A Comprehensive Guide to
Starting and Sustaining
a Red Cross School Club
School Club in a Box
At a Glance

Laying the Foundation for Your Club
I. Red Cross Club Constitution
II. Red Cross Club Bylaws
III. Red Cross Club Structures
IV. Working With Your Local Red Cross Unit

Getting Your Club Started
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II. School Club Calendar and Important Red Cross Dates

Planning Your Club Projects and Building Visibility
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II. Making the Most of Your Meetings
III. School Club Officers Training

Appendix
Make the Red Cross symbol relevant for your community.

Dream big. Turn ideas into action.

Worldwide:

- More than 97 million Red Cross or Red Crescent volunteers.
- 186 Red Cross or Red Crescent national societies.

Learn the value in lending a helping hand.

Be a Red Crosser and do more. Change a life.

United States:

- There are more than 600 locally supported American Red Cross chapters.
- More than 500,000 volunteers and approximately 35,000 employees provide assistance to the victims of more than 60,000 disasters.
- More than 9.5 million people are trained in lifesaving skills through a Red Cross class.

Inspire and energize others, all while socializing and having fun.

Go grassroots and learn more about service. Get to know your community.

Youth:

- More than 125,000 youth and young adults call themselves Red Cross volunteers.
- Youth represent more than 23 percent of total Red Cross volunteers.

Join a disaster response team, teach a CPR class, host a blood drive or help eradicate measles.

Be a leader. Start a Red Cross Club in your school.

Red Cross School Clubs

- In 2010, there were more than 1,600 K-12 and college Red Cross school clubs
- More than 54,000 youth and young adults were involved with a Red Cross club.

Where do you start? Right here.

Think creatively. Use this resource package and get your club established.
About the School Club in a Box Guide

Who is the guide designed for?

- Students of high school and college age
- Youth at any level of volunteer experience
- Youth who are looking to start a Red Cross club or strengthen their current club

What will the guide provide?

A comprehensive set of tools.

- Laying the foundation for your club:
  - Red Cross club constitution and bylaws
  - Working with your local Red Cross unit
  - Getting your club started:
    - Finding/creating club service opportunities
    - School club calendar
  - Planning your club projects and building visibility:
    - School club projects: ideas, planning and budgeting
    - Social media
    - Communication in a school club setting
  - Managing your club:
    - Essentials of working with your peers
    - Running effective meetings
    - School club officers training

Downloadable templates ready for direct use.

Advice from experienced American Red Cross youth volunteers.

A collection of examples from your peers across the country.

You and the American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is one of our country’s largest emergency response organizations. As part of a worldwide movement that includes more than 180 national societies, in addition to providing humanitarian care to the victims of war, the American Red Cross also aids victims of devastating natural disasters. The core American Red Cross mission is to provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. There are seven fundamental principles that guide all humanitarian interventions, namely: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.
Over the years, the American Red Cross has expanded its services, always with the aim of preventing and relieving suffering. Today, in addition to domestic disaster relief, there are core areas where the American Red Cross provides specific services: support and comfort for service members and their families; the collection, processing and distribution of lifesaving blood and blood products; educational programs that promote health and safety; and international relief and development programs.

Young people are an important part of the American Red Cross family; they are 125,000 strong, or 23 percent of the American Red Cross volunteer workforce.

Youth volunteers are actively involved in every line of Red Cross service delivery; they serve on disaster action teams, teach health and safety courses, hold leadership positions on local boards, donate blood and recruit other donors, raise funds for their local community or support international initiatives.

Youth volunteers have a robust relationship with the American Red Cross; the Red Cross symbol is perceived as credible, trustworthy and capable of having a life-changing impact on people. Eighty-five percent of youth volunteers serving with our organization said they are “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their volunteer experience; 92 percent are “likely” or “very likely” to stay involved with the Red Cross (HBS study, 2009). Youth volunteers are very important in sustaining our organization, both today and in the future.

The best way to maximize your talent, energy and skills and to make an impact on your peers and your community is to get involved with American Red Cross school clubs. Red Cross clubs allow you to be connected with your peers from across the country and around the world and serve under the symbol of the largest international humanitarian organization in the world. It is specifically the ability to act locally and simultaneously to be part of something that truly impacts the world through everyday interventions that is so powerful and inspiring.

**Here are some ways your club can make a difference:**

**Disaster Services:** Provides disaster assistance 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Disaster assistance is designed to help with the immediate suffering caused in the first few days after a disaster hits.

Sample school club activities:

- Conduct shelter updates in your local school
- Raise awareness of American Red Cross Disaster Services
- Receive training in all aspects of Disaster Services

**Health and Safety Services:** Provides training to community members so they can acquire lifesaving skills and be better prepared in the event of a wide variety of emergencies such as house fires or a person choking.
Part A – Laying the Foundation for Your Club

I. Red Cross Club Constitution

II. Red Cross Club Bylaws

III. Red Cross Club Structures

IV. Working With Your Local Red Cross Unit
I. Red Cross Club Constitution

Many schools require clubs to submit an official club constitution before being approved as an official school organization. Whether or not this is a requirement in your school, developing a constitution can be a great asset for your new club, helping you determine what the structure should look like and how the club will operate.

The club's constitution is a critical document that covers the basics of how the club works. In general, the constitution is developed and adopted in the early stages of starting a club and there are few modifications made over the years. Any Red Cross constitution should cover the following articles:

- Article I. Name
- Article II. Authority
- Article III. Purpose
- Article IV. Membership
- Article V. Officers
- Article VI. Chapter mentor (if applicable)
- Article VII. School sponsor
- Article VIII. Quorum and voting
- Article IX. Amendments

Writing a club constitution can be intimidating. To make the process easier, we have designed a Template Constitution, which we strongly advise you to use.

II. Red Cross Club Bylaws

Club bylaws cover the rules and regulations and general work guidelines that enable a club to operate efficiently. The bylaws serve as a working document, designed in a flexible way so they can be easily changed. Bylaws should cover the following articles:

- Article I – Name and Location
- Article II – Membership
- Article III – Meetings (i.e., annual meetings, officers meetings, general club meetings, quorum at meetings, voting procedures, etc.)
- Article IV – Officers (i.e., election process, job descriptions, vacancies, removal from function, etc.)
Article V – Committees (description of specific committees, key responsibilities and leads)

Article VI – Meeting Agenda (basic meeting agenda structure)

Article VII – Amendments (it is important to always note the exact date when the amendments were made)

As your club evolves, the bylaws will reflect a more detailed description of rules or general operation guidelines. Every club has to take into account some specific situations and circumstances and it is extremely difficult to come up with an all-encompassing bylaws document. Instead, we opted to discuss some key elements that will be reflected in the club bylaws: the club’s structure and the officer’s roles and responsibilities.

III. Red Cross Club Structures

Having a consistent functional club structure is crucial to a club’s success. A structure states how your club will communicate, organize and implement projects; it outlines the specific roles and responsibilities of club members and officers.

Before jumping into deciding which structure will work the best for your club, first take a look at three major structures we identified in the field. When analyzing these structures, keep in mind your club’s current situation, your members’ commitment, growth plans, and the existing relationship between the club, school, local Red Cross unit and your local community.

Structures at a Glance

Fundamental Club Structure
A straightforward club structure, frequently utilized for newly founded or smaller clubs with limited resources and/or a small membership base.

Intermediary Club Structure
Suitable for an average sized club (no more than 50-75 members), the intermediary structure offers flexibility in adding new officer’s positions in accordance with the needs of the club. The club president plays an important role in this structure, serving as the connection with the local unit and faculty sponsor.

Advanced Club Structure
Ideally, it is suitable for large clubs that have been successful for a few consecutive years. It offers opportunities for members to take on leadership roles and expand their engagement with the club.
Some important things to keep in mind:

• If you are just starting a club, there are a couple of activities that will go hand in hand. For example, you will need to ensure proper procedures are followed to gain the school's approval and also secure a faculty sponsor. You will also need to set up preliminary meetings, identify possible candidates for the officer roles and identify the best structure for your club. Remember, you can revisit the structure and make changes whenever the situation requires it, but it is recommended that you limit changes during the school year.

• If you are part of an existing club, you probably already have a good sense of what worked well and what needs to be revised in order to maximize your club’s potential. Make sure to weigh all options and find the best solution for the upcoming school year.

Finding the Structure That Works Best for Your Club

There are a number of issues that need to be taken into consideration when deciding your club's structure. You can use the following guiding questions when going through the process:

For New Clubs:

• Who would be interested in running for a club officer position?
• How many club members do you anticipate having for the upcoming year?
• What is the general interest among your peers in joining a Red Cross club?
• How do you envision the relationship between your club and the local Red Cross unit?

For Existing Clubs:

• How many officers do you currently have and what positions do they hold?
• How many members do you currently have?
• What changes do you anticipate in your club’s membership base for the upcoming year?
• To what extent do your officers/members have a thorough understanding of the Red Cross lines of business?
• Do you know all the special skills your officers and members can bring to your club? (Take a look at the activities under Club Officers Training Guide, in Part D, Section III.)

After answering these questions, take a closer look at each structure as outlined in the following. Every structure can be characterized through a series of advantages and disadvantages, and offers generic information on the specific officers’ roles and responsibilities.
Learn From Your Peers

In 2006, the Red Cross Club at UCLA encountered some unique challenges. It started the year with a handful of club members and few officers. All in all, the club had 15 active members. As the year progressed, it became obvious to everyone that some changes needed to be made, as there was a need for more officers. A webmaster and a chapter liaison position were added and the club ended up having twelve officers. It was more than obvious that this situation created an imbalance in membership and left the three members who didn’t have officer positions unengaged. As a temporary solution, the three members were given leadership responsibilities. Due to an unexpected decrease in membership, the club needed to react and adapt to the current situation.

The following year, in conformity with the membership base, the club structure was revisited and the officer’s team was reduced to four members. This experience was a great lesson learned on the need for flexibility and finding the best club structure for a specific development.

Club Structures

Fundamental Club Structure

The Club Structure in Practice:

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<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Works best for clubs with a small membership base</td>
<td>General members must help officers with duties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expedites the decision and communication processes, a vital element for a new club</td>
<td>Limits the decision-making process to a few club members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear roles and responsibilities</td>
<td>Increased workload for the officers</td>
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</table>
Roles

Officers:
- Officer’s roles include president, vice president, treasurer and secretary.
- The president is responsible for maintaining the relationship with the local unit and with the faculty sponsor.

General Members:
- Attend meetings, generate project ideas and participate in specific activities.
- Take on specific assignments, like website design and fundraising efforts.

Meetings
- The officer's team should hold regular meetings, at least twice a month. The purpose of the meetings should be to manage the current projects and initiatives, do general troubleshooting and identify growth opportunities for the club.
- The general meetings (including all members and the officers’ team) should cover project planning and brainstorming sessions. It is recommended that a general meeting should be held at least once a month.

Structure Alternatives
If you have two strong leaders who work well as a team and bring complimentary skills sets, you might consider having two co-presidents instead of one. Often, for the clubs that just started, this proves to be a viable alternative, especially if multiple people decided to create the club together.

For the position descriptions, please visit the Red Cross Club Template Constitution:

heads up!
This structure was proven to be efficient if the officers’ team makes a sustained effort to involve its members by sharing all relevant updates and having a streamlined communication process. Make sure to keep your members informed and engaged in the life of the club.
Intermediary Club Structure

The Club Structure in Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Efficient for clubs with a membership base not larger than 50-75</td>
<td>Facilitates a structure creep; that leads to an increased number of officers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enables a promotion track for dedicated members willing to take on an officer position (i.e., from fundraising officer, to secretary, and then president)</td>
<td>The decision-making and communications process is delayed as more members are involved</td>
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Roles

Officers:
- The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer are the principal officers.
- The president is responsible for maintaining the relationship with the local Red Cross unit and the faculty sponsor.
- All other officer positions are optional and determined by the club’s specific needs (i.e., webmaster, fundraising officer, publicity officer, etc.)

Members:
- Attend meetings, generate project ideas and participate in implementing specific activities.
- Take on additional assignments as determined by the club’s specific circumstances.
Meetings

The meeting recommendations are similar with the ones applicable for the fundamental club structure.

