

Acknowledgments

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Introduction



The American Red Cross has been saving lives for more than a hundred and forty years. In peace, in war, when catastrophe strikes, the Red Cross has always been there.

Throughout our history, volunteers have played an essential role in fulfilling our mission to help people prevent, prepare for and respond to disasters and other life-threatening emergencies. Today's American Red Cross strategic plan calls for encouraging a new generation of volunteers and supporters to join us, including youth and young people. Through Red Cross volunteer work, youth can experience the joy of giving and improving and saving lives.

Red Cross school clubs are service groups that help us fulfill our humanitarian mission. Working closely with their local Red Cross, club members participate in Red Cross service projects that help their schools, their communities and the world. School clubs are sponsored by Red Cross chapters, Blood Services centers and AFES stations, wherever the Red Cross is located. They offer student members many opportunities for self-development and the ability to choose activities that will address their communities' greatest needs.

The American Red Cross has found that youth are embracing volunteerism primarily through service learning more than ever before. We believe that with your support, an American Red Cross school club in your area can succeed.

You play an important role in setting up an effective Red Cross school club. You help the club get started, initiate activities and keep the group focused on the completion of projects that help their communities. As a dedicated contributor yourself, you are a role model for prospective young members. They will see what you do to save lives and how much you enjoy it. In the process, you will be teaching the skills of leadership to a new generation.

We have created this guide to help you get a Red Cross club going and to provide guidance to strengthen and sustain the club. Three companion guides support sponsors and students. We recommend you read each guide to get a full picture of what is involved in starting and supporting clubs. The companion guides are—

- *Save a Life: A Sponsor Guide to American Red Cross Clubs for Elementary and Middle School Students, A1618*
- *Save a Life: An American Red Cross Club Guide for Middle School Students, A1619*
- *Save a Life: An American Red Cross Club Guide for Elementary School Students, A1620*

Those who volunteer as youth are more likely to continue volunteerism throughout adulthood. Act today to engage a new generation of volunteers and supporters through Red Cross clubs!

*Youth and Young Adult Programs and Services
American Red Cross National Headquarters*

Red Cross School Clubs

Why Schools Are a Great Place to Start Clubs

Schools are a great place to reach youth with volunteer opportunities. Youth who volunteer realize a sense of social responsibility and humanitarianism. Involving youth in volunteerism early—while in elementary school or middle school—will instill a sense of community awareness and increase the likelihood that they will volunteer throughout their lives.

Young people say that posters, guidance counselors, teachers and other students are the best ways to let them know about volunteer opportunities. Many youth volunteer clubs meet in schools because it is a convenient place that allows for continued socialization and interaction with friends. It is also where many first find out about volunteer opportunities. It is the easiest place to reach young people; it is where they spend much of their time.

The Many Benefits of a Red Cross School Club

The establishment of a Red Cross club has many benefits for your field unit, the community, the school, the sponsors and the members themselves.

Benefits for the Field Unit

Through school clubs, volunteer leadership pools are renewed and membership becomes more diverse. Club members can support fundraising and provide an increased capacity for cost-effective service delivery. The students can also enhance the technological skills of the unit, allowing it to function more efficiently. Many young people may continue to volunteer throughout their lives.

Benefits for the Community

The contributions that a school club can make to your local community are immense. Clubs offer safe, positive environments for young people where they can discover multiple ways to help. The skills acquired by the members, such as disaster preparedness and babysitting skills, benefit everyone.

Benefits for the Schools

Schools find that community service and service learning benefit students personally and academically. Red Cross service teaches humanitarian values and helps to educate club members and those they serve to prevent, prepare for and respond to emergency situations.

Benefits for Club Sponsors

The effect of club accomplishments and student growth on the pride of a club sponsor—whether it is a teacher, principal, guidance counselor or Red Cross volunteer from the community—must never be underestimated. Seeing students learn, grow and prosper, as they will through their club service, is a reason many men and women choose to pursue careers in education or volunteer opportunities with youth in the first place. Serving as a club sponsor also helps develop the bond between teacher and student beyond the classroom.

Benefits for Student Members

For some students, a school club is their first venture into the world of volunteerism. Many take their first steps to becoming leaders through club involvement. They join with their peers to make a difference in their communities and the lives of their classmates. In this team approach, emphasizing interpersonal communications, students gain hands-on experience and a sense of achievement. Students also gain general skills in planning and following through with projects and a sense of budgeting and public relations. They also have the opportunity to acquire specialized skills in such things as first aid, babysitting and disaster preparedness. In addition, they may earn school credit through Red Cross community service or service learning.

Field Unit Roles and Responsibilities

When working with Red Cross school clubs, the role of a Red Cross field unit can include—

- Guiding the club toward activities that will help your field unit achieve its mission.
- Orienting the sponsor or school staff to the wide variety of Red Cross curricula, training and services for students and staff, for example, disaster preparedness education, first aid, CPR/AED training and more. A chart showing current curricula and training is included in the Resources section of this guide.
- Providing the club sponsor with the appropriate forms needed for volunteers, such as the *Red Cross Code of Conduct* and *Volunteer Application*. These forms are included in the Resources section of this guide.
- Informing the club sponsor and members of Red Cross training opportunities in the community, including swimming lessons, first aid or babysitting classes and community disaster education presentations.
- Updating club sponsors regularly about volunteer opportunities available through the Red Cross, such as staffing needs for a health fair or presentation opportunities in the community.

