

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

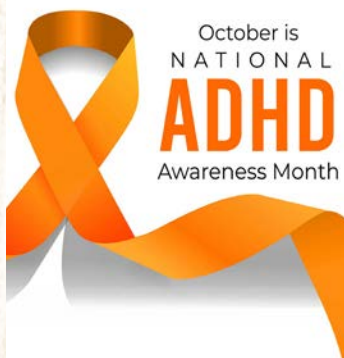
Advancing Equitable Opportunities



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October 2025 Cultural Heritage Highlights

Disclaimer: The Cultural Heritage Highlights is intended as a resource to encourage the recognition, exploration, and celebration of a wide range of cultural observances in schools and communities. Each monthly edition features selected observances that reflect both longstanding and emerging cultural traditions. While every effort is made to include diverse and meaningful content, the list is not exhaustive and should not be viewed as an intentional exclusion of any celebration. Educators and community members are encouraged to use this resource as a starting point for deeper learning, inclusive dialogue, and the continued honoring of all cultural identities throughout the year. Suggestions for upcoming highlights are welcomed and can be sent to ESBOCESdei@esboces.org.



ADHD Awareness Month

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is a brain-based medical disorder affecting all ages and communities. ADHD primarily affects skills related to executive functions and some individuals may also experience difficulties with social skills, motor skills, and conversational skills. The cause is an imbalance in the brain's anatomy and its wiring. How did ADHD Awareness Month get started? A resolution was passed by the United States Senate that declared September 7 as National Attention Deficit Disorder Day in 2006. From there it grew into a full month. The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of ADHD, by providing information that is reliable. The information is based on research and scientific evidence.

Learn more:

[What is ADHD?](#)

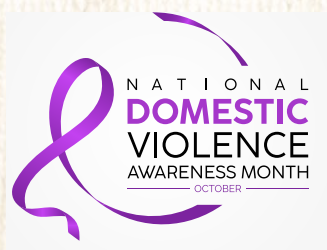


Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Breast Cancer awareness is a global healthcare event, organized to increase consciousness and support for more than two million people, mostly women, diagnosed yearly. Within this month the primary focus, outside of educating and supporting others, is to encourage women to go for regular breast cancer screening and to raise money for breast cancer research. Within this month, **October 13** is Metastatic Breast Cancer Awareness Day (cancer that spread beyond the breast to other parts of the body) and **October 17- 23** is Men's Breast Cancer Awareness Week.

Learn more:

[What is Breast Cancer Awareness Month?](#)

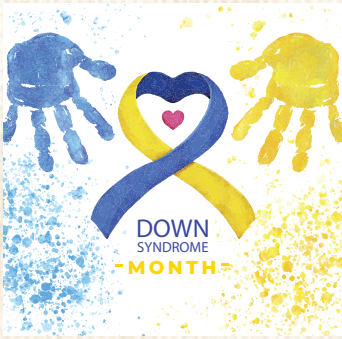


Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Millions of Americans are victims of domestic violence. One in four women and one in ten men have experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime and reported some form of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)-related impact. The statistical analysis of marginalized groups is even more alarming. To find support and safe transition, individuals need help and access to resources. This month is a call to action for domestic violence education as well as a reminder that simple actions can create a big change in victims' lives.

Learn more:

[New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence](#)



Down Syndrome Awareness Month

The month of October is dedicated to National Down Syndrome Awareness. Down Syndrome is a genetic condition where a person is born with an extra chromosome. Consequently, it can affect the brain and body development, however, that does not interfere with their ability to lead healthy lives with supportive care. President Ronald Reagan signed a resolution on September 28, 1984, proclaiming October as National Down Syndrome Month, and it has been celebrated every year since. As a result, October has been dedicated to raise awareness and celebrate the many abilities of our students, co-workers, community members, and loved ones with Down Syndrome. Down Syndrome is the most frequent chromosomal condition diagnosed in the United States. Help us in spreading awareness!