Structure Alternatives

Depending on the club’s specific situation, additional positions can be added to the structure (special projects officer, special events officer, service officer, etc.). It is recommended not to overcrowd the officers’ team with unnecessary positions. Keeping everyone engaged and connected with the main focus of the club can become a difficult task.

Specific Position Descriptions

For the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer position descriptions, please visit the Red Cross Club Template Constitution: Article V, Section 3.1-3.5

Additional Position Descriptions

Volunteer Coordinator (key assignments)

- Coordinates with the local unit contact about the Red Cross volunteer orientation process
- Keeps track of member volunteer hours
- Maintains a constant communication with volunteers and sends reminders for the activities they have signed up for

Publicity Officer (key assignments)

- Releasing information on service projects and events
- Works with the volunteer coordinator in recruiting new members
- Collaborates with the local Red Cross unit on marketing and visibility opportunities

Fundraising Officer (key assignments)

- Promotes and organizes fundraisers in support of Red Cross causes
- Organizes fundraising events designed to bring financial stability to the club

Webmaster

- Creates and maintains a website for the club
- The webmaster might take on additional assignments for increasing the club’s visibility in social media.
Depending on the club’s growth process, you will probably need to revisit the structure so it will correspond with the concrete challenges you have to face. After years of working with Red Cross clubs, we recognize that this structure applies well for an established Red Cross club. We consider a club to be established if it has run for at least two consecutive years, runs several events annually, and consistently has more than 30 active members.

Advanced Club Structure

- American Red Cross Chapter
- School Club Sponsor
- President
  - Officers: Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Fundraising, Volunteer Coordinator, Publicity, Webmaster
  - Red Cross Service Committees: Disaster, International, Biomedical, Health and Safety, Service to the Armed Forces
The Club Structure in Practice:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offers a number of leadership development opportunities</td>
<td>Requires a large membership base, more than 75-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decreases the workload for club officers</td>
<td>Officers are engaged in the planning process more than in the execution phases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allows club officers to focus on setting the strategic direction of the club instead of leading and implementing projects</td>
<td>Decision and communication processes might be cumbersome at times</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has a strong focus on Red Cross mission-specific projects</td>
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Roles

Officers:

- The president, vice president, secretary and treasurer are the principal officers. Some of their key responsibilities are related to facilitating and troubleshooting the work of committee leads as well as setting the direction for the club.
- The president is responsible for maintaining the relationship with the local Red Cross unit and with the faculty sponsor.
- All other officer positions are optional and strictly dependent of the club's needs.

Committee Leads:

- Must be knowledgeable in a focused Red Cross area of service (Health and Safety, Disaster, Biomedical Services, International, Service to the Armed Forces) or in a general support function (i.e., communication, events, fundraising, etc.). They should also be able to maintain periodic communication with a staff member or volunteer at the local Red Cross unit who works in their line of business.
- Lead the project development and implementation process for projects that fall under their areas of service.
- Actively involve the members of their committees in planning and executing projects.
- Maintain an active communication with the officers and share all relevant project updates and concerns.

Members:

- Each member is required to be actively involved with at least one committee, having a focus on a specific line of Red Cross business.
- Members should suggest ideas, lead or participate in projects and provide suggestions and recommendations on improving the general club activities.
Meetings:

Option 1:

- Officers meet prior to the general club meeting with the committee leads.
- Officers give their major updates to the general club and then the group breaks out into committees to discuss specific projects.

Option 2:

- Officers hold completely separate meetings with the committee leads where officers give updates and the committee leads give them progress updates on their projects.
- Each committee holds separate meetings to plan projects.

Structure Alternatives

- Each committee lead is connected with the specific program at the local Red Cross unit.
- General members can serve on multiple committees.

Specific Position Descriptions

For the president, vice president, secretary and treasurer position descriptions, please visit the Red Cross Club Template Constitution: Article V, Section 3.1-3.5

Additional Position Descriptions

The volunteer coordinator, publicity, fundraising officer and webmaster position descriptions are similar to the one presented under Intermediary Club Structure.

Committee Leads:

- Lead a group of club members in planning and executing projects in a Red Cross line of business
- Maintain a constant communication with the officers and share all relevant updates with their committee members

As you can gather, there are different structures that can help you streamline the way your clubs operate. Above all, it is important to include all these different roles, responsibilities and general operation procedures in your bylaws.

Remember, in order to set a solid foundation for your club, you will need to have a constitution, a bylaws document and a clear structure that defines the roles and responsibilities.
IV. Working With Your Local Red Cross Unit

Providing assistance for those in need; empowering local communities to prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies; and collecting and distributing a critical blood supply for hospitals throughout the country are just some examples of services delivered by the American Red Cross. In order to maximize the response capacity, the Red Cross relies on a well-established local structure that includes more than 600 chapters, Blood Services regions and Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) stations worldwide.

The tremendous acts of service are made possible by the support of incredibly dedicated volunteers. All Red Cross units rely on volunteers to carry out their services in the local communities, and youth volunteers are a critical element in this process.

Your school club can play an important role in helping the Red Cross unit in your community deliver critical services. Creating a strong collaboration and working with your local unit adds value and builds capacity for your club. You will be able to receive updates about needs in the community that have to be addressed, training opportunities, national initiatives and much more. Experienced Red Cross employees and volunteers can help you expand your club’s outreach and capacity and ensure you are getting the support you need.

In the following section, we will guide you on how to build a connection with the local Red Cross and make the most of your partnership.

Your Local Red Cross at a Glance

Before we send you off to knock on the door of your local Red Cross unit, we need to make sure you have a good understanding of what a local Red Cross unit stands for and what is the easiest way to connect.

Your local Red Cross should be the nearest chapter, Blood Services region or Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) station to where you live.

- **A Red Cross chapter** is the local unit that oversees Red Cross activities and services (excluding blood) for a given geographic area. Depending on the community needs, the chapter will provide services related to health and safety, disaster response, service to armed forces and international services.

- **A Blood Services Region**, on the other hand, oversees all Red Cross blood collection in a given geographic area. It collects, processes and distributes blood to hospitals and provides the gift of life for those in need.

heads up!

The three fundamental Red Cross units previously outlined can be structured differently in the field; they can combine services or look different than you expect. It is important for you to become very familiar with how your local Red Cross unit works and what key services are provided in the community.
• **A Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) Station** is a Red Cross office located on a military installation or in a military hospital. SAF station employees and volunteers provide direct services to service members and their families.

In order to deliver critical services, the chapters, Blood Services regions and SAF stations are responsible for managing volunteers—and this includes you.

**How Do You Find the Closest Red Cross Unit?**

Simply go to [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) and enter your zip code on the top right. Now you have found the closest Red Cross unit to you. The majority of chapters, Blood Services regions or military installations will have a website or they have listed contact information. The best way to contact your local unit is to identify the contact information for the person managing volunteers or youth volunteers. Some of the job titles you should be looking for are: volunteer director, volunteer manager, volunteer coordinator, youth director, youth volunteer coordinator, blood donor recruiter, etc.
Working With Your Local Red Cross

When connecting and working with your local Red Cross unit, there are slightly different steps you will need to take if you are just starting a club or you already have an existing one. There are a number of generic steps recommended in either of the situations:

Step 1. Connect

Establish a contact with the local unit and initiate a periodic communication process.

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<td>Find the closest Red Cross unit to your school. Identify the contact person in the local Red Cross unit. <strong>Note:</strong> If you have an existing club, please confirm the contact information for your Red Cross unit at the beginning of the new school year.</td>
<td>Great activity for the end of September as a kickoff for the new academic year (in conjunction with September is National Preparedness Month)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate communication—express intent to start a club or continue your Red Cross club activities.</td>
<td>• You can either call or email the contact person in the local unit. • A sample communication should cover: short introduction, your intent on starting a Red Cross club and your desire to have a joint meeting with the local Red Cross unit. For existing school clubs: Before school starts and before the officers meeting, please touch base with your local Red Cross unit and gather relevant updates that might impact your school club.</td>
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# Step 2. Inform

Share relevant information on your club membership, structure and upcoming projects.

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| Schedule a meeting with the Red Cross contact person. | • Make sure to provide accurate information on how you can be contacted and follow up promptly.  
• If the meeting is taking place at your school, make sure to secure the space.  
• Invite all your peers interested in starting the club. You can invite the faculty sponsor to join the meeting.  
• Prepare an agenda and designate the items you want to discuss.  
For existing school clubs: Ensure that the entire officers’ team will participate at this meeting. It gives you the opportunity to coordinate your upcoming initiatives with the local unit. |
| Gather information on existing requirements for starting a Red Cross club. | • Find out the required documentation for starting a club.  
• Verify the local unit’s policy for becoming a registered Red Cross volunteer, if you are not already one.  
• Make sure that your club officers are registered volunteers with the local unit. If they are over 18, this will include a background check.  
For existing school clubs: Verify with the local unit if there are any new policies on managing youth volunteers. |
| **Register** your club members as Red Cross volunteers. | • It is important for the local unit to have accurate information on the number of youth volunteers involved. Your support is vital in getting everyone registered.  
• Club members should each:  
  - Submit a Volunteer Application, Code of Conduct, and Intellectual Property and Confidentially form.  
  - Take your local unit’s “New Volunteer Orientation.”  
  - Go through a national background check, if over 18 years of age.  
For existing school clubs: Make sure to have the new officers’ team register as volunteers and the members that recently joined the club. |
Step 3. Collaborate

Hold joint needs assessment sessions and identify the best way to collaborate. Maintain regular communication and work together in implementing relevant projects and initiatives.

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| Schedule periodic meetings with your Red Cross contact person and school club members. | • Secure a time that works best for your club members and for the Red Cross contact.  
  • You can either have the meeting at the local unit or at your school. If possible, invite the club sponsor to join the meeting.  
  • Discuss upcoming projects; ask for guidance and informational resources. |
| Conduct joint needs assessments with the Red Cross contact person.      | Please use the Finding Club Service Opportunities document in Part B, Section I. |
|                                                                        | For existing school clubs: If applicable, refer to the previous needs assessments. Incorporate any significant changes in the community, school or Red Cross unit that can have an impact on the services delivered by your club. |
| Identify joint projects and the club’s specific support needs.         | You should have a club's inventory covering:  
  • Your available resources (e.g., school financial support, access to printing, meeting rooms, club members with technical skills).  
  • Existing needs (e.g., someone with marketing experience, access to meeting space, someone to provide guidance on your fundraising etc.) for you to be able to implement specific projects.  
  It is important to establish the availability of your resources and verify what is realistic to expect in terms of concrete support mechanisms from the local unit. |
| Develop your club's calendar of activities and share the information with the local Red Cross unit. | • Based on the identified needs, together with your club members you will select a number of projects to be implemented by your club throughout the school year.  
  • Develop your yearly calendar of activities.  
  • Make sure to share the club's calendar of activities with your Red Cross contact.  
  If you plan to implement a larger scale event and you are relying on the local unit's support, please ensure that you communicate all your support needs well in advance and you follow up on your requests.  
  For existing school clubs: Try to capitalize on recurring projects and gain more support in your school and at the local unit. |
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<td>Inform and coordinate with the Red Cross unit all major events</td>
<td>• Ensure that you maintain regular communication with your local Red Cross unit.</td>
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<td>implemented by your club.</td>
<td>• When appropriate and possible, attempt to collaborate with other Red Cross clubs on projects and events.</td>
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<td>• Allow appropriate time for planning events and scheduling training classes with your local unit.</td>
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<td>• Special notes for fundraisers:</td>
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<td>- Coordinate with your local Red Cross before soliciting in-kind or monetary donations.</td>
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<td>- Carefully review all written donation requests to ensure high-quality adherence to brand standards before sending to potential donors.</td>
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<td>- Document donor information and forward it to your local Red Cross, especially if the donor requested a tax receipt.</td>
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<td>Note: When approached, refer all questions and controversial comments about the American Red Cross to your local unit.</td>
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Step 4. Report

Depending on the specific requirements, you have to share periodic activity reports with the local unit. You should send at least one at the end of your school year.

