



**American
Red Cross**

Youth Engagement

CLUB IN A BOX

Impact Starts Here

A TOOLKIT TO HELP YOU START A RED CROSS CLUB





Impact Starts Here

Join Us!



When you volunteer with the American Red Cross, you become a member of one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world. Working with the Red Cross is an excellent way to make a meaningful difference in people's lives. At the same time, you're making a positive impact in your community and among peers, you'll be maximizing your talents, learning new skills, improving your resume and meeting new people.

Red Cross Clubs provide opportunities to address your community's greatest needs. You'll also be empowered with the knowledge and lifesaving skills to help prepare your school and community to respond to emergencies.

This toolkit will guide you through the process to start and manage a Red Cross Club!

American Red Cross

Who are Red Cross Club Volunteers?

Middle school, high school, and college students

Students at any level of volunteer experience

Youth volunteers looking to start a Red Cross Club

CLUB IN A BOX IS A GUIDE FOR RED CROSS CLUBS!





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The American Red Cross Story

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission.

Our Work Impacts Lives Every Day



NEARLY 170 TIMES A DAY,
Red Cross workers help a family
affected by a home fire or other disaster.



The Red Cross needs
**NEARLY 13,000 BLOOD
DONATIONS** daily.



Every day, the Red Cross provides
MORE THAN 1,100 SERVICES
to members of the military,
veterans and their families.



On average, **MORE THAN 17,000 PEOPLE**
a day receive lifesaving Red Cross health
and safety training and information.



On average, **MORE THAN 464,000 CHILDREN**
a day receive a measles or rubella vaccination
from the Red Cross and our partners.



COMPASSIONATE • COLLABORATIVE • CREATIVE • CREDIBLE • COMMITTED

Mission

The American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.

Vision

The American Red Cross—through its strong network of volunteers, donors and partners—is always there in times of need. We aspire to turn compassion into action so that...

- ...all people affected by disaster across the country and around the world receive care, shelter and hope;
- ...our communities are ready and prepared for disasters;
- ...everyone in our country has access to safe, lifesaving blood and blood products;
- ...all members of our armed services and their families find support and comfort whenever needed; and
- ...in an emergency, there are always trained individuals nearby, ready to use their Red Cross skills to save lives.

Values

We affirm our commitment to the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and add to these principles five values that are essential to our continued success in meeting our mission.

COMPASSIONATE | We are dedicated to improving the lives of those we serve and to treating each other with care and respect.

COLLABORATIVE | We work together as One Red Cross family, in partnership with other organizations, and always embrace diversity and inclusiveness.

CREATIVE | We seek new ideas, are open to change and always look for better ways to serve those in need.

CREDIBLE | We act with integrity, are transparent guardians of the public trust and honor our promises.

COMMITTED | We hold ourselves accountable for defining and meeting objectives, delivering on our mission and carefully stewarding our donor funds.

Lines of Service

Disaster Cycle Services ▪ Biomedical Services ▪ Training Services

Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) ▪ International Services

Seven Fundamental Principles of Global Red Cross Network

Proclaimed in Vienna in 1965, the seven Fundamental Principles bind together the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. They guarantee the continuity of the Red Cross Red Crescent Network and its humanitarian work.

Humanity ▪ Impartiality ▪ Neutrality ▪ Independence

Voluntary Service ▪ Unity ▪ Universality





Youth in the American Red Cross

Over the years, the Red Cross has expanded its vital services, always with the aim of preventing and alleviating suffering. Today, in addition to domestic disaster relief, there are other core services the Red Cross provides:

- Providing lifesaving blood and blood products
- Delivering educational programs that promote health and safety
- Support and comfort for military members and their families
- Offering international relief and development programs.

Youth and young adults are a valuable part of the Red Cross family and represent over 25% of the volunteer workforce. They serve by participating, teaching, raising funds, and taking on leadership roles. When you get involved with a Red Cross Club, you'll connect with peers from across the country and around the world as you serve under the shared symbol of the largest international humanitarian organization in the world. Volunteering provides you with a unique opportunity to become a social ambassador by acting locally, while simultaneously being a part of a global movement.

What is a Red Cross Club?

A Red Cross Club is an extension of a local Red Cross region or Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) Station where you'll be able to serve the community with your friends. Along with training and leadership development opportunities, you can choose mission-related activities in your community, while delivering lifesaving services of the Red Cross. You'll plan and implement projects that can save hundreds of lives, from blood drives to disaster preparedness education.

