Objective/Overview: Encourage recycling by rewarding students caught “green-handed.”

A team of spotters will wait near recycling bins and recognize people “caught” in the act of recycling. This is a great way for a resident assistant to connect with students in a dorm, or for a green team or sustainability office to reach the student body.

1. Pick a Time, Location, & Strategy

This activity can be conducted anywhere with a recycling bin. A green team or sustainability club could station itself in a school cafeteria or at a sports game/other organized event, and a resident assistant could go door-to-door in a dorm and reward people who have correct recyclables in their bins.

2. Plan a Prize

Consider taking photos for a “Recycling Heroes” bulletin board or social media post. You can also give out America Recycles Day® promotional material (request an order when you register your event). Other ways to recognize recyclers are naming them in a school-wide email or school newspaper, or entering each “hero” to win a larger, eco-friendly prize (e.g. reusable mug).

3. Rally Your Team

Outfit your team in America Recycles Day t-shirts and charge them with identifying and rewarding students who recycle.

4. Catch Recyclers Green-Handed

Assign one to two people to each recycling bin or have everyone walk around campus looking for recyclers. When they “catch” someone, applaud and give them a prize.