Responsibilities when starting a Red Cross club can include—

- Orienting the club sponsor and student leaders to the American Red Cross and your mission-driven initiatives.
- Tracking the activities of the club by collecting activity reports.
- Providing Red Cross training, where appropriate.
- Working with the club sponsor in planning suitable recognition for the members.
- Supporting club visibility by coordinating public relations efforts to spread the word about the good things the club is doing.
- Assisting the club sponsor with evaluating the success of the club.

Getting Started

Starting a Red Cross Club—Ten Easy Steps

If your field unit wants to sponsor a Red Cross club in a local school, here is a step-by-step guide to getting one started.

Step 1: Profile Your Local Schools.

To help cultivate a relationship with schools in your area and to determine how best to involve students in Red Cross programs and activities, create an informal profile of each school to determine the current level of Red Cross involvement. To do this, talk to other unit staff to determine what relationships already exist with the school, what Red Cross courses are already taught there or if any school employees are currently Red Cross volunteers or local board members.

Step 2: Determine the Interest Level.

Have your current youth volunteers shared an interest in starting Red Cross clubs in their schools? Is there a teacher, guidance counselor or school official on your local board who would make a strong club sponsor? While not necessary in order to approach local schools with the idea of a Red Cross club, knowing of pre-existing interest or commitment is always helpful.

Step 3: Contact the School.

Initiate a meeting with the appropriate designated school official(s), usually the principal, the superintendent and/or members of the school board. Advise the official(s) that the meeting's purpose is to discuss setting up a Red Cross club in the school. Ask the official(s) if there is anyone else who should attend, such as the assistant principal, the dean or the service-learning administrator. Consider bringing any youth volunteers from that school or a potential club sponsor along to advocate on the club's behalf.

Step 4: Make Your Case.

Your first visit to the school should include a presentation of—

- Services your unit provides to the community.
- The value of student participation in Red Cross youth activities.
- How youth involvement with the Red Cross can benefit the students, the school and the community at large.

Step 5: Obtain Permission.

If you receive permission from the school administration, you are ready to go. If you do not receive permission, thank them politely and try another school.

Step 6: Secure Sponsors.

If you haven't already done so, locate and screen several faculty members or volunteers who are involved with the school who would make good sponsors. Club sponsors can be any well-liked, interested, respected teacher, guidance counselor, principal or volunteer. Some may have certification in various skill areas.

Suggested screening questions include asking the interested volunteer if he or she:

- Has experience in volunteer management?
- Is part of the community?
- Is respected by students?
- Has any Red Cross certificates?
- Has at least three references?

Once a sponsor has been secured, discuss your vision and goals for the club. Be sure to provide your sponsor with—*Save A Life: A Sponsor Guide to American Red Cross Clubs for Elementary and Middle School Students* (A1618), one of the companion pieces to this guide.

Step 7: Recruit Student Leaders.

Work with your club sponsor to recruit student leaders as charter members of the school club. Student leaders are strong influences and can help effectively persuade friends to join in the fun.

Suggested screening questions include—

- Are the students enthusiastic about volunteering?
- Do they attend school regularly?
- Are they, at minimum, getting passing grades?
- Do they care about the larger community?
- Do they want to save and improve lives? How?
- Have they any project ideas?

Each club member will benefit by having a copy of—*Save a Life: An American Red Cross Club Guide for Middle School Students* (A1619) or *Save a Life: An American Red Cross Club Guide for Elementary School Students* (A1620).

Step 8: Meet With Club Sponsor and Student Leader(s).

You, your club sponsor and student leader(s) will be the driving force determining the success of the club. Before the first meeting, make sure all of you agree on roles and responsibilities and share a similar vision about club goals. Club members, with your and the sponsor's guidance, should be responsible for determining projects and creating job descriptions. You and the club sponsor are responsible for making sure activities reflect American Red Cross mission-based objectives. You may want to spell these out to the sponsor.

Step 9: Promote the Fact That a Red Cross Club Is Coming to the School.

Recommend that your sponsor assign the responsibility for promoting the new club to the student leader(s). They can use the companion posters designed for this purpose (P1309), the school newspaper or the school or municipality Web site to kick off the club's first meeting. They can leave fliers in the library, classroom, cafeteria or anywhere else in school where students congregate. The kickoff should be held as an assembly (if permitted), in a club fair or as a rally. Consider how you can help.

Step 10: Kick Off Your Club With an Orientation.

Conduct an orientation before service projects begin to make sure club members understand the American Red Cross and its mission. Brief the student leaders so that they can lead the orientation with the support of the sponsor. Do your best to be present at the first club meeting so that students can see your commitment to their club.