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Voices of Red Cross Youth

"Joining a Red Cross Club allowed me to bring my passion for the Red Cross to the forefront of my campus and added a new chapter to my Red Cross story... a chapter that I was happy to share with so many other university students who love the Red Cross as much as I do."

Aparna, Massachusetts,
Youth Engagement Lead

"It doesn't matter what you do, because the smallest impact still makes a difference."

Siera, Tennessee

"I loved volunteering with my Red Cross Club, because I really enjoyed bringing my school and community together for a good cause!"

Will, Maryland



**"WE HOPE THAT THIS WILL
TAKE YOUR RED CROSS
JOURNEY TO NEW HEIGHTS
AND CAN'T WAIT TO SEE
WHAT YOU DO!"**

National Youth Council



"A big thing is to be there, even when we're not in disaster. Just come in and help as much as you can. Get involved in your community. Meet as many people as you can."

Paolo, Texas

"Red Cross is a great organization that opened up some real opportunities for change... All the infrastructure really helps you get out and make an immediate impact on your community."

James, California

"I loved my Red Cross Club experience because I was able to unite youth together. It was amazing to see how much they loved making an impact, especially at blood drives, knowing we were part of a lifesaving mission."

Michelle, New Jersey

"One of the most rewarding parts of being a Red Cross volunteer is being able to help and contribute to your surrounding community; and, being able to see the difference you and other volunteers make is priceless."

Corie, California

American Red Cross



Checklist for Getting Started

☐ Recruit a Few “Start-Up” People

- ☐ Recruit 3–6 people to help you get the Club up and running.
- ☐ Share this guide with new recruits and work together to set up your Club.

☐ Find a Sponsor/Advisor

Your ideal candidate is likely to be a member of the faculty/staff at your school who has:

- ☐ A strong commitment and experience working with youth and young adults.
- ☐ Familiarity with the Red Cross. Your Sponsor could also be a parent or community volunteer.
- ☐ Also, having Red Cross training (CPR, disaster training, volunteer management training, etc.) is a plus.

☐ Get Approval from Your Red Cross Region

- ☐ Search for the nearest Red Cross region or SAF station by zip code at [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org).
- ☐ Ask who's responsible for youth volunteers. This person is commonly known as the Youth Engagement Lead or can be a volunteer supervisor within Volunteer Services.
- ☐ Schedule an in-person or phone meeting to learn about the local region and requirements for starting a Club. This person will be key to helping your Club get connected.

☐ **Get Approval from Your School**

- ☐ Ask about the requirements your school has for starting a club. You may be required to have: a Constitution, leadership positions, and a Sponsor—all of which are linked, in this toolkit. These requirements are important if you want to receive school funding or resources, such as meeting rooms and permission to hold events on campus.
- ☐ Create a presentation that articulates the benefits of having a Red Cross Club.

☐ **Register Your Club**

All Club members are considered Red Cross volunteers and must register in [Volunteer Connection](#), our online volunteer management system.

Note: In accordance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998, people under the age of 13 cannot be registered in Volunteer Connection, but can still be a member of your Red Cross Club. Members under the age of 13 must complete a parental consent form that your Red Cross region will provide and then submit the form to be recognized as a Volunteer and Club member.

- ☐ You'll also need to register your Club in Volunteer Connection.
- ☐ Contact your Red Cross region to attend or host a Volunteer Orientation for your Club.
- ☐ Submit a Club Constitution to the region when you start your Club and at the beginning of each school year.

☐ **Hold Your First Club Meeting**

- ☐ Invite your Red Cross Contact to join the meeting to answer questions, provide support, and guidance in setting up the Club's action plan for the year:
 - ☐ Find out what interests the members and brainstorm activity ideas that must align with the Red Cross [Lines of Service](#).
 - ☐ Collect the members' contact information so you can publicize the next meeting.
 - ☐ Announce when and where the next meeting will be held.
 - ☐ Prepare for elections by informing members about available positions and request applications.
 - ☐ Provide sign-up information to Club members about sign up to be a Red Cross volunteer, register in Volunteer Connection, and officially join the Red Cross Club.

☐ **Keep in Touch with Your Red Cross Region**

- ☐ The Club and Sponsor need to keep in touch with the Red Cross region, especially when starting the Club. Staying connected will ensure a better working relationship and continued support in the future.
- ☐ Submit your Club Events form after every event and/or service project on your Red Cross Club's GroupShare page in Volunteer Connection.
- ☐ Track and submit the hours your Club members spend volunteering for activities, meeting, or on administrative tasks.