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<td>Submit an activity report in accordance with your local unit's specific requirements.</td>
<td>Please make sure to share with the local unit the accurate information on initiatives implemented throughout the year, number of volunteers, etc. You can find a report template at the end of this document.</td>
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Note:

- Coordinate with your local Red Cross in order to develop an annual club budget at the appropriate time (preferably at the beginning of the year).
- Always have two or more club members (at least one officer) handling money at any given time.
- Maintain an accurate list of all financial activities.
- Give all received funds to your local Red Cross within 48 hours of receipt. Be sure to always count money before you deposit it.
- Make sure to maintain records of all your activities, how many people participated and how many people you served.

We hope you are in a better position to engage your local Red Cross. Following is a Sample Activity Report that you need to share with your local unit. You may download a blank form from here.
American Red Cross Youth Services

Club Activity Report

School: Pinewood High  City: Yukon  Date: May 8, 2009
Completed by: Megan Mukler  Position: President

Club Officers: (Please list names and email addresses)
Megan Mukler, President, MegMukler2257@yahoo.com
Josh Ardinel, Vice President, J.Ardinel@gmail.com

I. Club Meeting Attendance

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total Number of Members</th>
<th>Total Number of New Members</th>
<th>Date of Red Cross Orientation for New Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No new members this meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No new members this meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2 new members, Orientation, May 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Red Cross Club Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity and Location</th>
<th>Type of Presentation (i.e., Be Red Cross Ready, IHL, Safe Kids, CPR, etc.)</th>
<th>Number of Volunteers</th>
<th>Number of People Served</th>
<th>Number of Materials Distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>Puppet Show at ALB Elementary School</td>
<td>Disaster preparedness information for young children</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>200 children</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/26</td>
<td>CPR training</td>
<td>Taught adult CPR to club members</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. Fundraising Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity and Location</th>
<th>$ (Funds Raised)</th>
<th>Target for Funding Event (National Convention, Club, Disaster Relief Fund, Service Activities, Measles, etc.)</th>
<th>Number of Volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/21</td>
<td>Bake Sale Fundraiser at Ralph’s in Paperland</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Measles Initiative</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/11</td>
<td>Peanut Butter and Jelly Sale at school</td>
<td>$83</td>
<td>Local disaster relief fund</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Upcoming Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity and Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number of Volunteers Supporting Event</th>
<th>Number Expected to Attend Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/1</td>
<td>Tabling on Campus</td>
<td>To advertise club, first aid/CPR classes, and take donations.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Many</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/15</td>
<td>Blood Drive @ Pinewood HS</td>
<td>Blood drive in gym</td>
<td>7 + staff</td>
<td>40 units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Updates/Current Developments: Other News/ Updates/ Questions (i.e., elections/change in officers or sponsor, etc.)

*Sam Floren has been elected treasurer.
*Wants to work with the chapter on the Project Band-Aid Non-Violence event in the fall.
*Need help from the chapter on creative fundraising activities.
Part B – Getting Your Club Started

I. Finding Club Service Opportunities

II. School Club Calendar and Important Red Cross Dates
I. Finding Club Service Opportunities

As a Red Cross club, there are a lot of things you can do; the choices are endless. When planning for the upcoming year, the first thing to keep in mind is: What should be your club’s focus? How can you best represent and promote the Red Cross mission and fundamental principles through your club’s initiatives? In addition, you need to come up with projects that are appealing for your peers, have a real impact on your community and advance the Red Cross mission. This can be a far more complicated task.

In this section, we would like to discuss some tools you can use when identifying the best projects for your club.

The Benefits of Going Through a Needs Assessment Process

Going through a group exercise where together with your club members you identify the needs of your local community can be a fun and productive way to find the projects you want to deliver in the upcoming year. There are two main benefits for your club:

- Benefit: Service projects that respond to real needs in your community
  Your projects will be more meaningful as they address real issues impacting your community and they will be more likely to gain support and momentum.

- Benefit: Red Cross mission-specific projects your club undertakes represent the Red Cross symbol and principles in your school.
  You have to keep in mind that you are representing one of the most recognized humanitarian symbols in the world—the Red Cross. You will need to act as Red Cross ambassadors and not just represent a general service club.

Realistically, taking a look at your community should be done at the beginning of the school year or ideally before school has even started so you can hit the ground running. If you feel your club is losing focus or new opportunities have arisen, you might want to take another look at how you are reaching out and serving your community.
‘Must Haves’ Before You Start

Before acting, you need to do some research and gain an understanding of what is happening around you that can impact your club. There are four major elements that you should have in mind when planning your activities and projects for the coming year:

The FOCUS

- **Your School**—Your club is probably one of many at your school, so you need to have a good understanding of what sets you apart from the other clubs and to identify your unique attributes.

- **The Local Community**—Look around, see what is happening with your peers, your neighborhood, town and region. Identify who will benefit from your support and where you can make a difference. You can focus on reaching out to your peers, children, elderly, diverse populations, etc.

- **The Local Red Cross Unit**—The local unit is a great resource you should utilize. Check to see what projects they are working on. See how you can collaborate with them on some of their projects or get support and guidance for your own projects.

The TEAM

Who should work on this?

If you are just starting a new club, make sure to have all the founding members present at a face-to-face meeting.

If your club is already established, you should invite a number of club members to join the meeting (not just the club’s officers). The more people present, the better the chances to gather a lot of valuable insights.

The PROCESS

There are many ways to gather information about your community. You could take a survey, conduct interviews or have a group discussion. Complementary to your preferred approach, our recommendation is to opt for a group discussion. This is a great way to bring the club together, get everyone’s agreement on the next projects your club will be working on and move forward together.

advice from the pros!

Get your school club sponsor and Red Cross contact person to join your club for this group discussion. They can be a valuable resource, pointing out missing information, available materials, potential solutions, etc.
The TOOLS

Our aim is to make the process as easy as possible for you. In the following pages, you will find a number of straightforward, easy-to-use tools that should guide you through the process. Together with your members, go through each section’s discussion points and use the table on the last page to record your findings. Make sure to keep a record of it, since it will be instrumental for future planning.

Mapping the Needs and Identifying the Best Service Opportunities

STEP 1: Finding the Needs Gaps

It is important to start by looking at the present day gaps in your school, community or local Red Cross unit. We developed a list of guiding questions to help in that process. Be sure to come up with your own questions as well.

School

Guiding Questions:

- What are the other clubs at your school doing?
  - Are there other community service clubs at your school?
  - What are they doing that might impact your club’s projects (e.g., running blood drives or training students in CPR)?
- What gaps could your club fill in at your school?
  - Does the faculty need to be trained in CPR? Maybe your club could train them.
  - Is there a disaster/emergency plan at the school? If not, you could take a lead role in creating one or promoting it around campus?

Once you have identified all relevant questions you might want to discuss, please use the School Needs Assessment and fill out all relevant information. Please see the following table.
### Table 1. School Needs Assessment for the Clara Barton Red Cross School Club

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Programs Offered by Other Clubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential Service Opportunities for Your Red Cross</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School representative clubs:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Key Club</strong>: Focus on community service, leadership training (programs: babysitting services, leading community garden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Interact</strong>: Focus on community service (programs: help 3rd graders read, making Clara Barton High School “green”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Habitat for Humanity</strong>: Focus on building homes for the low-income families in a community (programs: youth build team)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Associated Student Body</strong>: Focus on elected student government (programs: run two annual blood drives, in coordination with events)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood drives/staffing and recruiting blood donors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster preparedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR, first aid and AED trainings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring Humanitarian Law champions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraisers—measles, disaster, supporting the local Red Cross unit, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Community

**Guiding Questions:**

- What are the gaps in your community that you can relate to and respond to?
  - Do you have Boy Scout troops that need to be trained in first aid?
  - Are there after-school programs for small children where you could teach them basic skills such as calling 911 or building a disaster kit?
  - Are there any problems affecting your community that are not being addressed and that the American Red Cross could help with?

Once you have identified all relevant questions you might want to discuss, please use the [Community Needs Assessment](#) and fill out all relevant information. In the following chart, you have an example.
Table 2. Community Needs Assessment for the Clara Barton Red Cross School Club

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Community</th>
<th>Community Needs (relevant from your club’s perspective)</th>
<th>Community Needs (addressing some community needs)</th>
<th>Potential Service Opportunities for Your Red Cross</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Youth health and safety training</td>
<td>Salvation Army: Developing programs focused on elderly and diverse populations, etc.</td>
<td>Potential Projects:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fire prevention education (increased number of house fires)</td>
<td>Local Volunteer Center: providing after-school programs, service projects, environment cleanups, etc.</td>
<td>• Youth mass CPR and AED trainings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disaster preparedness (community prone to disaster)</td>
<td>Boys and Girls Clubs: programs covering first aid stations at sporting events, leadership and public speaking trainings for youth, etc.</td>
<td>• Fire safety education for K-12 (use a puppet show for elementary school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outreach to underserved groups (diverse population, increased elderly population, groups remotely located from the chapter headquarters, etc.)</td>
<td>United Way: programs focused on education, low income and health issues.</td>
<td>• Youth leadership sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America: programs focused on training youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through outdoor activities and educational programs</td>
<td>• Fundraising for the local Disaster Relief Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Exploring Humanitarian Law champions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local Red Cross Unit

Guiding Questions:

- What gaps identified by the local Red Cross unit could you help fill?
- Are any of your members CPR instructors who can teach for the Red Cross unit?
- Are there any large fundraisers or events that the chapter needs volunteers for?
- Does your community have a language barrier that your members could help fill so your Red Cross unit can better communicate with the community?

Once you have identified all relevant questions you might want to discuss, please use the **Local Red Cross Needs Assessment** and fill out all relevant information discussed.

Advice from the pros!

We recommend that the local unit's needs assessment should be implemented after mapping out your school and community needs. Again, it would be extremely valuable if you could invite the local Red Cross contact to join you for the unit's needs assessment portion.
Table 3. Local Red Cross Needs Assessment for the Clara Barton Red Cross School Club

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Red Cross Unit</th>
<th>Current Programs Offered by the Local Red Cross Unit</th>
<th>Potential Service Opportunities for Your Red Cross</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programs relevant for youth involvement: Disaster Services</td>
<td>• Home fire safety for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Community Disaster Education</td>
<td>• Exploring Humanitarian Law champions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disaster Action Teams</td>
<td>• Measles fundraisers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Services</td>
<td>• Blood drives (or volunteer at a blood drive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Measles Initiative</td>
<td>• Leadership development trainings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• International Humanitarian Law/Exploring Humanitarian Law</td>
<td>• Support chapter-driven projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preparedness and Health and Safety</td>
<td>• Health and Safety awareness week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CPR and AED trainings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Home fire safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blood Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinating blood drives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Volunteer staffing for blood drives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service to the Armed Forces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Volunteering programs with the veteran hospitals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leadership Development trainings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Heroes Campaign</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP 2: Filling in the Gaps

Earlier in the document we looked at what opportunities were available for your school club. At this point, it is time to fill in the gaps and come up with some concrete project proposals. Please use Map Your Red Cross School Club Programs and let’s take a look at some concrete service opportunities for your club. You have an example in Table 4.

How to Use the Following Document

- Look at the opportunities you identified in relation with your school, community and local Red Cross unit. Please list one opportunity in each row in the column titled Service Opportunities for Your Club.
- In the Checklist column in Table 4, please make sure to look at both check boxes and fill in information as appropriate.
You need to verify if the opportunity relates to the mission of the American Red Cross (to prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters) and fits into one of the core lines of business (Disaster Services, Health and Safety, International Services, Service to the Armed Forces, Biomedical Services. For example, organizing a used clothing drive is a great community service, but does not directly relate to the mission of the American Red Cross. In this case, you would not check the box.

Check the second box if your club has the skills or resources to take advantage of the opportunity. For example: There is no youth information on the chapter’s website. This is an opportunity, but before saying ‘yes’ to creating it, do you have anyone in the club with the right skills to create it? If ‘yes,’ then check the box, if not, leave it blank.

- In the Comments column in Table 4, please write any additional remarks or reminders, highlighting the support you might need from the chapter, opportunities to collaborate with other clubs at your school, etc.

Once you have gone through these consecutive steps, you should have a hefty list of potential projects that can be implemented by your club throughout the academic year. In this resource package, you will find out more on how to organize your projects, what should be on your calendar and more. Get ready to learn more on how to plan, communicate and, eventually, make an impact on your community.