Club members will need to know—

- About the American Red Cross and the work that we do.
- The specific services provided by the local Red Cross unit with which their club is affiliated.
- Specific volunteer requirements, including orientation to the *Red Cross Code of Conduct* and completion of the *Volunteer Application*. A sample youth *Volunteer Application* is included in the Resources section of this guide.

Remember to register your club! Registration is quick and easy. Visit the Red Cross club section at www.redcross.org or CrossNet at https://crossnet.redcross.org/chapters/administer/vol/red_cross_clubs.asp and follow the steps on the registration form. A list of registered clubs by state is also available on the Red Cross public site.

Managing Risks

Risk is inherent in all that we do in any of the many programs and activities we provide as an organization. It is ultimately the responsibility of each unit to understand—and subsequently minimize—the risks to which we expose our employees and volunteers. Risk management, then, must be included in any plan or program that involves the participation of young people.

There are a number of important issues to consider. The following provides guidance on key areas of managing risk for Red Cross youth involvement. For your convenience, the later part of this section includes a risk management checklist.

INSIGHT While we can make every effort to minimize risk, it is unreasonable to expect that we can eliminate all risk.

FYI It is important to work with your unit's management and, if necessary, your unit's legal advisor to be sure that your youth plan falls within established policies as well as to be sure it is in compliance with federal, state and local laws.

What You Should Know About Youth Involvement and Risk Management...

Age Requirements

- Although there is no minimum age at which a young person may begin volunteering for the American Red Cross, some volunteer positions—such as Red Cross instructor, Disaster Services Human Resources (DSHR) member and transportation provider—do have age restrictions. Check with the person in charge of each service to learn what these age restrictions are.

- In times of disaster, youth program coordinators should check with the manager of the worksite about the number and ages of youth who can be assigned.
- Age restrictions may also apply when Red Cross youth volunteers are placed in other organizations, such as medical facilities and food banks.
- For all assignments, units should be sure that the maturity level and skills of the particular youth volunteer match the specific position's requirements.

Parental Consent

- It is imperative that parental permission be obtained for youth under the age of majority in their home states (usually 18) in advance of their participation in any Red Cross event or outing.

FYI Parental permission is part of the *Red Cross Youth Volunteer Application* and explicit in the *Field Trip Consent* form. Both documents are in the Resources section of this guide.

Supervision

- All employees and volunteers, regardless of age, need appropriate support, guidance and feedback on their work. The level of supervision, as well as the number of supervisors required, depends on the particular volunteer's maturity level and the demands of the situation.
- There is no magic formula or ratio of the appropriate number of supervisors to youth volunteers. It is okay to assign one youth with several adults or several youth with one adult, but never assign one youth with one adult (except the youth's parent) in a setting where they are alone.
- When youth are going to work in a disaster setting, the adult-to-youth ratio should be based on age and the activity. It is suggested, however, that youth be assigned in teams so that the management at that site can work with the adult youth leader. The adult youth leader can help supervise the youth and be the single point of contact.
- Consider the task, risks involved, age of the volunteers, etc. A common sense approach is best. Generally, the number of precautions should decrease as the age and maturity level of the youth volunteers increases. When in doubt, err on the side of caution.

FYI Always refer to regulations and recommendations referenced in *Youth in Disaster Services* when assigning youth roles in disaster response.

Expectations

- It is the responsibility of each Red Cross unit to develop and adopt the regulations, policies and procedures governing employees and volunteers of that unit, including youth volunteers. Each unit should have written policies and procedures for employees and volunteers that are reviewed by legal counsel and approved by the board of directors before implementation.
- It is important that these policies be consistent with corporate policies and direction. For youth and other vulnerable populations, the policies must also be consistent with appropriate laws and regulations protecting those groups.

- Red Cross units are encouraged to develop a volunteer handbook of written policies and procedures affecting volunteer staff. Units should consider incorporating specific information pertaining to youth volunteers into their existing handbook or they might develop one especially for youth volunteers.
- Develop specific job descriptions for various youth positions.

TIP: Guidance on creating a volunteer handbook can be found in the *American Red Cross Volunteer Administration Manual*, A3317 or at https://crossnet.redcross.org/chapters/administer/vol/consult_vol_pol_procedures.asp.

Screening employees and volunteers

- A Red Cross unit must be careful about the adult leaders it assigns to supervise youth activities. It is critical that all applicants for a particular position, whether employee or volunteer, undergo the same type of screening. The expectations of the community and parents as well as legal requirements place additional responsibilities on a Red Cross unit in selecting adult leaders.
- Individual units should establish policies and procedures for screening such personnel.

NOTE The *Volunteer Administration Manual* provides the guidance needed to help units conduct appropriate screening for all employees and volunteers. Again, certain laws apply. Keep in mind, however, that no amount of screening will take the place of careful supervision of staff working with young people.

NOTE It is important to work with your unit’s management and, if necessary, your unit’s legal advisor to be sure that your program falls within established policies as well as to be sure it is in compliance with federal, state and local laws. As recommended in *Youth in Disaster Services* (A2357), your unit’s legal counsel should be part of the team that develops the regulations and procedures for your unit’s youth disaster response activities.

