



Thank a First Responder Day

10 days of gratitude

thankafirstresponderday.org.au



Thank a First Responder Day

#ThankAFirstResponder #PowerOfThanks #TAFRD

Public social media messages using the hashtags will appear on the Thank a First Responder Day website Gratitude Gallery.



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10 days of gratitude – 000 with heart

In the lead up to Thank a First Responder Day on Wednesday 10 June 2026, we will be giving a special shout out to all those who work tirelessly to keep us safe, with 10 days of gratitude starting on 31 May.

You can show your love for all that first responders and their families do by sharing our 000 with heart symbol.

Creative ways to share your gratitude using the 0♥0 symbol include:

- Draw the symbol on your hand, snap a photo, and share it on social media—let's get the whole country involved in showing our gratitude!
- Gather friends to form the symbol with your bodies – or get the whole school involved for an epic aerial photo!
- Decorate cakes or cookies with the symbol and host a gratitude morning tea.
- Get creative and design an artwork honoring first responders, incorporating the symbol.
- Use glow sticks to light up the night with a fun photo of the symbol!

Read on to find out more about the 10 days of gratitude.



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 **Thanka
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Day 1 – Thank you to those who are there when disaster strikes

Rain, hail, fire or storm, first responders are always there to help us when disaster strikes.

Our police, fire, ambulance and volunteer agencies are out in all weather and on the darkest of days to rescue those who are in trouble and help us protect our property.

First responders put their own lives at risk to help protect ours.

Fun ways to get involved

- Ask kids to take time out to clean up their bedrooms/classroom, take photos before and after the disaster clean up and ask them to display the  symbol on their cleared floor in some (nonpermanent) creative way. Share the photos and their understanding of first responder clean up efforts.
- Bake or decorate some cookies using the  symbol before enjoying them for morning tea.
- Make a simple rain gauge at home or in class or participate in a 'weather experiment' and create your own thunderstorm.
- Work together to make sure your house is fire or storm ready and you have an escape plan.
- Think of ways you could support the community in times of disaster.



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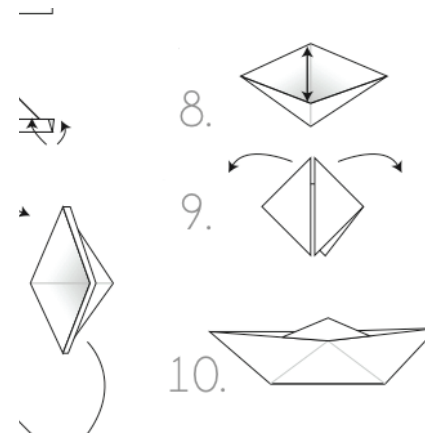
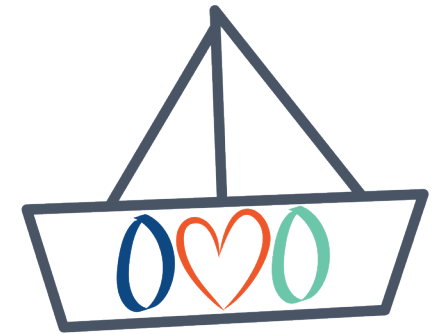
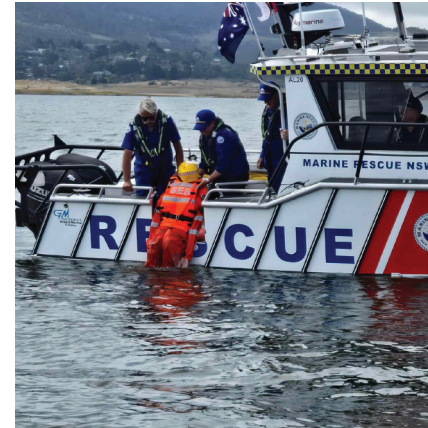
Day 2 – Thank you to those who keep us safe on the water

Whether on patrol or responding to a marine emergency, our first responders on the water are always ready to help us when we need it.

On the sea, at the beach or in rivers and lakes, we are so grateful that they are there to keep us safe.

Fun ways to get involved

- Draw and colour in a life bouy.
- Make paper boats out of paper, draw the  symbol on them and then race or display them - dont forget to take photos!
- Talk about how important it is to make a plan ahead of going boating. Include key topics such as making sure you tell someone where you are going and when you are back, checking all your safety equipment is working - including that personal locator beacon.



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Day 3 – Thank you to those who respond on the roads

We spend so much time on the roads, so we are incredibly lucky that there are many first responders ready to help us if we need it.

From the highway patrol officers who make sure people are doing the right thing, to the many agencies who respond when the worst occurs on the road, our first responders are there for us.

Fun ways to get involved

- Get creative and draw first responders or the  symbol in chalk on your driveway.
- Get each grade to create a first responder themed artwork and have an exhibition - raffle or silent auction your artworks.
- Work in the transport industry or drive a company car? Use paint markers or print and place the  symbol on your vehicle somewhere (back window/door etc) so that first responders out on the roads can see your support.
- Create a first responder vehicle out of cardboard.
- Draw the  symbol or write a thank you message onto post-it-notes and you see an emergency vehicle parked somewhere stick it on the window to show your support.



