



**American
Red Cross**

Youth Engagement

ACTIVITY GUIDE

Impact Starts Here

The American Red Cross has developed fun activity guides for youth volunteers to use to help spread the word about the Red Cross and its mission: to prevent and alleviate human suffering in the face of emergencies, by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.

Activity Guides can be used by Red Cross Clubs, general youth groups or any other students who want to organize Red Cross mission-related activities. No matter which activity you choose, get in touch with your local Red Cross region or Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) station. With these helpful resources and guidelines, you can definitely make your activity a success!

YOUTH DIVERSITY PLEDGE



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About

This pledge was created to empower youth and young adults to be advocates and leaders for the American Red Cross through education surrounding diversity and inclusion issues faced by the organization.

This activity has been adapted to a virtual setting (see original guide [here](#)). As volunteers, we can best serve our diverse communities by celebrating our differences and learning about what makes each of us unique.

Purpose

By being constantly and consistently mindful of the people around us, we can create a positive volunteer environment for the people we volunteer alongside and the communities we serve.

Time Required

Planning for a typically requires several weeks of advance notice in order to coordinate and prepare for the event.

Volunteer Services Contact

Before you begin, contact your Regional Volunteer Services Officer (RVSO), who will guide you to resources that can make this an impactful and successful event! You can search for your regional Volunteer Services contact info by entering your zip code [here](#).

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How to Get Started:

Step 1: Set a date and time for the Youth Diversity Pledge

It is recommended that you reserve 40-60 minutes for this activity, with 1-2 breaks included. Also, plan for short icebreakers!

Step 2: Decide on a video platform

Decide on a video calling platform (e.g. Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or Google Meet) for your event that will allow you to screen-share the video and create group breakouts

Step 3: Assign facilitators

- Choose 1-2 students who will help guide the activity and have them
- Watch the [follow-along video](#) beforehand so they are prepared to start and stop the video when prompted during the actual event
 - Watch the [introduction video](#), which can be used during the activity
 - Practice screen-sharing video beforehand to test technology and virtual setting

Step 4: Create an agenda

To ensure the success of your activity and maintain organization throughout your event, create an agenda that includes materials needed by participants, icebreakers, discussion questions, and time breakdowns (see below for an agenda template)

Step 5: Check that participants have necessary materials

- Since this is a virtual activity, please ensure that all participants have access to a computer
- Share Pledge card and fill-in-blank sign with students through email (see the fillable PDF's [here](#)) where students can print it before the event or fill it out online

Step 6: Share your event!

Work with your local Red Cross contacts to post event details on your local Red Cross region's calendar and social media platforms

Step 7: Finalize agenda and event details

Practice the pledge and get ready for your event!

Resources Included In This Package:

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- Event Agenda Template

Red Cross Club Toolkits:

Review youth volunteer resources on **RedCrossYouth.org**. Share the Red Cross Club Toolkits with students at the event who may be interested in learning about Red Cross Clubs.

Share With Us

Share pictures and videos of your Youth Diversity Pledge activity by posting them in the **American Red Cross Youth Network Facebook Group** or posting on Instagram and tagging [@americanredcrossyouth](#).

Looking For More Information?

If you're interested in organizing another activity, visit our Activity Guides Archive [here!](#)

Have more questions about volunteering with the American Red Cross as a youth volunteer? Email youthinvolvement@redcross.org!

Event Agenda Template

Introduction

Time: 10 minutes

Materials needed by participants: Device to join Youth Diversity Pledge call

- Greet attendees and ask them to sign in with virtual sign-in sheet (i.e. Excel, Google Sheets)
 - Note that youth may have technical difficulties or join the call late
- Give a brief introduction to the session and outline the agenda.
 - Introduction: *Hi everyone! We are so excited to get to know you all today! The purpose of this workshop is to help us understand ourselves better, to understand our friends, colleagues and neighbors. After our activities, I hope we can all gain a better understanding of how our identities inform how we perceive others and how others may perceive us based on stereotypes and assumptions. The American Red Cross heavily values the diversity within the volunteers in our organization. Diversity is a complicated but extremely important matter. It means understanding not just that people have different skin colors, but that we have divergent and varied life experiences that form who we are and how we engage with the world.*
- Lead a fun icebreaker (i.e. Never Have I Ever) or ask questions to engage volunteers (especially with chat function of video-calling platform)
- Play [follow-along video](#) (through screen-share) and pause when prompted (alternative is to play [introduction video](#))