INSIGHT When screening an applicant, consider whether anything in the applicant’s background appears to pose a risk to Red Cross clients, staff or resources and whether the applicant poses an unacceptable risk in the position.

TIP One of the best ways to minimize risk is to design well-thought-out activities. Such activities not only help to manage risk; they also enhance the experience for the young people involved.

Risk Management Checklist

Risk Management Policy Statement

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your unit obtained the most up-to-date copies of federal, state and other laws and regulations that apply to individuals under the age of majority? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your unit identified all the risks associated with a Red Cross school club? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your unit identified steps it can take to manage or eliminate these risks? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your board of directors consulted with legal counsel and developed a comprehensive policy on risk management, including procedures for involving youth in disaster activities? |

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are the applicable laws and your unit's policy being applied to a Red Cross school club? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are current employees and volunteers aware of this youth risk management policy? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a mechanism in place to share the policy with future employees and volunteers? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your unit have a volunteer handbook that is accessible to all volunteers and their supervisors? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your unit formulated expectations for youth volunteers? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Have these expectations been articulated in the form of a guideline or a volunteer handbook for youth that spells out unit expectations of youth volunteers? |

Screening

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your unit consulted with legal counsel with expertise in employment law? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you using the resources available, such as criminal history record checks? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | If selective background checks are being done for high-risk positions, was the decision based primarily on the specific responsibilities of the position? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are all applicants for a particular position, even if they are volunteers, undergoing the same type of screening? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your unit have clear-cut position descriptions? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your unit's application form address youth risk factors? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your unit's interview process use open-ended questions and enable you to focus on youth risk management areas of concern? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your unit have a release form that allows for obtaining references from other organizations or individuals? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit performing thorough reference checks, which include questions that elicit the desired information? |

Management

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit consistently using sound management practices for employees and volunteers? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has your unit created or adopted parental permission and other appropriate release forms? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit placing individuals (including youth volunteers) in appropriate work settings? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit providing employees and volunteers with adequate training? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit providing a thorough orientation to youth volunteers? |

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit providing youth volunteers with adequate training? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are employees and volunteers aware of the risk factors associated with working with vulnerable populations? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are employees and volunteers kept up-to-date on your unit's risk management policy statement? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit providing proper supervision and support to youth volunteers? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit providing employees and volunteers with feedback on and evaluation of their performance? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your unit staying abreast of current federal, state and other laws and regulations pertaining to the protection of youth? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Does your unit evaluate its risk management program on a regular basis, making changes as necessary? |

Suggested Guidelines

Once you have helped establish a school club, a set of guidelines for prospective members should be established. You may want to incorporate the items listed below. Refer to the Resources section of this guide for sample forms.

General Information

- **Club Size**—What is the preferred minimum/maximum size of the club?
- **Club Leadership**—How and what type of leadership positions will club members fill? Talk with other field unit staff who support Red Cross clubs and ask them what leadership positions are held by students at an elementary or middle school level; refer to the companion *Sponsor Guide* (A1618) for information on opportunities for leadership.
- **Club Meetings**—Where and when should meetings be held? Consider scheduling specific, regular meeting times and trying to hold meetings in school during lunch or after regular school hours. Also, check the school calendar for conflicting dates and make changes, if necessary.
- **Club Activities**—When possible, integrate the club activities with your field unit's activities, such as opportunities to serve the community during national days of service.

Membership Information

- **Academic Requirements**—Must prospective members pass all their academic subjects in order to be considered for membership?
- **Attendance Requirements**—Must club members attend a minimum number of meetings and take part in a minimum number of projects to remain in good standing?
- **Behavior**—Each member must sign a *Code of Conduct* form and adhere to American Red Cross values.

- **Volunteer Application**—A Red Cross Volunteer Application must be submitted before a student can become a member.
- **Permission Form**—A permission form, signed by a parent or guardian, must be provided for students under 18 years of age to participate in the club.
- **Membership Cards**—These are available through GSD (A1575).

Keeping Records

Consider creating—

- A School Club Information Sheet that contains pertinent facts about each club, such as member information, club size, the club’s vision statement, club committees, etc. A sample form is included in this guide.
- An *Activity Report* form, like the one in the Resources section, allows your club sponsor and students to report to you on service projects.
- A *Volunteer Time Record* that maintains a record of how much volunteer time each member has given to help others. A Red Cross school club member may request a letter of recommendation for college admission or a scholarship. The *Volunteer Administration Manual*, available on CrossNet, can provide you with more guidance.

Elementary school clubs are an opportunity for students to learn valuable skills like first aid, safety from strangers and fire safety. Students can also do community service projects and are often excited to learn how they can help others. Elementary school clubs help students build an ethic of service at a young age and can help students grow into caring and responsible adults.

—Katie Hanck
 Youth and Young Adult Services Coordinator
 American Red Cross serving King and Kitsap Counties

Maintaining the Club

Components of a Successful Club

To make the most of youth volunteers, a school club should offer them the opportunity to shine in many ways.