Learn more:

[National Down Syndrome Society](#)
[Arkansas Down Syndrome Association](#)



Family History Month

Learning where our ancestors came from gives insights into our family experiences and makeup of our lineage. This month is the chance for you to dig into genealogy and find out the gems of information that have been hiding within you since before you were born.

Learn more:

[Celebrate Family History Month](#)



Filipino-American History Month

Filipino-Americans are the second-largest Asian-American group in the nation and the third-largest ethnic group in California, after Latinx and African-Americans. The celebration of Filipino-American History Month in October commemorates the first recorded presence of Filipinos in the continental United States, which occurred on October 18, 1587, when "Luzones Indios" came ashore from the Spanish galleon Nuestra Senora de Esperanza and landed at what is now Morro Bay, California.

Learn more:

[Asian Art Museum](#)



German-American Heritage Month

Originating in Munich in 1810, an event that started as a horse race to celebrate a royal wedding, has evolved to what is now Oktoberfest. Oktoberfest is an event celebrating the customs and heritage of Germany. While Munich's Oktoberfest is the largest, some cities in the U.S. also hold celebrations for this festival of food, dance, and lederhosen!

Learn more:

[From PBS: Oktoberfest | All About the Holidays](#)



Italian-American Heritage Month

Benvenuti! (Welcome!) Italian-American Heritage Month is an annual designation observed in October that was first celebrated in 1989 with the proclamation of the United States Congress and George H. W. Bush. During this time, we celebrate the Italian-American culture, and spread the word about the traditions that come with it. Italian-Americans have made many contributions to the U.S., especially in art, humanities, and sciences. In 1880, Italians began migrating to the U.S. to flee rural poverty in Southern Italy and Sicily, and today, Americans of Italian descent are the nation's fifth-largest ethnic group.

Learn more:

[About Italian American Heritage Month](#)
[Live in Italy Magazine](#)



LGBT History Month

Not to be confused with Pride Month, LGBT History Month focuses on the history and achievements of the LGBT community. This month also provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations, and communities to recognize and celebrate contributions of the LGBT community. This month, we celebrate marriage equality, honor preferred pronouns, and reflect on how far we have come with LGBTQIA+ rights. **National Coming Out Day** is celebrated within this month and takes place on October 11 every year. Today, we not only respect the use of preferred pronouns, we celebrate it on October 15. **International Pronouns Day** began in 2018 and takes place on the third Wednesday of October each year. **Spirit Day** is an annual observance that takes place on the third Thursday in October which is October 16 this year. This day aims to create awareness for the bullying and harassment that the LGBTQIA+ community faces.

Learn more:

[What does LGBTQ Month mean?](#)

[National Coming out day](#)

[International Pronouns Day](#)

[Spirit Day](#)



National Bullying Prevention Month

In 2006, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center declared the first week of October a time to educate and raise awareness about bullying prevention. By 2010, the event was expanded to the entire month. Their goal was to change the prevalent view that bullying was just a childhood rite of passage and something every kid had to go through. Statistics show that bullying raises school absentee rates, decreases student performance, and increases physical and mental stress. The center argues that teachers and families need to work together to create a climate where bullying is not tolerated.

Learn more:

[National Bullying Prevention Center](#)



National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Each October, during National Disability Employment Awareness Month, or "NDEAM," we celebrate the value and talent workers with disabilities add to America's workplaces and economy. NDEAM's purpose is to confirm our commitment to ensuring disabled workers have access to good jobs, every month of every year.

Learn more:

[NDEAM](#)



National Work and Family Month

Work-Life balance can be a challenge for workers and families. In October, businesses around the United States are pushed to encourage their employees to create harmony within their work and family lives. Work can be demanding of a person, making it difficult to prioritize their family lives over what needs to be done for their paycheck. This month is the time to focus on how to better support your organization so that the balance is easier.