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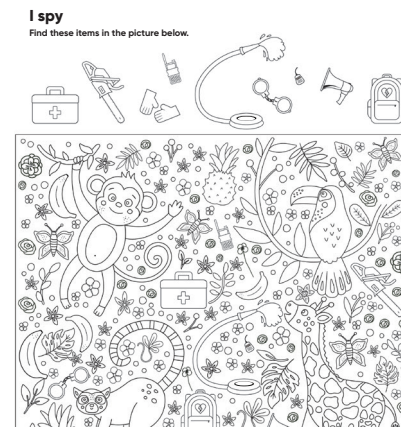
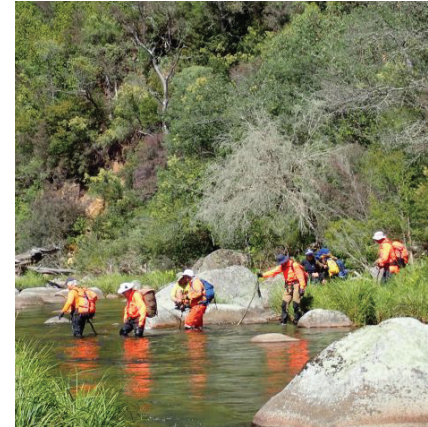
Day 4 – Thank you to those who search for us when we are lost

Getting lost or having a family member or friend go missing can be incredibly distressing, but we are so lucky that there are so many first responder agencies, including volunteers, that are ready to step in and help.

Whether in our towns or cities, out in the bush or on the water, they will do all they can to bring us home.

Fun ways to get involved

- Ask kids to draw the  symbol as small as they can and use a magnifying glass to find and highlight it - post a photo on social media.
- Play a game of hide and seek.
- Hide the  symbol in a busy environment and make a Where's Wally for others to find.
- Have fun doing the Fortem 'I Spy' or word search activities.
- Have a club or workplace scavenger hunt or amazing race - a great way to bond as a team and recognise first responders.
- Flash Light Tribute: At 8 pm on Wednesday 3rd June, everyone shines a flashlight in the air as a tribute and share a photo on social media.
- Run an orienteering workshop or activity.
- Talk to children about making a plan ahead of going bushwalking or exploring. Include things like making sure you tell someone where you are going.



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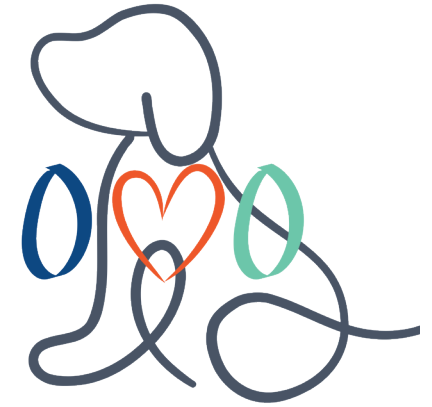
Day 5 – Thank you to the furry friends who help keep us safe

From dogs and horses right through to police cats, there are many furry first responders who work with their handlers to keep the community safe.

Their dedicated training, incredible bonds with their handlers, and ability to accomplish tasks not possible for humans makes them integral members of first responder teams. And let's not forget the cuteness factor!

Fun ways to get involved

- Use the downloadable thank you cards to write a message of thanks to our furry first responders.
- Get creative and style your furry friend with the  symbol.
- Colour in the police dog in our resources, maybe even write a story about the day in the life of a service animal.
- Create a fun social media post of your pets saying 'thank you' on social media.
- Keep a water bowl outside your business for all furry visitors, not just the first responder kind.
- Make up little dog friendly care packages of treats to take to police stations.
- Take some time to research the special training first responder animals need to undertake and maybe try a few tricks with your own pet.



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Day 6 – Thank you to those who must deliver the worst news

One of the more challenging roles for many first responders is having to deliver the worst news to family members that their loved one has gone.

They do this with care, compassion and empathy, taking the time to provide support at what is an incredibly difficult time.

This can also impact them, and we say thank you for all that you do.

Ways to get involved

- Make paper flowers using teal, blue and orange, gift them to a first responder and take a photo to share on social media.
- Visit a loved one's grave.
- Make or decorate candles with the  symbol and gift them to your local first responder or police station.
- Light a candle and post it on social media using #ThankaFirstResponder #PowerOfThanks #TAFRD
- Send someone flowers.
- Create a paper chain of kind words or supportive messages from your school or organisation for those in difficult jobs. Use the  symbol colours.
- Hold a candlelight prayer session or mass, include a prayer in the prayers of the faithful.