☐ **Get Started!**

- ☐ Plan and coordinate a minimum of three Red Cross mission service projects per year.
- ☐ Use our [Activity Guides](#) to implement existing service projects!
- ☐ Follow [Brand Standard Guidelines](#) when developing emails or fliers. Only use the national [Red Cross/Zorch E-store](#) vendor available to Red Cross workforce for any promotional products.

Follow this checklist to create and run your Red Cross Club!

Club Constitution

Red Cross Clubs are required to have a Constitution. Many schools require clubs to submit an official Constitution before a club is recognized as an official school organization.

We've created a standard [Red Cross Club Constitution](#), which you should use to run your Club that can be changed to fit your Club's structure.

Club Structure

Having a consistent, [functional structure](#) is crucial to a Club's success. A structure states how your Club will communicate, organize, and implement projects. It also outlines specific roles and responsibilities of Club members and officers.

Structures at a Glance

SMALL CLUB STRUCTURE

A straightforward structure is frequently utilized for newly founded or smaller Clubs with limited resources and/or a small membership base of 25 members or less.

LARGE CLUB STRUCTURE

A large club offers flexibility in adding new Officer positions in accordance with the Club's needs and allows members to take on leadership roles and expand their engagement. This is suitable for Clubs with a membership base of more than 25 members.





Position Descriptions

Club members need standard position descriptions so they're aware of the expectations.

One sample Club description for Members:

CLUB MEMBER

- Register as an active Red Cross volunteer in Volunteer Connection and submit hours on a regular basis.
- Learn and follow the American Red Cross Mission Statement, Code of Conduct, and Principles of the Global Red Cross Network.
- Attend Club meetings regularly and participate in Club activities and events.
- Remain a Club member in good standing according to the Club Constitution.

Clubs also need to have position descriptions for their Officers, such as a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. If your Club is larger, you may also have Committee Leads or additional Officers. The Officers will form the Executive Board.

CLUB PRESIDENT

- Utilize Volunteer Connection to: register/renew your Club each year, work with the Secretary to record all Club events, and ensure all Club members have active Volunteer Connection accounts with updated hours.
- Represent the Club as a spokesperson to the local Red Cross region and school community.
- Prepare for all Club meetings. Develop agendas with the Secretary, preside and facilitate Club meetings, provide follow-ups to organizational tasks, and inform Executive Board of additional meeting information.
- Ensure all Club activities are related to the Red Cross mission, help coordinate Club programs, and serve on various Club committees.
- Coordinate Executive Board transition.
- Maintain regular contact with region contact and Sponsor/Advisor.

CLUB OFFICERS

- Recruit new members and maintain current memberships.
- Greet members and make them feel welcome at meetings. Be open to input, opinions, and new ideas.
- Recognize fellow Club members for achievement and commitment.
- Attend local or regional Officer training, as available.
- Prepare for new Officers at the end of the term, including required time for mentoring.

It's also important that positions are specified for your Sponsor/Advisor and Red Cross region contact. This will keep everyone on the same page and help everyone work together.

SPONSOR/ADVISOR

- Attend Club meetings, keep Club informed about school/institutional matters, and give a report during Club meetings when appropriate.
- Respect and encourage all Club functions and assist with risk management decisions.
- Ensure all Club activities are entered within Volunteer Connection and that members are submitting hours.
- Maintain regular contact with Red Cross Chapter Contact and Executive Board.
- Provide developmental activities for the Executive Board to assist in developing group cohesiveness—attend goal-setting meeting with Executive Board and/or Club.
- Help maintain Club history every year.

RED CROSS REGION CONTACT

The regional Red Cross Club contact (likely a Youth Engagement Lead or Red Cross Club Coordinator) is ensuring the link between your Club and your local Red Cross region.

- Provide Club with guidance and resources to be successful, both local and national.
- Provide Club with **Brand Guidelines**, Style Guidelines, and guidance on use of the brand.
- Provide Club access to promotional materials on Brand Central for member recruitment, member recognition, events, and fundraisers.
- Provide Club members with volunteer opportunities among multiple lines of service.

You'll find more **Sample Position Description** templates online so you don't have to start from scratch.



National Youth Engagement

YOUTH ARE MAKING AN IMPACT ACROSS THE COUNTRY!