Learn more:

[National Work and Family Month](#)



Polish-American Heritage Month

As an expression of gratitude and affirmation to the solidarity between Poland and the United States, the Congress and President Ronald Reagan proclaimed October as Polish-American Heritage Month to encourage all Americans to join the celebration of their fellow Polish citizens. Part of the celebration is to commemorate the deaths of two military leaders who fought in the American Revolution, General Kazimierz Pulaski and Tadeusz Kosciuszko.

Learn more:

[Proclamation 5548](#)

[Polish-American heritage, Polish Americans, and a Polish recipe](#)



October 1 – Yom Kippur

In 2025, Yom Kippur begins at sundown on October 1 and ends at sundown on October 2. Yom Kippur means “Day of Atonement” in Hebrew. Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is known as the holiest day of the Jewish year. Leading up to and on that day, Jews traditionally ask for forgiveness for their wrongdoings from God and from fellow human beings.

Learn more:

[Chabad.org](https://www.chabad.org)



October 2 - International Day of Non-Violence

The International Day of Non-Violence is also Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday, established by the United Nations General Assembly on June 15, 2007. As a pioneer of non-violence philosophy and strategy, Gandhi paved the way for us to say no to violence. Today, we encourage you to disseminate the message of non-violence through education, public awareness, and the values of Gandhi himself.

Learn more:

[International Day of Non-Violence](https://www.un.org/en/observances/20-october-day-non-violence)



October 5 – World Teachers’ Day

The United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) established this celebration in 1994. Held annually on October 5, it is a day to celebrate teachers and the central role they play in guiding children, youth, and adults through the life-long learning process. Additionally, it is a day to reflect and support teachers’ needs to fully execute their talent and vocation.

Learn more:

[World Teachers’ Day](https://www.unesco.org/en/observances/teachers-day)

[UNESCO](https://www.unesco.org/en/observances/teachers-day)

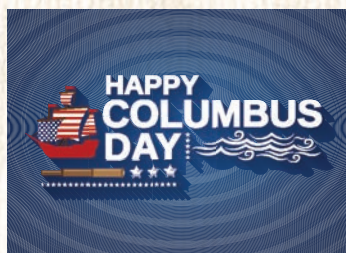


October 10 – World Mental Health Day

The overall aim of the field of global mental health is to strengthen mental health all over the world by providing information about the mental health situation in all countries, and identifying mental health care needs in order to develop cost-effective interventions to meet those specific needs. The theme for this year is: Access to Services–Mental Health in Catastrophes and Emergencies.

Learn more:

[World Federation for Mental Health](https://www.wfmh.org/)



October 13 – Columbus Day

Columbus Day is observed in the United States on the second Monday of October. It recognizes the historic voyage and arrival of Italian explorer, Christopher Columbus, who sailed to the Americas on October 12, 1492. U.S President Benjamin Harrison proclaimed the 400th anniversary of Columbus’ arrival a national holiday in 1942.

Learn more:

[Columbus Day](https://www.columbusday.com/)



October 13 – Indigenous Peoples’ Day

Indigenous Peoples’ Day honors the histories, cultures, and perspectives of Indigenous peoples and their ancestors who lived on the land now known as North America. They existed in these areas for thousands of years before the first European explorers arrived. Indigenous Peoples’ Day is celebrated annually on the second Monday in October. In 2025, it will be observed on Monday, October 13.

Learn more:

[When is Indigenous Peoples’ Day 2025?](https://www.indigenouspeoplesday2025.com/)



October 22 – International Stuttering Awareness Day (ISAD)

ISAD is a global observance dedicated to raising awareness about stammering (also known as stuttering) and provide understanding and support for individuals who stammer. This day is to destigmatize stammering and provide resources for those affected.

Learn more:

[Awareness Day](#)



October 31 – Halloween

History identifies Halloween as a Celtic festival which celebrated the end of the harvest season and the perplexity of the physical and spirit world. Now, it has evolved to trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings, and scary movies.

Learn more:

[Halloween Timeline](#)

