



HIGH SCHOOL CLASS CURRICULUM

A curriculum supplement on rare diseases for high school biology and health classes has been developed by a genetic counseling master's degree student in collaboration with NORD®. This curriculum contains background information for teachers and creative, flexible classroom activities to promote active learning. The activities focus on advancing scientific understanding of rare disorders; promoting compassion, empathy, and respect for people with different abilities; developing critical thinking skills; and preparing students to make informed decisions as citizens.

- Introduction
- Activity A: Research and Learn
- Activity B: Rare but Significant
- Activity C: Living with a Rare Disease
- Activity D: Big Challenges, Tough Decisions
- Take-home Handout
- Teacher's Fact Sheet

Helpful resources include: [Rare Disease Day Fact Sheet](#), [NORD's Rare Disease Reports](#) and the [Rare Disease Video Library](#)

Class Activities

- [Watch "10 Things You May Not Know About Rare Diseases" video.](#)
- Invite a patient or caregiver speaker to come to your classroom and share their story.

Social Media

- Ask the students to devote their social media feeds to rare diseases leading up to and on Rare Disease Day. Visit our website for more [social media resources](#).

Show Your Stripes®

The zebra is the official symbol of rare diseases in the United States and is noted for its black and white stripes, which are central to its uniqueness. Everyone has his/her own stripes, those characteristics that make each individual distinct. While each of the more than 7,000 rare diseases are unique, there are many commonalities that unite patients, families, caregivers and supporters. In the spirit of raising the profile of the rare disease community at large and celebrating Rare Disease Day, this year NORD is promoting a variety of ways in which individuals, organizations and groups can "show their stripes."

Bullying and Acceptance

Many of the over 25 million Americans who have rare diseases are children or teenagers, and they often encounter bullying and lack of peer acceptance. Rare Disease Day is a good time to think about how students in your school who are different from others are treated and whether there may be things teachers and students can do to encourage greater acceptance and inclusion.

- Watch "A Brave Heart: The Lizzie Velasquez Story," a documentary on a woman with rare congenital disease who overcame bullying to become a motivational speaker.

Questions? Write to NORD at education@rarediseases.org.