucket list” of things to accomplish at your school. Then, during the start of the following year, give each new student a copy of the finalized list. This is an excellent way to encourage participation early and often at your school!
4. Replica Recognition: During basketball season, use poster paper to create replica jerseys of each basketball player on your school’s roster. With the help of your staff members, student body, and student leaders, fill each jersey full of good luck wishes and encouragement. Finally, hang each jersey from your players’ lockers before a big game!
5. Mondays are for Music: Want a simple activity that takes less than 5 minutes to complete? Establish a day of the week when music will be played during passing periods. To give students more voice, encourage song submission via your group’s Instagram or Snapchat account!