At the end of this process, you should have a good understanding of how your club's projects are connected with your school, community or local Red Cross unit and how you can contribute to expanding the Red Cross presence.

**heads up!**

The check boxes serve as a warning flag that the opportunities found might not be a good fit with the type of initiatives your club should be implementing. Both boxes need to be checked in order for you to move forward, come up with the project plan and get ready to implement the initiative. If only one box is checked, keep the opportunity on an alternative list and see how you can meet all requirements.

**advice from the pros!**

- Make sure to keep a record of the opportunities you have identified as they might be translated into concrete projects at a later date.
- Pay special attention to service opportunities that your members are particularly fond of.
- Keep the needs assessment documents on hand and use them whenever you come up with a new project idea.
- Verify if there is consistency with your previously identified needs and decide on the best way to proceed.
### Table 4. Map Your Red Cross School Club Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Opportunities for Your School</th>
<th>Checklist</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth CPR and AED trainings</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td>Great activity for the end of September as a kickoff for the new academic year (in conjunction with September is National Preparedness Month)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire safety education for K-12 (use puppet show for elementary school)</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td>Potential activity for the spring semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety awareness week</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td>Need to join a “train the trainers” session for the club members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth leadership sessions</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td>Potential to help the chapter organize a Leadership Development Camp in summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising for the local Disaster Relief Fund</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td>March Heroes campaign can be a good opportunity to implement the fundraiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraisers: Measles Initiative, local Red Cross unit-led fundraisers, etc.</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td>Need to discuss with the chapter the process of becoming an EHLC champion. Great potential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring Humanitarian Law champions</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood drives/staffing and recruiting blood donors</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used clothing drive</td>
<td>❑ The opportunity is Red Cross mission-specific and linked to a line of business. ❑ The opportunity found is something the club could possibly do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. School Club Calendar and Important Red Cross Dates

When starting a new school year, there are a number of things already on your agenda: to implement relevant projects, build an efficient team, increase your club’s visibility in the school or local community, etc. Equally important is to keep your members engaged, have a good number of projects implemented each semester and stay mission focused.

A great tool to help you in this planning process is the School Club Calendar. There are a few elements that you need to consider before identifying your major events and writing down the dates.

- Research and identify what is happening in your school and what are some traditional events for your campus. (If you plan a blood drive the same day as the career fair, you will get low participation rates.)
- Identify the events that are taking place in your community and take them into account when planning your activities. (Selling first aid kits at a parents’ event/weekend as opposed to during a lunch break can make all the difference.)
- Conduct a needs assessment and identify some relevant needs in the community, school or specific to your local Red Cross unit that you would like to focus on in the upcoming school year. (Keep in mind that your initiatives have to be mission-specific and you have to have the resources to implement them.)
- Come up with a number of projects you want to implement throughout the year. (A good number to keep in mind is two or three projects per semester.)
- Identify an online calendar that is easy to customize and update. Ensure that you have a way to set up e-mail alerts and reminders for upcoming events. (You can consider using Google groups or incorporate alternative Social Media resources to help you build and customize your calendar.)

Building Your School Club Calendar

In the following section, we will walk you through a step-by-step process that will enable you to build a customized calendar for your club. Feel free to set up your calendar in accordance with the events that are relevant for your school and community.
Step 1.
Look at your school calendar for the year and mark down all major school breaks. You should keep in mind the summer, winter and spring breaks. With some minor exceptions, you should avoid scheduling events during school breaks.

Step 2.
Mark down on your school club calendar all major holiday breaks. Some of the official holiday breaks gain a huge momentum and represent great service opportunities, i.e., Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, Veterans Day, etc. You should consider the following events:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service
- Presidents’ Day
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving

Step 3.
List all major school events. There are a couple of places where you can get the best information: look at the school website, task club members to cover the sports events, social activities, etc. Be as specific as possible. The following are some events you should list:

- Club registration day/week
- Freshmen orientation
- Sporting events (i.e., homecoming, playoffs, etc.)
- School holidays (teacher service days)
- Finals, midterms
- Other clubs’ events (major fundraisers)
- PSAT/SAT/ACT testing, AP/IB exams
- Special school days (career fair, Seniors’ Day)
- Pep rallies/school-wide assemblies
- Dances
- Career fairs
- Volunteer fairs
Step 4.
Identify all local major events for your community with special relevance for your school club. The best places to find relevant information are the local city, county and state government websites. The following are some of the events you might consider:

- Festivals
- Sporting events
- Town/city meetings
- Holiday events
- Parades
- State fairs
- Local Red Cross chapter events

Step 5.
Mark all Red Cross-relevant dates on your calendar. Each year, Red Cross national headquarters issues a Visibility Calendar. Please connect with your local Red Cross unit and make sure you get a sample of the calendar. Please take a look at the Visibility Calendar for the current fiscal year and mark all the important dates on your calendar (link). In addition, you might want to consider some additional dates that have a special relevance for youth volunteers:

- World Red Cross Day—May 8
- Global Youth Service Day—usually the 4th weekend in April
- International Youth Day—August 12
- Make a Difference Day—4th Saturday in October
- National Youth Involvement Month—November

Step 6.
List all projects and initiatives your school club is planning to implement for the upcoming year.

Once you have gone through all these steps, you should find a calendar template you could use. We recommend building your calendar for the entire school year.

Below you will find an example of how to incorporate the dates mentioned above and develop a functional calendar for your club. Each month is broken into four sections so you can put projects where they are most likely to fall.

RedCrossYouth.org/club_in_a_box
# Sample Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>World Red Cross Day</td>
<td>Competition Blood Drive</td>
<td>World Red Cross Day</td>
<td>Summer Safety Fairs</td>
<td>Brainstorming for New Year</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Club Recruitment</td>
<td>Officers Meetings</td>
<td>Social Activities</td>
<td>Health and Safety Project</td>
<td>Spring Recruitment</td>
<td>Red Cross Month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitions Blood Drive</td>
<td>Brainstorming for New Year</td>
<td>Summer Safety Fairs</td>
<td>Leadership Camp</td>
<td>Officers Meetings</td>
<td>Health and Safety Project</td>
<td>Chapter Outreach</td>
<td>Social Activities</td>
<td>Break</td>
<td>Holiday Parade</td>
<td>MLK Day Activity</td>
<td>Spring Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Officers Meetings</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>Leadership Camp</td>
<td>Officers Meetings</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Winter Break</td>
<td>Holiday Parade</td>
<td>MU Day Activity</td>
<td>V-Day Fundraiser</td>
<td>Service Project With Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition Blood Drive</td>
<td>Brainstorming for New Year</td>
<td>Summer Safety Fairs</td>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>Leadership Camp</td>
<td>Officers Meetings</td>
<td>Final</td>
<td>Winter Break</td>
<td>Holiday Parade</td>
<td>MU Day Activity</td>
<td>V-Day Fundraiser</td>
<td>Service Project With Chapter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
<td>Summer Vacation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Look out!** You have a lot going on during these times.
- **Advice:** February is a great time to connect with your chapter about Red Cross Month in March.
- **Advice:** Not much going on here, try something new!

- **Make sure you keep in touch with members over the summer!**
Part C – Planning Your Club Projects and Building Visibility

I. School Club Projects: Ideas, Planning and Budgeting

II. Social Media at Work

III. Communication in a School Club Context
I. School Club Projects: Ideas, Planning and Budgeting

Why Plan Your Projects?

Throughout the semester, you have to balance school, your social life, family time and numerous extracurricular activities, one of them—your Red Cross volunteer activities. As you know, it's not easy. Running a school club is just one of the many things you need to keep on your radar screen. Often, it seems that you are wasting precious time on the planning process when you could simply roll up your sleeves and start working on delivering a project. If you want to avoid unnecessary complications, confusion, conflicts, procrastination and other issues, the key is to have a good plan and a team that is on board with what needs to be done.

Here are some of the benefits to be gained with good project planning:

- **Clear Objectives**—Together with your peers, you could establish what is most valuable to accomplish through your projects. In addition, involving team members in the planning process will enable them to be more committed and motivated to succeed.

- **Accurate Timeline**—You will be able to set a deadline for delivering your project and establish some important dates for implementing the project's activities.

- **Clear Roles and Responsibilities**—You could avoid duplicating the work and prevent potential conflicts and misunderstandings by having clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the project team.

- **Identify Potential Gaps and Risks**—By mapping out how you will execute the project step by step, you will gain a good handle on what resources are missing and some of the critical support needs.

- **Track Work Progress**—At any given time, you will be able to see where you are in the process and what needs to be done in the future.

**Before Starting to Plan Your Projects**

Previously in this resource package, we discussed a number of tools that could help you identify the gaps in your community and school and develop a comprehensive calendar of activities.
Preliminary Steps to Organize Your Project:

**STEP 1. Map Out Your School Club’s Potential Projects and Initiatives**

Before the beginning of the school year, you should host a meeting with your club members, identify the existing gaps in your school and community and come up with a realistic list of project ideas. Please use the Finding Club Service Opportunities document in Part B, Section I to learn more.

**STEP 2. Decide on the Projects to be Implemented by Your Club During the Upcoming School Year**

Depending on the project opportunities identified and the manpower/skills you have in the club, you should decide on the final list of projects to be delivered by your club. You should strive to implement two or three projects per semester.

**STEP 3. Develop a Yearly Calendar of Activities**

Once you have narrowed down your list of projects, you should find the best timeframe and develop a School Club Calendar in Part B, Section II. The calendar will provide an “at a glance” perspective of your workload and your members’ availability, and should help you plan for your specific projects.

Developing a Project Plan

Whenever implementing a new project, it is extremely important to have a general image of the progress of your projects. Equally important is to have the capacity to manage all pertinent project details (e.g., having the printed materials when needed, enough volunteers showing up at the event, informing all club members, etc.). A good project plan will help you cover all details about activities, roles, responsibilities, deadlines and such.

Elements of a Good Project Plan

1. **Preliminary Information:**
   - **Project Summary:** Offers an “at a glance” perspective of the project, covering information on target audience, goals, main results and costs. The project summary should not exceed 100 words.
   - **Project Team:** List all individuals involved in delivering the project. When selecting the project team, please verify if your peers have the skills, time and energy needed to finalize the project implementation.
• **Target Audience:** Spell out who will benefit from your project. Knowing your target audience is extremely important; your project will look completely different if the audience is represented by a cross-section of your peers, the elderly, military veterans, adult blood donors, etc.

2. **Project Goal:**
The goal consists of a clear and concise statement of the project's purpose and intended results. It offers a broad vision of what you wish to accomplish through your initiative. All members of the project team must share the goal, and it should be relevant to your target audience. Some possible examples: help students K-12 to be better prepared to respond to single-family fires, or empower students to gain critical lifesaving skills through first aid and CPR trainings, etc.

3. **Project Objectives:**
This can be viewed as the battle plan that you set in order to get the specific results projected through your initiatives. A key for the success of your project is to have clear, well-defined objectives. The SMART technique is an easy way to verify if you have the right objective for your project:

- **Specific**—Objectives should be concrete, well defined (e.g., deliver a training event, host a blood drive, fundraise for Disaster Relief Fund, etc.).
- **Measurable**—Easy to measure (e.g., number of people who benefited from your project, amount of materials distributed, etc.).
- **Achievable**—The objectives should be feasible and attainable (you have the capacity to deliver the project in a realistic timeline).
- **Realistic**—The objectives can be accomplished with the resources available and by the team members working on the project (e.g., collect 30 units of blood, raise $100 for your local unit).
- **Timely**—You have a specific timeline that marks the start and end date of the project (e.g., implement a three-week campaign, one day health and safety awareness fair, etc.).

4. **Project Outcomes:**
Cover what you accomplished through your project, specifying all results, activities, services or products delivered (e.g., a school club blog, leadership training, $500 raised for the local Disaster Relief Fund, etc.).
5. Project Timeline:
Captures the duration of the project, stating the project start and end dates and all deadlines associated with some key activities in the project. In order to set a realistic timeline, it is essential to have a good understanding of what needs to be accomplished, what some key activities are and what resources are needed or available.

6. Communication and Marketing Strategies:
Streamlines the process that enables you to generate attention and to bring visibility to your project. You have to keep in mind the beneficiaries of your project and identify the best way to connect with them. Make sure to share information with the peers in your school—and don’t forget to celebrate the accomplishments.

