

Public Media Promotes Civic Learning

Civic learning is necessary for a healthy democracy. And it is a unifying force for our country, particularly during times of deep division. CPB has a long history of supporting civic education to teach children and lifelong learners about American citizenship, our democracy, and the fundamentals of our government.

Public media provides numerous programs and projects that build civic knowledge and encourage understanding and engagement, key components in a civil society. Some examples include:

Educational Resources

- **[The Civics Collection](#)**: GBH has created a media-rich collection of educational resources to encourage civic understanding and engagement among middle and high school students. The Collection is designed to teach students about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the founding principles of our constitution, and explore issues of government policy and decision-making with a robust set of interactive educational resources. The collection is available on [PBS LearningMedia](#), a free library of resources designed to supplement classroom instruction, aligned to curriculum standards.
- **[U.S. History Collection](#)**: GBH has created an award-winning, comprehensive compilation of 400 media-rich digital learning resources for teaching U.S. history to students in grades 6-12 on [PBS LearningMedia](#).
- **[The American Revolution classroom resources](#)**: Extensive learning materials and experiences developed around themes such as individual rights, democracy and governance covered in the docuseries *The American Revolution*, by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein and David Schmidt, will be available timed to the series' premiere in November 2025. The resources, for students grades 3-12, will be the [Ken Burns in the Classroom](#) section of [PBS LearningMedia](#).
- **[NewsDepth](#)**: Ideastream Public Media (Cleveland) breaks down the biggest news stories of the week into teachable lessons for 4th to 6th graders. NewsDepth is used in classrooms across Ohio and available for free online.



Engagement

- **Civic Content and Engagement Initiative:** Anticipating the country's 250th anniversary celebration, PBS SoCal (Southern California) has been selected as the lead station for a national public media civic content and engagement initiative. Through this short-form, digital first initiative local public media stations throughout the country will be working with the communities they serve telling the stories of people helping one another through daily and extraordinary circumstances.
- **One Small Step:** StoryCorps' One Small Step initiative, launched six years ago with CPB support, pairs strangers from opposite sides of the political spectrum for civil conversations under the premise that it's hard to hate up close. StoryCorps has spent years testing the premise that we can build political civility by connecting people of differing political viewpoints to share common ground.
- Minnesota Public Radio News has partnered with Braver Angels to create **Talking Sense**, an online and in-person platform initiative to help Minnesotans navigate challenging political conversations in a way that's aimed at preserving relationships.

Programming

- The **Civics 101 podcast**, from New Hampshire Public Radio, is a podcast about how our democracy works. It explores topical issues related to civics, such as what is the difference between the House and the Senate? How do landmark Supreme Court decisions affect our lives?
- **A Citizen's Guide to Preserving Democracy** is a one-hour PBS program, hosted by Hari Sreenivasan and based on a book by Richard Haass, explores the habits of good citizens. It is streaming on demand for free through 2026.



- **City Island** is an animated, short-form PBS KIDS video series and games set in a living city where objects—mailboxes, lamp posts, cars, and more—are characters who show how people in a community work together to make decisions and solve problems. The series, on PBS KIDS digital platforms and broadcast, looks at citizenship, civic participation, geography, culture, and family in age-appropriate ways.

- **Rosie's Rules** provides children from ages 3 to 6 with social studies lessons about how a community works, helping them develop awareness of themselves as individuals and as part of a broader society.
- **Together We Can** is a music series from Sesame Workshop for children ages 4 to 8 consisting of 20 live-action music videos that cover civics topics such as the importance of rules and rights, voting, symbols of democracy and our Constitution. One of the videos is called "50 States in Our Country," which teaches the foundations of government in a modern doo-wop style.