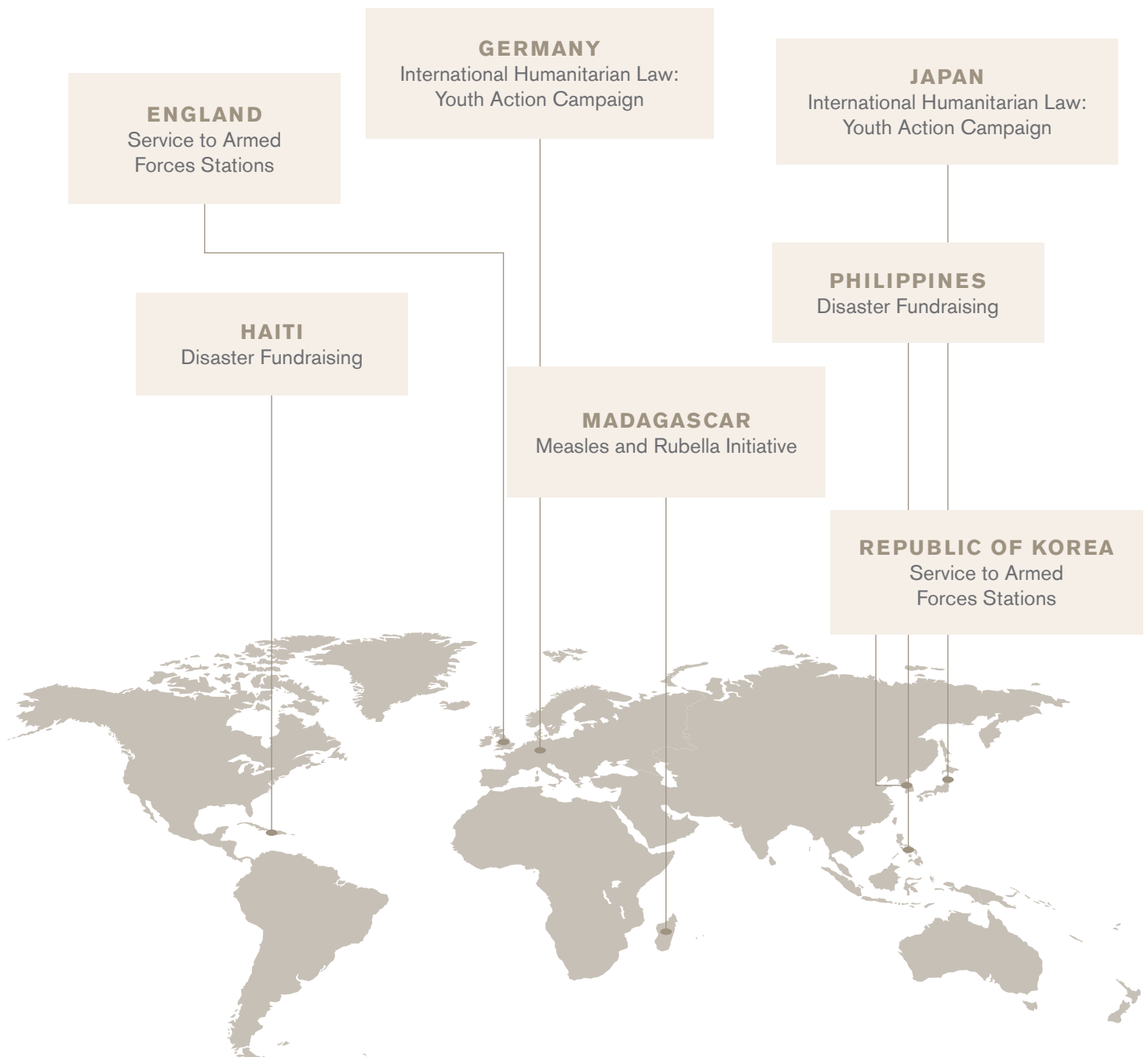
Youth programs and young adult volunteers support the mission every day, across all lines of service in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. Below are just a few examples of the impact Red Cross youth and young adults make every day.



Global Impact

YOUTH ARE PART OF A GLOBAL MOVEMENT

From fundraising to raising awareness, clubs and youth are able to support the mission and share the Red Cross Story across the world.



Impact Starts Here

Now you have the basics needed to start and maintain your Red Cross Club.
Please view other toolkits on [RedCrossYouth.org](https://www.redcrossyouth.org) for more information about service projects, planning your year, hosting successful meetings, and much more.

If you have any questions, email YouthInvolvement@redcross.org.





MISSION

The American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.