7. Resources:
Captures the materials, equipment and people you need in order to accomplish the intended results of your project. It is important to have a clear understanding of all the work that needs to be done in a project in order to map all needed resources. Remember to check with the local Red Cross unit when planning a project; they might be able to provide some critical informational and/or material resources.

8. Budget:
Represents the total amount of money necessary for project implementation. You need to list all expenses and the revenue sources, especially in the case of fundraisers. For example, if you plan a fundraiser, you might need to print materials, to purchase T-shirts, to advertise the event, etc. We developed a Project Budget Template you can use when planning or keeping track of your expenses.

Whether you are using your own template or the Project Plan template proposed in this document, the time spent on mapping out all these components is probably the best time spent toward the success of your projects. Your time is limited and precious, so use it wisely.
The Process of Developing a Project Plan

The task of defining and mapping all elements of a project plan might seem daunting at first. Below, we will guide you through a process that simplifies the task and turns project planning into a fun group activity.

There are two common ways of creating a project plan.

The “Bottom-up” Approach—

There are times when you have a vague idea about a project that you should implement. For example: A club member comes up and says that she is interested in creating a project for Preparedness Month in September. She doesn’t have an idea of what to do, but everyone agrees this is a great opportunity. In these instances, it is easier to plan if you start from listing concrete activities and advance in the process, ending with spelling out the objectives of your project.

Follow the steps below to see how you can come up with a sound project plan when starting from a generic/vague idea. You can also use the Bottom-up Project Plan template to capture the information.

Bottom-up Project Planning Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Schedule a project meeting</td>
<td>You have four club members interested in helping to implement the project for Red Cross Month. Schedule a meeting and invite all of them for a planning session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If possible, invite all club members who want to work on the project to join you for a planning session. The entire process shouldn’t last longer than an hour.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Come up with a concrete project idea</td>
<td>The project you decided to work on is Do More Than Cross Your Fingers—Health and Safety Awareness Week in Your School.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Starting from a generic idea, decide on a specific project or initiative you will be focusing on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Define the goal of the project</td>
<td>Increase awareness of Health and Safety issues among students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• State the project goal. Paint the broad picture and come up with the vision of what you would like to accomplish.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Brainstorm potential activities

- Hold a short brainstorming session and list all possible activities that come to mind related to a health and safety awareness week.

At this stage you should not worry about the timeline or resources available, just be creative and write down all ideas.

Sample brainstormed topics:

- Select five health and safety topics (e.g., flood safety, fire prevention, etc.) and coordinate a school-wide contest with posters shown at lunch
- Organize a scavenger hunt that will feature safety items in your school
- Invite a guest speaker
- Organize a first aid and CPR training event
- Make sure each lunch break has a themed activity in the cafeteria
- Design posters about washing hands

5. Organize activities in general categories

- Revisit the brainstormed activities. Decide which ideas are feasible and would work well together.

Look for a way to group the information so you can obtain a couple of categories. If you had a productive brainstorming session, capturing four or five categories would be ideal.

Category 1. Develop materials (information about the five topics, posters about hand washing, prizes)

Category 2. Safety awareness events (speaker, scavenger hunt)

Category 3. Training (CPR, first aid)

6. Assign resources

- Refer to the activities category. List all human and material resources needed to implement the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 1. Develop materials (information about the five topics, posters about hand washing, prizes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two volunteers to design posters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three volunteers collecting information on the five topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five volunteers distributing materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InDesign suite</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 2. Safety awareness events (speaker, scavenger hunt)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 volunteers running scavenger hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 volunteers staffing the speaker series—distributing fliers, staffing H&amp;S booth, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Assign resources (continued)

- Refer to the activities category. List all human and material resources needed to implement the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category 3. Training (CPR, first aid)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depending on the size of the training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of volunteers recruiting and registering participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of volunteers for logistic support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Identify project results

- Look at the activities categories. The results of your project should be deduced from the categories already listed.

Category 1 Results: Engage students in teaching their peers about health and safety.

Category 2 Results: Guest speaker series on Health and Safety awareness. (Red Cross guest speaker)

Category 3 Results: A mass first aid and CPR training for students.

8. Map project objectives

- Once you establish the desired results of your project, the next step is to determine exactly how you will be able to achieve them.

This process will lead you to formulating the objectives of your project. It is realistic to have 3 or 4 clearly defined objectives for your project.

Objective 1: Develop educational materials customized to help students acquire new health and safety skills.

Objective 2: Collaborate with local Red Cross chapter in delivering first aid and CPR training in the school.

Objective 3: Host a series of events designed to raise awareness on health and safety topics in the school.

9. Verify the logic of your project plan

- Verification: Look back to where you started the process and verify the logic of your planning process:

Be sure you established your project goal correctly and—

- Brainstormed a good number of activities relevant for the project you have in mind;
- Followed a specific logic in grouping the activities in categories;
- Identified the project’s results correctly based on the project activities; and
- Formulated the objectives in accordance with the already identified results.

- Then the objectives have to be specifically tied to the initial goal of the project. You went full circle and you transformed a general idea into a concrete project plan.

heads up!

Capture the information in a Project Plan and you are all set to make a difference and put the Red Cross mission to work.
The “Top-Down” Approach

This approach follows a traditional model of planning your projects. You will start by stating the goal of your project, establish the project’s objectives, identify the results, and in the end develop a list of concrete activities. This approach has proven successful when you have to plan projects with a well-defined end result. For example: You live in Connecticut and a volcano erupts in Indonesia. You have been asked to raise $500 to help the victims of the eruption.

Follow the steps below and see an example of a “top-down” project planning process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. State the goal of the project</strong></td>
<td>Provide financial relief for the victims of the current volcano eruption in Indonesia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You will need to establish the broad vision of what you would like to accomplish by implementing the project.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Formulate the project’s objectives</strong></td>
<td>Objective 1: Raise $500 for the Indonesian volcano eruption victims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Think of the major strategies that will help you achieve the goal and deliver the project.</td>
<td>Objective 2: Energize and expose the students from high school to an international humanitarian action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Objective 3: Disseminate information on American Red Cross International Services and Disaster response operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Identify the project results</strong></td>
<td>Result 1: $500 for volcano relief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Take the above objectives and identify the desired results.</td>
<td>Result 2: A better prepared school and community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Result 3: Stronger collaboration with the local unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Result 4: Enhanced Red Cross visibility in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Map out the specific project activities</strong></td>
<td>Action 1: Contact the local chapter for current information and the amount of support it can provide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• List the concrete steps you need to take to achieve your objectives and get the desired results. You can start by describing the general activities and get as specific as needed when designing the detailed project plan.</td>
<td>Action 2: Come up with the specific fundraising idea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action 3: Gather your team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action 4: Select the date and location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action 5: Run the fundraiser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action 6: Celebrate and inform your community of your success in building visibility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Identify resources

- Look at all project activities and map out the people and the budget needed to successfully implement your project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People needed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of volunteers the day of the fundraiser.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of volunteers developing the marketing materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of volunteers disseminating the information on American Red Cross services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget items:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Red Cross apparel for the volunteers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Printing capacity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logistics—space, refreshments, transportation, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regardless of the specific technique used, you need to verify if there is a connection between different elements of your project plan and if there is a logic flow. Once you have captured the key elements of your project, you can move forward and develop the Project Plan for your project. You are all set now for a successful planning session.
II. Social Media at Work

We know that most of you are frequent users of social media and Internet tools. It's time to make the most of your savvy skills and get your club in the spotlight. Social media enables you to almost instantly connect, track and update all your friends about what is new in your life. In addition, these tools have been proven to be efficient in communicating with fellow officers, publicizing your events, sending out alerts for meetings or organizing your calendars with activities. In another words, it can help you organize your work, communicate efficiently and build visibility.

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, etc. are sites you probably are all too familiar with. If you want to learn more or have access to in-depth information on social media, please visit the following two resources:

- American Red Cross Social Media Guidelines
- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Social Media Toolkit

Social Media and Your Club

When used accordingly, social media can be a tremendous asset for your school club. You can take a proactive role in promoting your achievements and build a solid online presence and a sound reputation for your club.

Before you take a deep dive into exploring the features and capabilities of different sites and tools, we would like to walk you through a quick planning section on how to integrate social media in your school club.

The generic steps are adopted from American Red Cross Social Media Guidelines:

- Select a number of social media avenues you want to establish a presence on. Due to the huge variety, different functionality and resources available, you shouldn't use more than three or four different social media sites.

The specific steps you can take:

- Research what other local Red Cross clubs have a presence on social media sites.
- Identify local Twitter accounts.
- Identify local Facebook, YouTube or Flickr accounts.

- Set up your social media goals. Together with your members, decide what social media tools you are planning to use and what you are trying to accomplish. For example, you can use social media to improve your club's
How Can Social Media Help Your Club?
There are two fundamental directions to take when using social media for your Red Cross club:

I. Building Your Club’s Internal Capacity
You can improve your club’s communication capacity by—

• Setting up an online discussion board (consider using Facebook, Google, Yahoo Groups);
• Directly messaging all group members (consider using Facebook, Google, Yahoo Groups); and
• Having a dedicated email address to send messages to all members (consider using Google, Yahoo Groups).

Organize Your Club

• Work together on developing and reviewing documents (Google Documents).
• Have a virtual library—post minutes and other files (Google Groups).
• Evaluate the work done, design surveys (Google Groups—forms).

Implement your social media strategy and learn from experience. Dedicate enough time to explore different features and be consistent in using the selected tools, updating profiles, blogging, etc. Measure your impact and keep track of the number of hits, Twitter followers, video visualizations, etc.

Make sure you have genuine people joining your private club page and/or group. Always verify that the people who have joined your social group are those who are affiliated with the club. As always, privacy is a big issue; use your best judgment in accepting club members online and posting private contact information. All club requests should usually pass through the page creator and/or administrators.
II. Building Your Club’s Reputation and External Visibility

Club Page

Creating a public group (consider using Facebook, Google Groups)

Suggested items that should go on your main club page:

- A brief explanation of the Red Cross mission
- Information on the club’s schedule of events
- Short descriptions, images and/or videos from recent events hosted by the club
- Contact information for club officers

**heads up!**

A club’s home page can be a great draw for new members, but if it is not managed correctly and updated, it can actually damage your club.

**advice from the pros!**

Advice From the Pros: We cannot stress enough the importance of having relevant and current information posted on the club’s website. In order to make the process manageable, we recommend that the entire officers’ team have administrator rights so that they can make changes as well.
Create a blog (consider using WordPress or Blogger)

- Decide if you have the technical capability and the human power to set up a blog for your club.
- Visit other school club blogs and get a sense of what might work best for your club.
- Experiment and learn more about blogging by submitting stories to www.redcrossyouth.org and asking for feedback and advice.
- Then follow the technical requirements and go live.

Event Advertising

- Create an event where people can RSVP, upload videos, pictures, links and send reminders to attendees (Facebook).
- Host videos you have created (YouTube).
- Send short messages (Twitter).

Other Commonly Used Internet Resources

- Schedule meetings easily (Doodle).
- Invite guests to an event (Evite).
- Host pictures from events to share (Flickr, Picassa, Facebook).
- Send large files (e.g., videos) (Rapid Share, YouSendIt).
III. Communication in a School Club Context

All your social interactions with family, friends and school are broadly conditioned by how you share and interpret messages, data, feelings, non-verbal cues; overall, how you exchange information. The topic of communication is extremely broad; for the purpose of the present document we will discuss only those issues pertaining to communication in the context of a school club; from project communication, involvement to general work atmosphere.

The communication exchanges with your peers, your officers team or general members, faculty sponsor or your Red Cross contact play a key role in determining the success of your group.

Depending on the size of your school club, the majority of the work will be done in small teams. In order to ensure efficient teamwork, you will need to pay special attention to how the members communicate among themselves, as well as how they share information with external groups or identify opportunities.

Efficient team communication will impact:

- **Project planning and execution**—from setting the goals or timelines, to the final evaluation of your project. It is vital to communicate all aspects pertaining to efficient project planning and ensure that all team members are bringing their contributions in the process.

- **Decision-making process**—gathering relevant information or identifying creative solutions aiming to overcome project barriers will rely heavily on how the information is shared as well as on the active participation of team members.