Opportunity to Lead

While saving lives and serving a community's needs, young people naturally develop leadership skills. In Red Cross school clubs, agendas and programs are decided by the membership themselves. This requires decision making, responsibility and commitment to completing the task—all leadership skills.

Opportunity to Improve Lives

Learning skills, such as those acquired through first aid training, helps youth contribute to their community. Helping peers, family members and those in the community make safe choices through club-sponsored workshops, such as community disaster education presentations, definitely improves lives.

Opportunity to Help

Helping those in need has been cited as the greatest source of satisfaction among volunteers. In the community, members of a Red Cross school club can form relationships with other generations and those in need. They can quickly jump into action when a disaster strikes, giving comfort and care to the elderly, fundraising to help the victims of a local flood or bringing cheer to children in disaster relief shelters. Young people can also help the victims of earthquakes, floods, tornadoes and fires in other parts of the country and the world. And, in time of war, Red Cross club members can write letters to soldiers and uplift the morale of families left behind. They can learn the importance of giving blood and encourage others to donate.

Opportunity to Learn New Skills

The opportunity to learn new skills is an incentive for prospective members of a school club. By becoming trained in disaster preparedness, aquatics and water safety, first aid, babysitting or CPR, youth gain skills for life.

Opportunity to Socialize

Socialization and interaction with peers and other generations is a natural outgrowth of the meetings and programs carried out by the clubs. Members learn to speak at meetings, give suggestions and take criticism. They learn team dynamics and the need to celebrate the completion of a job well done. All the time, they are socializing with and enjoying each other.

Meeting the Needs of Your Community

First and foremost, a Red Cross club should help you fulfill your local mission-based initiatives. Types of programs that will meet with success at your local elementary or middle school can best be ascertained by assessing the needs of the school and its community. Components that should be taken into account are the achievement levels at the school, the age and economic health of its population and the geography of the area. You, the young people in the school and the club sponsor should discuss what local needs there are before club members decide on what services to provide the community. Polling students sometimes helps, as students can advise you of the needs or issues of which they are aware.

As you guide the club members and sponsor in choosing activities, consider—

- Is your community economically depressed? Would service projects, such as a Thanksgiving food basket drive, be appreciated?
- What are the most pressing challenges facing local youth in the school? Ask students if a community outreach program already exists or if a Red Cross club would be a welcome conduit for health education or home safety awareness.
- What are the geographic needs of your community? Has the community ever been struck by a natural disaster before? Are there many house or apartment fires? Would presentations stressing the five steps of Together We Prepare™ be helpful?
- What is the existing relationship between the Red Cross and the school? Is the school used as a shelter during times of disaster? Does the Red Cross already offer a certified swimming program, lifeguard training courses, babysitter training or community disaster education courses in the school? If not, this could represent a major training opportunity.

The *Volunteer Administration Manual* can walk you through a needs assessment to determine ones the Red Cross club in your school can help meet.

Managing Multiple Clubs

A Red Cross field unit with minimal staff can reach a large number of youth by organizing multiple clubs. Some chapters have as many as 50 clubs in operation. What's their secret? According to those asked, the key to managing a large number of clubs lies in finding committed club sponsors and maintaining strong communication between those sponsors and the Red Cross. The following tips will help you manage multiple clubs.

1. **Select club sponsors wisely.** When setting up clubs, look for sponsors who are involved with, or knowledgeable of, Red Cross volunteer work. You may want to consider having two adult sponsors per club. Step six in the section titled Starting a Red Cross Club—Ten Easy Steps includes screening questions to ask potential sponsors.
2. **Communicate monthly.** Consider asking for a monthly club report. Upon receipt, read it and respond, offering support and ideas for their activities. Monthly contact will serve as a reminder of the club's vision and goals and will help you strike a balance between clubs that are autonomous, yet involved with the local Red Cross mission.

3. **Consider club members when planning chapter activities.** Club members may want to attend chapter-sponsored events with their families or help staff chapter events.
4. **Provide opportunities for clubs to interact.** Consider hosting quarterly meetings at the unit where youth from several area clubs can meet and interact together. Highlight a club that has completed a successful project by asking members of the club to share project how-to's with the others.
5. **Involve your Service Area Youth Liaison (SAYL).** A SAYL appointed by national headquarters works to support Red Cross clubs in each service area. Get to know the SAYL appointed to your area and ask him or her to contact your club president(s) with updates on club activities. This is a great way to involve youth in networking with others in clubs in the service area and beyond.

Awards and Recognition

Let's face it. We all love to be recognized and to know that our efforts and contributions are making a difference. Saying thank you goes a long way to making students feel good about their accomplishments and continuing their involvement. Sometimes, all that is needed is a personal note or a verbal thank you.

Like the rest of us, teens love being recognized for good deeds and saving lives. They especially like being recognized in groups. A photo exhibit mounted in the school lobby, showing club members bringing holiday cheer to a ward of sick children, for instance, can be a great way of saying thank you. It not only builds self-esteem, but generates interest in volunteering among other classmates.

