



How to...



DID YOU KNOW?

Martin Luther King Jr. Day was designated a National Day of Service in 1994, when President Bill Clinton signed the King Holiday and Service Act.

Give a day of service

You have the power to make a difference on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Each year the US celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. Day to honor the life and legacy of the civil rights leader. (See the box at right.) This year the holiday falls on Monday, January 19. The observance is also a National Day of Service, when all Americans are encouraged to volunteer in their communities. Here are some steps that you, your family, and your friends can take to help others.

Find out why it's a day of service

MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service. It has its roots in something Martin Luther King Jr. once famously said: "Everybody can be great because everybody can serve." Volunteering helps honor his unfinished work of building a more equitable society through community action.

Identify ways to help

There are most likely many needs in your own community. If you like to draw, for example, you could consider brightening the day of a senior who lives nearby by taking them some of your artwork. Your family may have old towels or blankets you could drop off at a local animal shelter. Or you could

help clean up your neighborhood or a nearby park by spending a few hours with friends collecting and disposing of litter. Another idea is to volunteer in a community garden that provides food to people in need.

Check out organized opportunities

Find out if your school is planning any volunteer activities. Your community may also be holding service events—check your local government website to learn more.

Hunger Free America has an area on its website where people can search for nearby service activities (tinyurl.com/TWJUS-Hunger). Some opportunities may have age restrictions, but many welcome young people. Check the rules or contact the event's organizer to find out.

Spread the word

To help other students learn that MLK Day is a day of service, ask your teacher if you can make an announcement about it in class. You can also invite a friend to join you in a service project. Finally, lead by example—when others see you making a difference, they may be inspired to help too. You can also record your thoughts about supporting your community on the form at right.



There are many ways to volunteer.

History of a holiday



Martin Luther King Jr. Day, also called MLK Day, honors American civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. (above).

King, born on January 15, 1929, devoted his life to achieving racial equality for all people. Among his actions, he led peaceful protests for civil rights. On April 4, 1968, he was killed by a white man who opposed his beliefs. People called for a national holiday in honor of King, but it took years for lawmakers to pass a bill.

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed legislation designating the third Monday of January as MLK Day. The first federal observance took place in 1986. By 2000, all 50 states had recognized the holiday.



How I'll help my community

Use this form to organize your thoughts about ways you can serve others. Then ask an adult to email it to hello@theweekjunior.com. Extra forms can be found at kids.theweekjunior.com/activities.

First name _____ Age _____ State _____

In honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Day, what is something you can do to help someone you care about or your community?

What do you think a caring community looks like? What examples have you seen of people caring for others?

Draw a picture here of what serving your community looks like to you.

By submitting this form, you give *The Week Junior* consent to print it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending it to us.