- **Roles and responsibilities**—good team communication will ensure clear role descriptions and task assignments and avoiding conflicts and duplication of the work that needs to be done.

- **Development opportunities for team members**—club members can acquire new skill sets as they get exposure to new leadership roles or take on additional roles with increased exposure to interactions.

- **Overall work atmosphere**—club membership should be in an atmosphere of trust and accountability and in a creative and fun environment.
Communication Types

When referring to communication in the context of a school club, we can identify two main communication types that need extra consideration:

- **Internal communication** refers to all communication exchanges with your officers, club members, faculty sponsor and Red Cross contact.
- **External communication** covers the information shared with your school officials, local community partners, organizations, media, etc. There are specific requirements for both types and you should use different strategies when employing them.

**Internal Club Communication**

This can be characterized as less formalized compared to the external communication; it has to be structured on an ongoing basis, enabling a constant, transparent exchange of information. It is important to have a strategic approach to your internal communication. In other words, do not just react to conflict situations or crises in your club. You need to have a good handle on what is communicated and how things are communicated with your peers, officers, and club members. Keep in mind, it is important to constantly share updates with your groups.

**Some specific tips for communicating within your club:**

**Officers to Officers**

- Hold an officers team meeting before the beginning of the academic year. Assign and discuss the specific roles and responsibilities with your team and streamline a clear communication plan. Set clear objectives and responsibilities and you will keep your club meetings focused and your projects on track.
- Set clear communication expectations. At the first officers team meeting, decide and agree what will be the prevalent form of communication (i.e., email, Facebook, etc.). Make sure each officer agrees to regularly check his or her email, etc.
- Use every method possible to stay in contact. Call their phones, send text messages, and use instant messaging and other social media. Remind them to periodically check their messages and be aware of recent developments.
- Listen, listen, and listen! You do not always have to do all the talking. Listen to others’ ideas and comments and keep in mind what you want to accomplish. Guide the discussions and cover all topics that need to be discussed.
General Members

- Welcome members at every meeting and cultivate a positive environment for interactions.
- Stay in touch with members and check in with them periodically.
- Email the meeting minutes immediately after the meeting, before people forget what was discussed at the meeting.
- Create a Facebook group, or use other social media outlets. Many students don’t check email regularly; use other online tools to stay in touch.
- Send meeting reminders and other important announcements over the school communication system.
- Ask for approval from administrators; if granted, post flyers of upcoming events in approved areas of your school.
- Make phone calls to members when you need to share important and/ or urgent information.
- Encourage members to voice their opinions on how the club might improve its activity. You might get useful suggestions, and the members will feel they bring suggestions that are taken into consideration.
- Remember to learn from your peers. Listen to others’ ideas and comments and see how you can improve.

Faculty Sponsor

- Whenever appropriate, invite your faculty sponsor to join the officer or general meetings.
- Copy your faculty sponsor on all relevant emails so that he or she is aware of all club activities.
- Try to have a periodic dialogue with your faculty sponsor. He or she can be a valuable resource for your group.

Local Red Cross Unit Contact

- At the beginning of the year, establish the specific expectations and requirements you have to consider when working with the local Red Cross unit. For details, please see the “Working With Your Local Red Cross” document.

advice from the pros!

Sometimes, when you have to deal with time-sensitive issues, you can opt to meet only with your officer team. There are times when you have club members who miss meetings. How do you keep them informed? More importantly, how do you keep them engaged and connected? You might consider sending a brief email update to all members covering the key topics that were discussed. It is an efficient way to share information and ensure all members have access to latest developments on the projects or issues relevant for your club.
School Administrators

- Communicate well in advance any relevant information on fundraisers and other activities that need the school’s official approval; the paperwork might have to be approved by several people and it can be a time-consuming process.
- Meet school administrators in person rather than using email, when appropriate. Emails can easily get overlooked in overflowing inboxes or be sent straight to spam mail.
- Keep a good relationship with the associated student body/student government at your school. They are just like normal school administrators, because they run the school activities. Report club activities as necessary, and follow their specific communication requirements.
- Inform the school newspaper or webmaster on what's going on in the club and share the dates for all upcoming events.

External Club Communication

External communication refers to all messages and information exchanged with other organizations, groups or individuals outside of your club. Independent of the specific communication outlets used, from social media, to a newsletter or website, there are two significant aspects that should be of interest to your club when it comes to external communication:

- **Building your club’s image and reputation**—your humanitarian work gains momentum when it is shared. You have the power to inspire and mobilize others. Make sure to share updates with your peers on your current projects and celebrate your accomplishments. It is a great way to promote information on the Red Cross and build new partnerships.
- **Expanding your club’s membership**—showcasing your key accomplishments and signature events makes a powerful statement on the impact you have in the community. Sharing relevant updates with external audiences can work as your most powerful recruitment tool.

Representing one of the most recognized symbols in the world, you should pay special attention to what you are communicating with external audiences and how you are sharing the information. In the following section, we will guide you through a discussion on Red Cross brand guidelines and the importance of having a consistent and unified message.

Red Cross Brand Guidelines

The Red Cross stands as a worldwide symbol of goodwill and humanitarianism. A trusted and respected emblem is invaluable; through consistent usage, our organization is stronger and able to communicate a unified message. In this

RedCrossYouth.org/club_in_a_box
document, you will learn the basics of how to use the logo and the specific Red Cross language in order to maintain and cultivate its credibility.

**Red Cross Logo**

All your Red Cross club external communications will need to display the specific Red Cross logo. Common uses include: T-shirts, buttons, web pages and flyers. The Red Cross brand consists of two main parts:

- The American Red Cross logo.
- The American Red Cross language (style).

All Red Cross units follow standard [American Red Cross Brand Guidelines](#). Please take some time and read more about key requirements when using the Red Cross logo.

In addition, we have included the “cheat sheet” in this guide, which you can use when talking to T-shirt vendors or others who may be working with the logo. See the document titled “Brand Standards at a Glance”.

Here are the basic guidelines you need to follow when using the American Red Cross logo:

- The cross should be red and the type black.
- The cross should appear only on a clean white background (including on colored T-shirts) (exceptions: jewelry).
- Nothing should be set on top of the cross (text, pictures, etc.).
- The cross should not be altered in any way except shrinking/enlarging with the same ratio.

A standard [Red Cross logo](#) should be used at all times.
Here are examples of improper uses and what to avoid:

- Do not alter the cross or logotype, enlarge or rearrange one element, use a different color or font or re-create it in any way.
- Do not use drop shadows, run type over the cross or use other graphic devices to alter the logo in any way.
- The cross and logo are not design elements and should never be used in repetitive patterns, as bullets or borders or in other graphic continuances.

Style Guidelines

When talking about the American Red Cross on your website or on any official material, it is important to follow the officially approved Red Cross style. Here are the basic guidelines:

- Refer to the organization as the American Red Cross on first reference, and the Red Cross thereafter.
- Don’t ever use the acronym ARC to represent the organization.
- The legal name of the organization is The American National Red Cross. (Note that the word “The” is capitalized.) Use the legal name only in legally binding documents and in publications committing the Red Cross to the expenditure of funds.
- In materials, you should use the Akidenz-Grotesk or Georgia fonts.

Our logo is an incredibly powerful tool. It tells a story about commitment, humanitarianism and service. Misusing it dilutes the value of the Red Cross logo. It is in our power to use it accordingly, and to use it properly.
Part D – Managing Your Club

I. Recruit, Retain, Recognize School Club Members—Essentials of Working With Your Peers

II. Making the Most of Your Meetings

III. School Club Officers Training
I. Recruit, Retain, Recognize School Club Members—Essentials of Working With Your Peers

There are many different stages in the life of a school club. Some of you might just be starting a club, while others have a well-established program. Regardless of how advanced your club is, member recruitment, retention and recognition are always a challenge. In the following section, we discuss some strategies that will enable you to recruit new members, do a better job of keeping existing ones and recognize those members who have made a difference and followed up on their commitments.

I.1. Recruiting New Club Members

At the beginning of a new school year, together with your officers’ team you should develop a recruitment plan and set some specific directions for recruiting and involving your peers in the activities of your club.

*Things you should keep in mind before deciding on your recruitment strategy: Why do young people volunteer?*

When making the pitch to your peers about joining the club, it is important to know what excites them. What are they interested in? Why would they decide to embrace your cause and join the Red Cross club?

Here are some reasons why youth decide to volunteer with American Red Cross:

- The ability to make a difference
- Feeling good about helping others
- Believing in the mission and values of the Red Cross
- Gaining leadership skills and development opportunities
- Doing meaningful work that is fun, with friends

*What are your real membership needs?*

Before planning to recruit new members, you have to have a solid understanding of your club’s present situation and growth potential. If you are just starting a new club, you will mostly rely on the officers’ team and a handful of enthusiastic members. A consistent recruitment effort would probably take place at the end of the first semester, once you have a better understanding of how your club functions and your real membership needs.

If you have an already-existing club, it is important to distinguish between active club members (attending all club meetings, heavily involved in implementing new projects, etc.) and volunteers needed for implementing a specific project. The most important
An element in determining your membership needs is represented by your club’s workload. You will need to take a look at the number of projects planned for the entire school year and at the additional functions needed to be covered (i.e., developing/maintaining a club blog, designing marketing materials, fundraising, etc.). These elements will play an important role in determining the number of members needed for implementing all above-mentioned projects and ensuring a solid growth of your Red Cross club.

What would be the best avenues to recruit new members?

Each school brings some unique opportunities and resources that will help you in your recruitment efforts. Your club’s social network is always a great resource to consider. Make sure to include your peers who expressed interest in learning more about your club and those people who help out occasionally. Also, connect with other clubs in your school or at youth-serving organizations. In addition, word of mouth is a great avenue to use; do not hesitate to personally ask friends and classmates to join the club. Talking to people directly about the club and telling them why they should join is a powerful tool. In addition, take advantage of all opportunities to advertise, even when you are not conducting a specific recruitment campaign. It is important to use flyers, posters and other promotional materials to build visibility for your club.

Designing Your Recruitment Strategy

Your recruitment strategy will vary greatly based on the reasons you are conducting a recruitment campaign: from recruiting new members who will be engaged with the club for the long-term to recruiting volunteers for a single project implemented by your club.

Regardless of the specific objectives, all recruitment strategies should have two major components:

1. Creating “the ask”

Whenever aiming to recruit new club members or volunteers for a specific project, you should have a strong case. Together with your officers and/or general club members, develop some key talking points that would be used when recruiting new members.

Your pitch should cover the following issues:

- The club’s mission and values
- The club’s service-delivery focus (i.e., blood drives, CPR trainings, etc.)
- The elements that set the Red Cross club apart from other service organizations or youth-led groups
- Key responsibilities for new school club members
- Benefits and incentives associated with joining the club
Some specific requirements that you need to keep in mind when generating the recruitment talking points:

- Present the information in the most concrete and specific way possible. Give examples and share success stories.
- Emphasize the exciting/engaging aspect of the project assignments; present the fun, enjoyable elements associated with being a club member.
- Capture the rewarding aspects of projects and initiatives; stress the challenge to make a difference and the commitment to represent the Red Cross symbol. Tie this step in with the information on what motivates your peers to volunteer.

2. Making “the ask”

There are different approaches you can use when recruiting new members, depending on your specific membership goals and needs. Regardless, you should schedule at least two major recruitment campaigns—one in the fall and the other in the spring.

There are a number of avenues used to share information on your club, build visibility and generate interest among your peers. Out of the huge variety, you should consider the following:

Face-to-face meetings: you can schedule a specific informative meeting and invite all your peers who expressed an interest in your club. Make sure to plan an interactive presentation, share information on your successes and inspire others to join. Invite your senior members to be present at the meeting.

Service projects or special events: the best way to make the case for recruiting new members is by the power of example. Invite your peers to join some of the events implemented by your club on campus or in the community; demonstrate that you can have fun while making an impact and helping others.

In addition to the direct interactions, you can use social media and other avenues to recruit members. However, making flyers and posters should add to, not replace, the personal ask.

The following are some suggestions:

- Place flyers and posters in busy areas in your school.
- Make announcements advertising the club over the school communication system.
- Get on your school's video announcements.
- Get an article in your school's newspaper or newsletter.
- Pass out small giveaways (e.g., bookmarks) with information about the club.