Consider giving awards to your most dedicated club members. These can include an individual certificate or Red Cross service pin, a custom-designed award for an exceptional volunteer or a volunteer-of-the-month citation. These awards may be presented in the intimacy of the club meeting room, or in an assembly to which parents, classmates and dignitaries are invited. Perhaps students in your club are eligible for a national award. Check out the Awards and Recognition section of CrossNet for more details. See what's appropriate.

Evaluating the Club

Many of us think of evaluation as a one-time task. In reality, evaluation is a continuous process and should be built into all club activities. Constant evaluation can permit a club to change program content at any time before investing too much energy in an activity that needs to be redesigned before it can succeed.

Evaluation permits you to ensure your efforts, bolster resources, recommend program changes, modify goals and meet emerging community needs.

If, in the evaluation process, it is determined that membership is declining, you'll know that corrective measures must be taken. If it is increasing, then you'll know the club is doing something right and it should be continued and improved. Success in programming breeds more success.

If you want to prove that your club is successful, only a formal evaluation can tell you. Your programming must meet the needs of an ever-changing population. Most importantly, your programs must improve and save lives.

How do you find out if they do? Evaluation is accomplished by listening to members talk, monitoring their behavior and recording what is heard, seen or written down.

Evaluation may concern attitudes, leadership growth or increased or decreased participation by its members. Such components are not always easy to document. This data can be collected by—

- Establishing and monitoring goals and objectives.
- Taking member surveys.
- Conducting one-on-one interviews.
- Arranging group interviews.
- Requiring report forms and journal keeping.
- Observing behavior.

It is recommended that your club sponsor lead the evaluation process because the sponsor has day-to-day interaction with and a personal interest in the club and its student members.

Resources

Official and Sample Forms

The following forms are provided to help you organize information from clubs. Use any or all of them and revise as necessary. Many were provided by various Red Cross chapters. Laws vary by state, so please use the forms as a guide and revise them as necessary. The *American Red Cross Code of Conduct* and *Information Release* form, included here, are also available online in the Forms section on CrossNet.

American Red Cross Code of Conduct

Introduction

The American Red Cross is a charitable not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing service to those in need. The American Red Cross has traditionally demanded and received the highest ethical performance from its employees and volunteers. In an effort to maintain the high standard of conduct expected and deserved by the American public and to enable the organization to continue to offer services required by those in need, the American Red Cross operates under the following Code of Conduct, applicable to all staff.

Code of Conduct

No employee or volunteer shall—

- a. Authorize the use of or use for the benefit or advantage of any person, the name, emblem, endorsement, service or property of the American Red Cross.
- b. Accept or seek, on behalf of himself or any other person, any financial advantage or gain of other than nominal value that may be offered as a result of the employee's or volunteer's affiliation with the American Red Cross.
- c. Publicly utilize any American Red Cross affiliation in connection with the promotion of partisan politics, religious matters or positions on any issue not in conformity with the official position of the American Red Cross.
- d. Disclose any confidential American Red Cross information that is available solely as a result of the employee's or volunteer's affiliation with the American Red Cross to any person not authorized to receive such information, or use to the disadvantage of the American Red Cross any such confidential information without the express authorization of the American Red Cross.
- e. Knowingly take any action or make any statement intended to influence the conduct of the American Red Cross in such a way as to confer any financial benefit on any person, corporation or entity in which the individual has a significant interest or affiliation.
- f. Operate or act in any manner that is contrary to the best interest of the American Red Cross.

In the event that the employee's or volunteer's obligation to operate in the best interest of the American Red Cross conflicts with the interests of any organization in which the individual has a financial interest or affiliation, the individual shall disclose such conflict to the American Red Cross upon becoming aware of it, shall absent himself or herself from the room during deliberations on the matter and shall refrain from participating in any decisions or voting in connection with the matter.

American Red Cross Form 5244 (Rev.3-92)

American Red Cross Code of Conduct *(continued)*

Certification

I, _____ certify that I have read and understand the American Red Cross Code of Conduct and agree to comply with it. I affirm that, except as listed below, I have no financial interest or affiliation with any organization that may have interests that conflict with, or appear to conflict with, the best interest of the American Red Cross. Should such conflicts or apparent conflicts of interest arise in connection with the affiliations listed below, I agree to refrain from participating in any deliberations, decisions or voting related to the matter.

I also agree, during the term of my affiliation with the American Red Cross, to report promptly to the chairman of my unit, or his/her designee, any future situation that involves, or might appear to involve, me in any conflict with the best interest of the American Red Cross.

Date: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____

Social Security Number: _____

American Red Cross Information Release

I. I give to the American Red Cross, its nominees, agents and assigns, unlimited permission to use, publish and republish for purposes of advertising, trade or any other lawful use, information about me and reproductions of my likeness (photographic or otherwise) and my voice, whether or not related to any affiliation with the American Red Cross, with or without my name.

Name of person photographed or recorded (please print)	Age (if minor)
Street address, city, state and zip code	
Signature	Date

II. Consent of parent or legal guardian if above individual is a minor

I consent and agree, individually and as the parent or legal guardian of the minor named above, to the foregoing terms and provisions.