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- Be sure to also share audio when sharing screen!
- Make sure participants have already printed/have the editable PDF version (see [here](#)) of the Pledge card and fill-in-the-blank sign, and brought other necessary materials before event starts

Discussing Diversity

Time: 20 minutes

Materials needed by participants: Sheets of paper or notepads, pens or pencils

Thought Starter

Before the discussion begins, pose a thought starter to get the group focused on the session. Potential questions to ask:

- What does diversity mean to you?
- What do you think of when you hear the word diversity?
- Think of a time when you have felt out of place. How did this make you feel and what factors contributed to these feelings?

Allow the session participants to write their thoughts for about five minutes. After the participants have completed this activity, split them into groups of about 3-5, utilizing breakout room function, and encourage them to share their answers. This will help participants feel more comfortable and build trust with each other before moving into the next discussion. Ask an individual from each group to share a few highlights of their conversation when they return to the main room of the virtual event.

Discussion Questions

Ask a question and give the participants a few minutes to discuss in their breakout rooms. After participants have discussed and shared, share the Red Cross approved answer provided in italics below each question.

- How do we typically define diversity?

Diversity, by definition, encompasses all the characteristics, experiences and cultural influences that make each of us unique individuals.

- Can this definition be limiting at times?

Yes. Our identity is made up of many characteristics and traits. It is important to always consider the numerous dimensions which contribute to our diversity.

- How else can we define diversity to be more inclusive and fully encompassing?

Note all the responses participants share.

Refer to the list below to make sure all of these were mentioned:

- *Race*
- *Ethnicity*
- *Gender*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *Marital status*

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- *Parental status*
- *Education*
- *Physical abilities*
- *Family/work life*
- *Economic status*
- *Job level*
- *Communication style*

All these traits, plus many others, make us diverse, or different from one another. It is these differences that bring value to the objective of understanding the needs, the thoughts and the desires of others with whom we work, serve and do business.

- How can we embrace diversity while volunteering with the American Red Cross?
We should ensure our groups are diverse and inclusive. Inclusion, by definition, occurs in a workplace where everyone has an opportunity to contribute and fully participate in creating goal-oriented success. Inclusion also refers to an environment where each person is valued and respected for his or her distinctive skills, experiences and perspectives.

The principle of Inclusion works where it is supported by committed leadership, organizational norms and values, and a set of policies and procedures that promote a culture where being valued and respected are consistently demonstrated between all team members and toward clients served. This is the practice of Inclusion, which is required for organizations to become truly diverse and to reap the intended benefits. To find more tools about Inclusion, click [here](#).

“Inclusion is not an attitude, it is the deliberate act of including.”

Conclude the discussion portion of the session and have people get back into their breakout rooms formed earlier.

Ask them to discuss the following:

- After learning what you did from our discussion, ask yourself, ‘How can I alter my actions to be more inclusive?’

Signing the Youth Diversity Pledge

Time: 20 minutes

Materials needed: Printed Pledge cards, pens or pencils, PDF Pledge card

- Have students take out their Pledge card and ask participants to sign
- Next, ask participants to complete the fill-in-the-blank signs (which should have been printed with the card)
 - Consider asking individuals to share their responses

Wrap-up and Thank-You

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Thank everyone for their attendance and participation.

Feel free to use the remarks below, or develop your own:

When we walk out of this room, we want to remember that our society is comprised of many different races, ethnicities, socioeconomic classes and other diverse groups that have their own identities and lifestyles. These groups are continuously growing, making groups comprised of only identical-looking and identical-thinking individuals a dwindling minority. Keep this in mind when you are volunteering with the American Red Cross and dealing with others in your daily life. Hang up your pledge card at home or in your Club to remind yourself to embrace diversity while volunteering. We hope that you'll help recruit diverse friends to join our Club. Consider inviting a friend who is from a different race or gender or culture or whatever it may be to join our Club and become a Red Cross volunteer.

Taking photos:

- Have each volunteer hold their sign to take a photo individually
- Have each volunteer take a short video reading why they took the pledge
- Spend a few minutes sharing the photos and videos on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media accounts using the hashtags **#YouthDiversityPledge** and **#RedCross**