A word of caution about the last suggestion: Creating a stand-alone website takes a lot of time and effort, needs constant updating and usually helps in communicating with existing members rather than recruiting new ones. Maybe you should consider integrating alternative social media resources like a Twitter group.
• Start a Facebook group and invite your friends to join.
• Spread the word through other social networking websites.
• Email friends about joining the club.
• Create a website.

When using any of these methods of communication, make everything look professional and ensure that the American Red Cross logo is used correctly. This is important in creating a good image of your club. Some tips and resources can be found in the Social Media at Work (Part C, Section II) and Communication in a School Club Context (Part C, Section III) documents.

Recruitment Follow-Up
After taking these steps, making the appeal and connecting with your peers through face-to-face meetings or indirect communication, follow up and ask people if they would be interested to join your club. If you get their commitment, give details on the next steps to becoming an active member (meeting information, sharing contact information, etc.) and don’t forget to introduce them to the team and thank them for their pledge.

Collaborating With Other Youth Organizations
If there are other service clubs or organizations at your school, such as National Honor Society or Key Club for high schools, ask the leaders of these clubs about sharing with their membership information about volunteer opportunities with the Red Cross club. This approach will work best in the instances when you can implement some joint initiatives or you just need volunteers for a specific project. Collaborating with other groups will help spread the word about the Red Cross club and allow you to get started on service projects without being limited by a lack of volunteers.

II.2 Retaining Club Members
Retention demonstrates your club’s ability to keep members active and engaged. Most school clubs have a fluctuating membership base. Whether you are in your first year or you have a prestigious club with years of experience, you might struggle with retention issues for various reasons.
There are times when you will have episodic volunteers or members, or peers interested in working with you on a specific project, and you should be prepared to deal with these specific instances.

In general, youth and young adults tend to commit their voluntary services for a longer period of time and take on the challenges of building a sustainable Red Cross club together. When growing your membership base, together with your officers’ team, you will need to reassess the club structure and explore how you can expand the leadership team and adopt a more advanced club structure. For more information, please see Red Cross Club Structures document in Part A, Section III.

Inevitably, not everyone will stay with the club the whole year, but there are some strategies you can use to improve your club’s ability to retain members:

- **Communication is key.** Be transparent in sharing information with your members. Keep them up-to-date with all major developments for your club, request feedback and make them part of the decision-making process. Learn from past mistakes and improve your interactions with the general members. Students lead busy lives; do your best to make sure that your volunteers are in the loop at all times.

- **Be proficient in managing club meetings.** Host well-structured meetings and pay close attention to the general atmosphere. Make sure to use icebreakers, establish a welcoming work environment and manage conflicts in a professional manner. Please check Running Effective Meetings in Section II and ensure you cover all details.

- **Monitor your members’ workload.** Burned out or bored members are two extreme situations you need to avoid. It is important to involve the entire team starting with the planning stages of the project and empower club members to take ownership of the project they are implementing.

- **Get started on service projects.** Most new clubs tend to have planning meetings without getting involved in real service projects in the school and community, and then lose critical members along the way. Try to find projects suitable for small numbers of volunteers as soon as possible, so members can feel that they are making a difference. Try to have small-scale service projects at general meetings, like making cards for veterans.
• **Create leadership and development opportunities.** Often, during stressful times, the president has the tendency to take charge of everything, but whenever possible, let other officers, committee leads or club members take some responsibilities as well. This will allow your volunteers to take ownership of the club, have a sense of the impact and difference they make, and cultivate their overall personal and professional growth.

• **Have fun!** Ensure you have the opportunity to know each other and socialize. There are times your members will stay for the friendship.

### 1.2 Tracking Club Members Information

Having accurate information on your club members, the volunteer hours your club dedicated to a project, the number of hours served by a club member during a semester, the best way to contact a club member, etc., all represent important elements in ensuring volunteer retention.

Ideally, all your club members should be registered volunteers with the local Red Cross unit. They should have their records at the local unit and should have attended an official Red Cross orientation.

As a leadership team, you should have an accurate record of volunteer hours and contact information for all your club members. There are a number of tools and software solutions on the market that can help you track your volunteers. The easiest and most convenient way is to use an Excel spreadsheet. If you are not familiar with building spreadsheets, you can follow an Excel tutorial and learn some of the basic functions.

When tracking volunteers, you should keep in mind **three different sets of information**:

- **Overall volunteering information**: essential for your activity reports, recruitment campaigns or when writing funding/small grants proposals.

  You should collect data on the following items:
  - Number of club members
  - Number of volunteering hours (per semester or per year)
  - Number of spontaneous volunteers (your peers who joined for a limited period of time to help out implementing a project)

- **Contact information for club members**: should cover relevant information on your officers and members, covering primary contact information, roles, attendance and volunteer hours. You might already have a tracking mechanism for capturing information on your members. We developed an **Excel template for tracking club members** that might be valuable, especially for clubs that are just starting their activity.

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**heads up!**

Try to plan large events during parts of the semester/quarter when not much is going on. If members are concerned about a big final, you may have fewer volunteers than you need to pull off a big event.

**advice from the pros!**

Retention is key to any group or club. It's easy to get people out to one meeting, have them put their contact information on a sign-up sheet and then never hear from them again. It's crucial to have a retention strategy that works and that you make consistent. The most important piece of advice we have is that if there aren't meaningful service projects and activities, members won't stick around. Your retention rate is often a key indicator in how successful your club will be.
• **Information on prospective club members:** obtained as a result of attending school fairs or a recruitment campaign for your club. This information is vital for your recruitment efforts and for renewing your club membership.

*You should track the following items:*
- A list with people who expressed interest in joining your club (names and contact information)
- Dates the information was collected
- Follow-up status – follow-up actions with individuals who expressed an interest in joining the club

### 1.3 Recognizing Club Members

Recognizing the work done by your club members, the time and energy committed to implement projects must be a priority for your leadership team. As a general rule, it is crucial to recognize all members for their contributions and good work.

An indispensable tool in recognizing the people who walked the extra mile and stood out through exemplary commitment and service is provided by your capacity to **track the volunteer hours and activities reports**. Make sure you have a system in place that enables you to monitor the hours and involvement of your members.

Recognizing your peers can be as simple as sending a thank-you note after an event or a certificate of appreciation at the end of the year. Through recognition, you can show your members that their time and effort is valued. There are many ways to recognize your members, but at the very least, personally thank them genuinely for their contribution. Remember, praise the person, not the work that was done.

Some recognition ideas:

- Present members with pins, certificates and T-shirts.
- Recognize a “Volunteer of the Month.”
- Create an end-of-the-year recognition event for your outstanding members in conjunction with other Red Cross clubs in neighboring schools.
- Share outstanding stories of members with the local Red Cross and/or school newspaper.
- Nominate volunteers for American Red Cross or other outside awards.

learn from your peers!

You should consider small gestures that will bring new energy to your executive meetings, such as buying coffee for your club officers every week. It has proven to be an efficient way to share appreciation, and small rewards like this can go a long way in building a cohesive team.
II. Making the Most of Your Meetings

There are numerous types of meetings you might need to hold as a Red Cross club. First, there are officers’ meetings, which serve to strategize, solve problems and organize and plan club activities. You also have general club meetings, which allow all members to come together and discuss ideas, plan events and get relevant updates, or meetings with other school clubs or faculty to discuss issues. Even though you might have different reasons for holding meetings, there are some generic steps outlined below that apply to a wide majority of situations.

Struggling with limited time and conflicting priorities, it is important to plan your meetings well in advance and have a clear calendar with dates and locations. There are four different phases that you should follow when planning and running an effective meeting. In the following section, we will guide you through the process and discuss some resources you might use.

II.1 Planning the Meeting

It is extremely important to clarify what you are trying to accomplish through your meetings. Before setting your objectives, please take a look at the following issues and try to identify what is most relevant in your context:

- **Purpose of the meeting**—decide on the reason you are holding the meeting: sharing information, brainstorming, planning next steps on a project, receiving status updates on club activities, troubleshooting and solving conflicts, etc.
- **Outcomes**—what you are trying to get out of the meeting: member’s agreement, project plan, new ideas, shared information, updates, etc.
- **Topics to be discussed**—prepare a meeting agenda and make the most out of the limited time you have available. Cover as much information as possible without rushing.
- **Attendance**—decide who should attend the meeting. Is the meeting limited to club officers, for a specific committee or open to general members?
- **Date, time and location**—lunch break or after-hours? School or local Red Cross unit? Make sure to select a time and location convenient for the majority attending the meeting.

The next step you need to take is collating these answers into a neat, structured meeting agenda.

Advice from the pros!

Before deciding that you need to have a meeting with your members, you need to carefully review some things to avoid. A face-to-face meeting is not the best format for—

- General updates on the club’s projects: you can request this information via e-mail;
- Reenergizing your members’ commitment for the club: you can schedule separate one-on-one meetings and have an in-depth conversation with the members struggling with such issues; or
- Getting everyone’s agreement on an issue: you can assign the project lead to have specific conversations with members.
What is a meeting agenda?

A meeting agenda is an outline of the topics that would be discussed during a meeting, giving participants time to prepare beforehand. Agendas are sent out prior to meetings—typically a day or two in advance.

Developing a Meeting Agenda

There are a number of things to consider when creating a meeting agenda. Focus on the critical things that need to be discussed and make sure to set clear priorities. There are some important elements to be captured in a meeting agenda, namely:

- **Start by establishing the time frame for your meeting.** If you have a number of topics to cover, instead of rushing through, you can split them up and either have a separate meeting or follow up with an email.
- **Use an icebreaker.** Start out with something that boosts the energy level and creates a productive work environment. Your members should feel welcome and their contributions valued.
- **Announce the topics** to be covered during the meeting and review past activities or issues that need to be wrapped up.
- **Tackle the most important/time critical item on the agenda first.** It is important to discuss the most important item at the beginning of the meeting, making sure it gets as much time as needed.
- **Address the remaining items on your agenda.** If you need to come up with new ideas and brainstorm on some topics, place the item last on your agenda. It might eat up all your time and you might have critical items that weren’t addressed due to the time crunch.
- **Reiterate all decisions made** and all items on your members’ agendas. Remind everyone of the next meeting time, date and location and thank everyone for their participation.

The meeting agenda should serve as your timekeeper. Monitor the time allocated for each of the topics; if there are delays or the discussion takes longer than planned, consider adjusting the agenda, expediting some conversations, pushing for a decision or assigning the topic to be wrapped up in an officers’ meeting.

heads up!

Creating agendas for each meeting is a responsibility of the club leadership team. This will allow the club’s officers to focus on specific topics and use the club time effectively.

learn from your peers!

Make sure your agendas account for lag time—budget about five minutes for people to get there, sign in and wrap up extended discussions. It is realistic to have some time set aside for these situations; they will occur invariably. Make sure you have enough time to cover all items on your agenda and all officers are on board.
Following is a Sample Agenda for your club’s first meeting of the year.

Note: If applicable, indicate the break times and the names and roles of guests joining the meeting.

Setting Up the Meeting

Prior to the meeting, you need to ensure that you secured the following aspects:

- Location
- Time
- Audiovisual
- Guests—faculty sponsor, Red Cross contact, others if applicable

It is extremely important to communicate to your peers, in due time, information about the meetings. In an ideal case, your club should have a calendar of meetings for each semester developed in collaboration with your officers’ team. Reminders are proven to be efficient tools for keeping everyone informed and ensuring good meeting participation.

Most importantly, you need to use a number of different communication avenues to share information with all of your club members. You should consider sending messages via e-mail, phone, school announcements and Facebook.

Once developed, the meeting agenda should be shared with the club members, allowing time to prepare in advance, if needed.

Running the Meeting

Starting your meeting on time always sends a professional message; at the very latest, you need to start your meeting no more than five minutes after the time announced. Don’t confuse your meeting with a lecture. Think of it as a structured discussion or conversation; ensure active participation, positive feedback and a great group dynamic.

There are some important elements to cover during each meeting:

- **Make introductory remarks:** welcome participants, share what you are trying to accomplish, address housekeeping issues, review communication rules, and assign a time keeper and a note keeper.
- **Focus on your agenda:** cover all items captured in the agenda; make sure to stay on time and focus on the desired outcomes.
• **Manage difficult situations or participants:** address complaints, ensure equitable opportunities for all members to bring their contributions, and facilitate a positive environment for discussions.