Signature	Relationship
-----------	--------------

Producer, writer or photographer

Assignment	Location
------------	----------

School Profile

Name of school: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #: _____

Type of school: _____

Principal/Head: _____

Date of contact: _____

Point of contact: _____

Title: _____

Existing extracurricular activities, clubs, after-school programs: _____

Policy on fundraising in school: _____

Experience working with the Red Cross: _____

Name of teacher _____ Grade _____ Project _____

Willing to work with the Red Cross? Yes No

In what capacity? _____

School Club Information Sheet

Name of school: _____

Type of school: _____

Name of club: _____

Point of contact: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Prefers to be contacted via: phone _____ email _____

Club mission: _____

Number of active club members: _____

Notes: _____

Activity Report

Purpose: To provide your local American Red Cross with the proper documentation of activities completed. Please report all projects or events that your Red Cross club organizes or takes part in.

School: _____

School's address: _____

Name of Red Cross club: _____

Name of project/event: _____

Number of students in club: _____

Was the project planned by students? Yes No

Project description and comments: _____

(Attach additional information, such as photos, news reports, etc.)

Number of person(s) served by project:

Youth (Ages 5-24) _____ Adults (ages 25+) _____

Send to: (Insert Red Cross name and address here)

American Red Cross School Club Monthly Report

School: _____ County: _____

Month: _____ Year: _____

Completed by: _____ Position: _____

Club Meeting Attendance

Date	# Returning Members	# New Members

Community Service Activity

Date	Activity	Description	# Volunteers

Fundraising Activity

Date	Activity	Description	# Volunteers

Teambuilding/Misc. Events

Date	Activity	Description	# Volunteers

Upcoming Events

Other News/ Updates (i.e. elections/ change in officers or advisor, etc.): _____

Send to _____ by the last Friday of each month:

Provide contact information here:

Field Trip Consent

American Red Cross, [insert name of Red Cross chapter], [insert name of club]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As part of their educational experience as a member of a Red Cross club, our youth volunteers will occasionally participate in a field trip. In order to participate, each youth volunteer must receive written consent from his/her parent/guardian.

On , _____
(Date) (Name)

will visit _____
(Location)

traveling by _____
(Bus, car, other)

The main purpose of the trip is _____

Departure time: _____ Anticipated return time: _____

(Red Cross Representative) (Date)

Parent/Guardian Consent

I hereby give consent for my child, _____, to participate _____

in the planned field trip to _____ on _____

I understand that my child will be traveling by _____

Emergency contact: _____

Name: _____ Relationship to youth volunteer: _____

Phone number: _____ Alternate phone number: _____

Insurance provider/group# _____

Health care provider: _____ Phone number: _____

On behalf of myself and my child, I release the American Red Cross, its officers, directors, employees and agents from any claim of liability arising from my child's participation in this field trip.

(Parent/Guardian Signature) (Date)

Red Cross Youth Volunteer Application

PLEASE PRINT.

American Red Cross

Identification

Social Security Number	<i>To be filled out by group leader</i>	ID Number (Assigned by CHERS)
		Reviewed By

Name

Last	
First	
Middle Initial	
Suffix (Jr., etc.)	
Preferred Name (if other than First)	

Addresses

Line 1	
Line 2	
City	
State	Zip

School Address

School	
Address	
City	
State	Zip

Phone Numbers

Home Phone		School	
Cell Phone		Fax	

Year of High School Graduation

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Branch

--

Sex

Male	Female
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Emergency Data (name, phone numbers, etc.)

Contact	Relationship
Day #	Night #

Birthdate

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Availability (non-disaster) AF10

In what geographic area are you willing to volunteer? Choose all that apply.

Volunteer Hours (if applicable) SF3

Have you been a Red Cross volunteer at a previous chapter?	Yes		No						
Previous chapter				# Years there			Total		

Mission Statement: The American Red Cross is a humanitarian organization, led by volunteers, that provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies. It does this through services that are consistent with its congressional charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

As a volunteer, I recognize and will be committed to the principles of the American Red Cross—impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

I will represent the American Red Cross in a positive manner and will carry out my responsibilities in a courteous, respectful and professional manner. All client records and information shall be treated with confidentiality.

I understand that I must abide by the rules and regulations of the American Red Cross and any other institution to which I am assigned. I promise to be dependable and perform my service unselfishly and to the best of my ability. I also understand that I must complete the Red Cross training offered in order to qualify for the volunteer work assigned. I understand that my assignment or assignments require me to give advance notice of any absences and vacation plans. I will always do my best to behave in a professional manner when on duty as a volunteer.

Signature _____ Date _____

My son/daughter/ward has my permission to participate as a Red Cross youth volunteer, and I make the commitment to support my child/ward in these activities whenever possible. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I give my permission for his/her participation.