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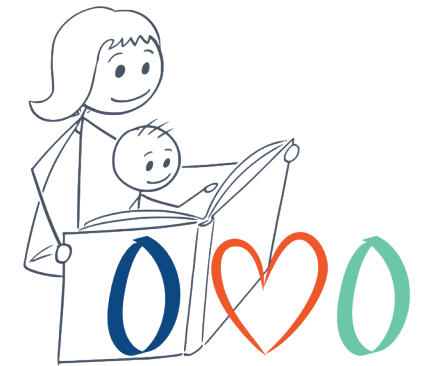
Day 7 – Thank you to the first responder families who sacrifice so much

Behind many of our first responders are the amazing families that support them. They often give up so much to ensure that first responders can be there for us, such as being together at sporting games, school events or special days like Christmas.

There is also the worry that comes with being a first responder family, knowing that your loved one is out there in times of danger and other crises, and wondering what time they will be home. First responder families are amazing and also deserve our appreciation and support.

Fun ways to get involved

- Write a first responder family a letter of gratitude.
- Take a moment to do something special with your family.
- Post a message of support to first responder families on social media.
- Invite first responder families to a BBQ or a morning tea.
- 24-hour challenge – families or work colleagues spend a day “on call” (e.g., responding quickly to household or work tasks) to experience what responders’ families go through.



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Day 8 – Thank you to those who are there both day and night

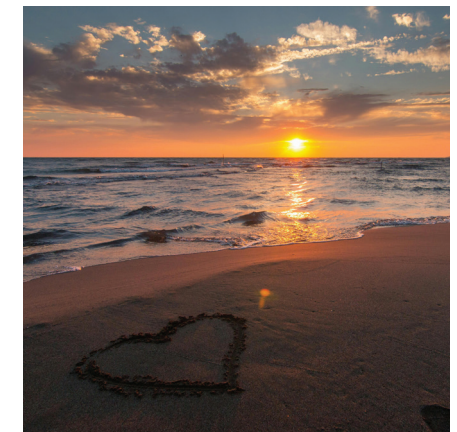
Emergencies can happen at any time of the day or night which means there are first responders always out there working.

From doing the night shift to waking up before the sun comes out, giving up their weekends or missing out on their kids' bedtime routines, they make a lot of sacrifices to be there for us.

Thank you for always being there at any time.

Fun ways to get involved

- Write the  symbol on your hand in glow in the dark texta or paint and take a photo - dont forget to post it on social media.
- Use glow sticks or LED lights to create the  symbol and post it on social media.
- Invite a first responder agency to your school to talk about what they do - the kids might even get to see the flashing lights and hear the sirens!
- Hold a pyjama day to honour night-shift first responders.
- Stay Awake Challenge - kids and teens try to stay up late (supervised) and post a message of thanks on social media when they hit midnight!
- Sunset to Sunrise - post photos at sunset and sunrise to show appreciation for responders working through the night 24/7 - 365



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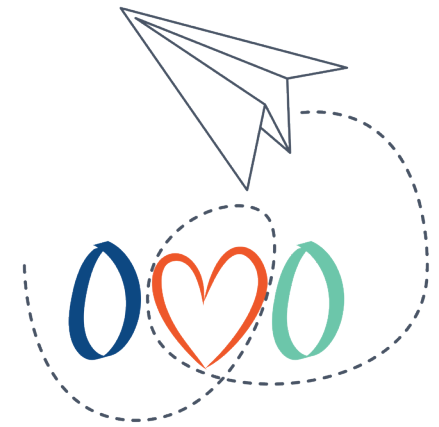
Day 9 – Thank you to those who respond from the air

Thank you to those first responders who take to the skies to help keep us safe.

From patrolling the suburbs to searching for lost people, supporting fire fighting efforts and responding to emergencies, it's comforting to know you are there.

Fun ways to get involved

- Make paper planes, and decorate with the  symbol to have a flying competition. Share your best paper plane design on social media or with your class.
- Create the  symbol with people so you could see it from the air - take a photo or video (if you can!)
- Spot a Pol air or first responder helicopter flying over your neighbourhood and snap a photo, draw the  symbol onto the photo and post on social media or send the photos to local first responder stations with note of gratitude.
- Write thank-you messages on string hanging from balloons and display them at school or work - don't forget to take photos!
- Draw the  symbol really big in chalk on your driveway and use a drone to photograph the symbol from the air.



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Day 10 – Thank you to those who take our emergency calls

They are often the first people we speak to during an emergency - the calm voice at the end of the phone taking our call and sending help on the way.

These amazing people need to act quickly in high-stress situations, often while dealing with people in crisis. It's a critical role among our first responders and these people deserve our praise and appreciation.

Thank you!

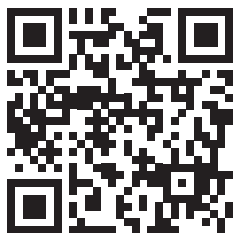
Fun ways to get involved

- Teach your children how to use a phone to call 000 and practise what they would do if there were an emergency.
- Create some artwork using the  symbol and gift it to a local call centre. Seeing something specially created for them on the wall will help them feel recognised.
- Write a letter of thanks to emergency call takers, organise a small care package with snacks, and thank-you notes to be delivered to call centers.
- Print the downloadable 'what to say if you need to call 000' resource and use it as a class activity.



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