• **Wrap up the meeting:** summarize key discussion points and decisions, remind key tasks assigned to members, announce the next meeting and thank participants.

You might be wondering what meeting minutes are. They are detailed notes taken during the course of a meeting, documenting all key topics discussed for future reference. In a nutshell, you will ask the note taker to follow the agenda and fill in the blanks with some key deliverables.

There are a number of benefits associated with capturing the information discussed during your club meetings:

- Information for the members who could not attend the meeting
- Serves as a reference document for the officers’ team
- Follow-up tool—(use as a reminder) for members who committed to work on specific assignments

**Meeting Follow-Up**

Especially after general club meetings, make sure to meet with the rest of your club’s officers and get their specific feedback on the general atmosphere, inquire if the meeting met its purpose and if there were any outstanding items that you need to follow up on.

Be sure to send out the meeting minutes no later than two days after the meeting. Highlight all assigned tasks and deadlines you agreed on.

**Tips and Strategies for Improving Your Meetings**

Remember, all effective meetings should have the following:

- A facilitator
- A structured agenda
- A clear time frame
- Specific objectives

In other words, there should be a reason why your peers are coming together to be a part of your Red Cross club.
The following is a checklist you can use to ensure that you captured some essential aspects of an effective meeting:

- ✓ Meet with your leadership team prior to each club meeting; have a joint decision on the items covered by the agenda and get everyone’s agreement of the purpose and outcomes of the meeting.

- ✓ Create a fun, interactive atmosphere by involving all participants at the beginning of the meeting in an icebreaker or team-building activity.

- ✓ If possible, have snacks at your meetings (there can be a sign-up list among club members for this).

- ✓ Make sure that all members have the opportunity to actively participate in the discussions and that their contributions are welcomed and valued.

Additional information on how to effectively run a meeting can be found in the School Club Officers Training document in Section III.

advice from the pros!

Designate one point person to take the minutes at every meeting and an alternate to assist with documentation should the primary note taker be unavailable. If both are unavailable, the note taker can be determined on a voluntary basis.
III. School Club Officers Training

Planning for the Officers Training

At the beginning of every school year, a new leadership team is getting ready to take responsibility for the school club; to commit their time, energy and passion; aiming to do more, reach further and increase the Red Cross presence in the school.

Being a school club officer is not an easy job. You should be ready to:

- Find a good balance between school, social life and your commitments as a Red Cross volunteer.
- Inspire your peers by the power of example and build a reliable team.
- Implement projects that respond to real needs and are true to the Red Cross mission.
- Identify what resources are available, be creative and work on a shoestring budget.
- Assess the skills your club members bring forward and identify how you can make the most of them.

It is recommended that before the start of the new school year, you host a training session for the club officers. There are some specific things you should consider when planning to run an officers training:

- It helps you build a solid team and sets up the fundamentals of working together as a leadership team throughout the year.
- It provides the new officers with the opportunity to plan a meeting and gain insight on what works and what are some areas where they need to improve their skills.
- It gives officers the opportunity to think proactively, set rules for efficient collaboration, and clarify roles and expectations.
- It creates an environment for open dialogue and provides officers with the opportunity to ask questions and get prepared for handling difficult situations.

How should you use the guide?

In the following section, you will find resources and guidance on how to run a school club officers’ training. Ideally, an external person (faculty sponsor or local Red Cross contact) should be the facilitator for this session. If this option is not available, the club president or a senior club officer can facilitate as well.

There are two separate modules, and each of them has recommendations for the content to be covered, as well as a number of exercises. The guide is self-explanatory and gives you the opportunity to customize the content according to the needs of the group you are working with.
School Club Officers Training – Facilitator Guide

1. Introduction

Time: 15 minutes

Issues to be covered:

• **Brief introduction** of the participants (club officers and possible guests—school club sponsor and Red Cross contact person).

• **Create an engaging atmosphere** – Consider using a fun icebreaker you learned during your previous leadership trainings. For more resources, you can follow the link to [Icebreakers](#) or simply research an exercise that will best fit your purpose.

2. Purpose and Expectations

Time: 10 minutes

Issues to be covered:

• **Training purpose**—Why did you decide to host this training? What do you want to get out of it? Share with the participants the agenda for the day and ensure they are comfortable with the proposed schedule.

  Possible examples:
  – Understand the mission of the American Red Cross and how it translates into your club’s activity
  – Discuss the general structure, roles and responsibilities of members and officers of your club
  – Strengthen your officers’ team

• **Member expectations**—Engage the participants in a dialogue and find out their specific expectations with regard to this specific training. Try to understand what would be the most valuable information to take away from this training session.

*Note: It is important that at the end of the exercise you clarify what will be covered and what is unrealistic to expect. Take down all ideas and look into topics that need to be covered during another meeting.*

3. Decide on a Module and Begin

We understand that time, space and participation might be an issue when you are trying to host a day-long session. Because of this, we decided to split this training into two modules. Although we think it is best to set aside a full day and complete both modules, we understand your possible difficulties and made it easier to conduct two separate trainings. Enjoy!
Module I. Red Cross Club at a Glance

The purpose of the module is to ensure a common understanding among the club’s officers of the specific nature of your club, structure, and key initiatives delivered and to help them build a compelling case for your Red Cross club.

I. Red Cross School Club at a Glance

I.1. The Red Cross School Club – Who Are We?

Time: 10 minutes

Issues to be covered:

- Discuss the American Red Cross Mission and Fundamental Principles
  - Read aloud the American Red Cross Mission and Fundamental Principles. Use a number of resources that exemplify the power of the Fundamental Principles and make sure everyone has a good understanding of the importance of our mission and fundamental principles.
  - Give specific examples (think of concrete projects implemented by your local Red Cross or even your club).
  - Include a brief history of the American Red Cross and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.
- Discuss what sets you apart in the school as a Red Cross club
  - You might want to talk about the unique things the Red Cross does in your community, or at the national or international levels. (Please look at the Finding School Club Service Opportunities document in Part B, Section I and you should get a better sense what is unique about your Red Cross club.)

I.2. The Structure of the Red Cross School Club – How We Function?

Time: 15 minutes

Issues to be covered:

- Club’s independence—as a Red Cross club, you receive support and guidance from your school and local Red Cross unit, but, ultimately, it is you who decide the specific focus of your club. Be sure to remember that your club represents the Red Cross symbol in your school and act accordingly.
- Club’s structure—please visit the document Red Cross Club Structures in Part A, Section III. If your club already exists, discuss your current structure and any relevant changes that need to be made. If you are just starting your club, identify the structure that fits best with your specific situation. At this point, you should have your club constitution available to propose any relevant changes.
- Relationship with the school—discuss the specific requirements promoted by your school, the roles and responsibilities, and share the name and contact information for the faculty sponsor. If present at your meeting, allow your faculty sponsor the opportunity to bring clarity on any relevant topics.
- Relationship with the local Red Cross chapter—share the name and contact information for the local Red Cross contact person and discuss roles and responsibilities. If present, invite your local contact to bring clarifications and share any relevant information.
I.3. The Service Delivery of the Red Cross School Club – What Do We Do?

Time: 10 minutes

Issues to be covered:

If you are a new club:

- Discuss initiatives specific to Red Cross lines of business: Disaster Services, Biomedical Services, Health and Safety Services, International Services and Service to the Armed Forces. Give specific examples of projects for each line of business and identify initiatives that can be implemented by your club.

  Note: Research websites for already-existing Red Cross clubs. Find out what they are doing and list ideas to bring up and possibly implement with your peers.

If you are an existing club:

- List all successful activities implemented by your club in the last couple of years.
- Discuss how you can diversify the services delivered by your club and respond to some needs specific to your school and/or local community.

  Note: Make sure that after this meeting and before each school year, you reference the Map Your Red Cross School Club Programs sample in Section B to identify and explore other project ideas your club can put into practice.

I.4. Our Red Cross Story—Making the Case for Your School Club

Time: 1 hour

Issues to be covered:

- Make the case for your school club and customize it for various target audiences. Please use: Your Club – Your Story exercise.

Session Debrief: before wrapping up the session, make sure to follow up with the participants with a number of questions. Some issues you might consider discussing include:

- Briefly mention what sets your club apart as a Red Cross club in your school.
- Name the faculty sponsor and some key roles associated with him or her.
- Clarify the mission-specific requirement of all school club projects.
- Explain the importance of having a unified message that spells out the very essence of your school club.
Module II. Building a Team and Running Effective Meetings

The purpose of the module is to help school officers gain a better understanding of the unique skills and talents everyone brings forward. In addition, they will gain some relevant information on how to communicate efficiently with club members and how to run effective meetings.

II. Building a Team

Time: 1 hour 40 minutes

Issues covered:

- Discuss the unique skills sets your club officers bring to the team. Make sure to ask the officers to mention the things they are passionate about, even if they are not connected to their Red Cross experience. Please use the “In a Nutshell” exercise or come up with your own.
- Address the specific skills and competencies acquired by the officers during their Red Cross volunteering experience. Make sure to gain a good understanding of the different Red Cross-specific skills your team brings forward. Use the “As a Red Crosser” exercise or come up with your own.

Identify some of the traits specific to an effective leader; discuss with the participants concrete examples that apply to their new leadership role.

Some things club officers should keep in mind:

- **Demonstrate competency**—always prepare before a club meeting, do your homework and research the issues to be discussed. It is important to be knowledgeable and earn the respect of the others.
- **Inspire trust and honesty**—be reliable, demonstrate accountability and foster an open dialogue with your peers.
- **Be creative and open-minded**—come up with innovative solutions and look at ways to improve the current initiatives.
- **Boost up the group’s energy** and inspire your peers in their service delivery.

Discuss the specific roles and responsibilities of schools club officers. Please use the exercise “School Club Officers Roles and Responsibilities.”

**Session debrief:** Put aside a couple of minutes at the end of this section and recap some of the key issues. The club president should ensure that everyone is comfortable with their responsibilities and document the skills and expertise the club officers have. Some questions you might consider using include:

- What are some important take-a-ways from this section?
- How important is it to have clear roles and responsibilities in a leadership team?
- Name one thing the officers weren't aware of that they are responsible for, etc.
Module II. Building a Team and Running Effective Meetings (continued)

II.2. Running Effective Meetings

Time: 2 hours

Issues Covered:

- Briefly discuss the importance of effective communication within your club and/or with the school and local Red Cross unit. Please use the "The Road to an Effective Communication" exercise (30 minutes).
- Use the "Making the Most of Your Meeting" exercise and have a dialogue on effective meetings. Be as specific as possible and cover examples that apply to your specific situation (30 minutes).
- Discuss a plan of action for conducting your meetings and assign general responsibilities (35 minutes). You should cover the following elements:
  - Establish the frequency of the officers' meetings and the general club meetings. Map out the meeting dates for the next 1-2 months and synchronize your calendars.
  - Revisit the officers' roles and responsibilities and discuss in detail what each officer is expected to do (who is developing the agenda, sending reminders, covering all the logistics, etc.).

Session debrief: Before wrapping up the training, be sure to reiterate some of the things discussed during this section. You should recap the steps for your action plan on running effective club meetings, and the specific roles and responsibilities assigned for your team members (10 minutes).

Session evaluation: When wrapping up the meeting, please ask the participants to share information on the following issues (15 minutes):

- What is the most important thing they learned during the officers' training?
- What did they like most?
- What are some areas that can be done differently?
- What are some issues that need to be followed up on?

If you have specific recommendations or exercises customized for your officers' training, we would love to hear from you. Please send your feedback and insights to youthinvolvement@usa.redcross.org.
Acknowledgments

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Appendix

List of Attachments

Template Constitution
Sample Activity Report Part
School Needs Assessment
Community Needs Assessment
Local Red Cross Needs Assessment
Map your Red Cross Clubs School Programs
Project Budget Template
Project Plan Template
Bottom up Project Plan
Project Plan
Tracking Club Members
Your Club Your Story
In a Nutshell
As a Red Crosser
School Club Officers Roles and Responsibilities
The Road to an Effective Communication
Making the Most of Your Meeting