NATIONAL DAY OF
RACIAL HEALING

ACTION KIT FOR COMMUNITY SPACES

The National Day of Racial Healing takes place annually on the day after Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The observance is an opportunity for people to connect and imagine a better future together.

What is racial healing? Racial healing is learning how to better understand ourselves as individuals and the experiences of the people around us, as well as why things are as they are in our communities. It's an experience that addresses the harm caused by racism by strengthening the capacity to advance racial equity — so that every child has a fair shot and opportunity to succeed, no matter their background.

IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY SPACES

Parks and Recreation Centers

Created in partnership with the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)

- **Start a tradition** by hosting an annual staff development day on the third Tuesday in January that focuses on personal and professional development related to racial equity, inclusion and racial healing.
- **Learn about the land** your agency sits within and the history of parks and recreation, including the unfair practices that have shaped access and distribution. Reach out to Indigenous leaders and tribal elders in your community, and work with them to post a land acknowledgment.
- **Invite community members or traditional storytellers** from various backgrounds to come and share about their history and experience in the park.
- **Learn about your local immigrant community** and their connection to your spaces.



- **Pick up a good read** and learn more about race in parks and recreation. Consider: "Race, Riots and Roller Coasters: The Struggle over Segregated Recreation in America," "The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together," "Landscapes of Exclusion: State Parks and Jim Crow in the American South" and "American Indians and National Parks."
- **Engage and empower teens** in developing, planning and facilitating your community's participation in the National Day of Racial Healing.
- **Hold a community cultural day** and invite people of different backgrounds to share their culture, language, food and traditions.
- **Host a play date or family engagement event** that focuses on community connection and relationship-building for children and caretakers.
- **Display your agency's commitment** to racial equity and inclusion.
- **Find and connect with a local chapter of outdoor groups** like Latino Outdoors, Outdoor Afro, GirlTrek, Black Girls Run, Indigenous Women Hike and Outdoor Asian.



- **Host a resource fair** at a park for local outdoor chapters to connect with community members.
- **Collaborate with local artists,** teens, community-based organizations and other community allies to create and display local, culturally reflective art in your parks.

Libraries

- **Dedicate your children's story hour** to the National Day of Racial Healing by inviting a local cultural storyteller or reading a book from the Social Justice Books or PBS Kids Celebrate Diversity book lists.
- **Organize a panel discussion** of local historians and authors about the history of race, racism or cultural groups in your community.
- **Launch a book club** built around books that explore healing and what it means to build a more just community. Find inspiration from the Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards list, the nation's only juried prize for literature that addresses racism and diversity.
- **Work with library administrators** to write and post a land acknowledgment on library grounds.
- **Use a whiteboard, chalkboard wall or poster board** with the words, "I will create common ground with my neighbors by..." at the top and ask your patrons to fill in their ideas.
- **Host a "community stories" oral history project** by partnering with community members to record and archive interviews with longtime local residents.
- **Plan a family engagement event** that focuses on community connection and relationship-building for children and caretakers.

Youth Sports Organizations

- **Create a youth athlete coalition** across local sports organizations to provide space for young leaders to connect, share culture and practice fairness.
- **Team up with a local small business owner** who represents the local culture to sponsor your sports team's end-of-season banquet.
- **Invite college or professional athletes** from a variety of backgrounds to speak with your youth team about their journey and the intersection of sports and race.
- **Discuss the history of your sport,** including the unfair practices that have shaped access to sports in your community. Then, host a team-building activity with parents, caregivers, coaches and youth.

Faith Institutions

- **Hold a special service,** prayer gathering or meditation on the National Day of Racial Healing.
- **Incorporate messages** of respectful truth-telling, racial healing and reconciliation into your services, prayer gatherings, meditations or study groups.
- **Deepen connections in your community** by hosting an interfaith panel to explore common ground.
- **Organize a giving drive** for local interfaith groups and organizations dedicated to building a more just, healed community.

COMMUNITY EXAMPLES

- One park department set aside a full day to bring staff and community partners into the same room to explore what real, authentic relationship-building looks like in practice.