Signature _____ Date _____

Medical Information Release

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Date of birth: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home phone: _____ School: _____ Year in school: _____

Health insurance company: _____ Phone: _____

Doctor: _____ Phone: _____

Dentist: _____ Phone: _____

Allergies or medical conditions: _____

Date of last diphtheria/tetanus shot: _____

Emergency Contact Information

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Day phone: _____ Evening phone: _____

Other: _____

I recognize that my son/daughter may require emergency medical care. I authorize American Red Cross employees or volunteers to secure medical care and transportation as is necessary in their judgment. I assume responsibility for any medical and/or transportation bills incurred by my son/daughter en route to and or at a medical facility. I fully understand that every effort will be made to contact me as soon as possible, giving first priority to my son/daughter's medical care.

Parent/Guardian name (Please print): _____

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

American Red Cross Curricula and Training for Schools

Every day teachers throughout the United States use Red Cross training materials and curricula to support their daily lesson plans.

Together We Prepare—Schools™, one of the most recent programs, includes a variety of programs, curricula and services that Red Cross field units can offer schools. Training programs teach young people how to perform first aid and CPR on those who need it. Lessons teaching disaster preparedness and safety before, during and after a disaster can easily be implemented as regular classroom lessons. School staff can also be trained in these important lifesaving skills.

Prevention strategies provide youth with the skills they need to better respond and cope with emergencies. Open discussions about how to prepare for an emergency encourage dialogue between students, parents and administrators that can aid in prevention.

Ask your schools about implementing the Red Cross curricula and training listed below. For more information on Together We Prepare—Schools, visit https://crossnet.redcross.org/every/initiatives/twp/twp_schools.asp.

TRAINING	DESCRIPTION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CLASSROOM INTEGRATION
Together We Prepare, First Aid and Preparedness, Levels 1 and 2	The content is designed to minimize fear and focuses on five main steps that individuals can take to plan, prepare for and respond to different emergencies. These presentations can be taught in approximately 2 hours.	Grades 1-5 (Level 1) Grades 6-9 (Level 2)	Science, health
Masters of Disaster™	Standards-based lessons integrate natural hazard safety into students' daily instruction. Hands-on activities cover earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, lightning, general preparedness and fire prevention and safety. Curriculum kits include a teacher's manual, a book of reproducible activity sheets, stickers (K-2 and 3-5 only), certificates and a video. Activity sheets are available in both English and Spanish at www.redcross.org/disaster/masters .	Curriculum kits available for grades K-2, 3-5 and 6-8	Science, mathematics, social studies, language arts, health
Facing Fear: Helping Young People Deal With Terrorism and Tragic Events	<i>Facing Fear</i> is a standards-based curriculum developed to address a demand by educators and caregivers of children for materials to help children cope in uncertain times. Lessons and accompanying activity sheets can be downloaded from www.redcross.org/disaster/masters .	Curriculum packets available for grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12	Social studies, language arts, health

TRAINING	DESCRIPTION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CLASSROOM INTEGRATION
<i>Youth in Disaster Services: Exploring the Possibilities</i>	This guide outlines opportunities for youth in disaster education, training, volunteerism and community service.	Red Cross club leaders	
First Aid for Children Today (F.A.C.T.)	A leader's kit designed for teachers and a fun fact book for students with coloring pages, puzzles, stickers and activities teaches health promotion and injury prevention activities.	Grades K-3	Science and health
Basic Aid Training (B.A.T.)	B.A.T. introduces children to safety information and first aid procedures for breathing difficulties, bleeding, poisoning, burns, shock and other emergencies. A workbook includes puzzles, mazes and word games.	Grades 3-5	Science and health
Community First Aid and Safety (C.F.A.S.)	Community First Aid and Safety trains individuals to overcome any reluctance to act in emergency situations and to recognize and care for life-threatening respiratory or cardiac emergencies in infants, children and adults.	Grades 7-12 / school staff	Science and health
First Aid/CPR/AED Program	Courses in this program give individuals the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize and provide basic care for injuries and sudden illnesses until advanced medical personnel arrive and take over.	Grades 7-12 / school staff	Science and health
Longfellow's WHALE Tales	Easy-to-follow lesson plans for teachers, parents or other adult leaders teach children about safe behavior in, on and around the water. Each lesson is reinforced with color posters, worksheets, activities and a video that features Longfellow, the animated whale.	Grades K-6	Science, social studies, language arts and health
GuardStart: Lifeguarding Tomorrow	GuardStart is a program for youth designed to provide a foundation of aquatic and leadership knowledge, attitudes and skills for future successful completion of American Red Cross Lifeguard Training. Lessons are grouped into five main areas: prevention, fitness, response, leadership and professionalism.	Grades 5-8	Physical education and health

TRAINING	DESCRIPTION	TARGET AUDIENCE	CLASSROOM INTEGRATION
Babysitter's Training Program	This course provides youth with the information and skills necessary to provide safe and responsible care for children in the absence of parents or guardians. This program provides participants with a range of injury prevention, first aid and basic childcare skills and helps develop professionalism and skills in decision making and leadership.	Grades 5-9	Health
ActSMART	This HIV/AIDS education curriculum contains a manual outlining age-appropriate activities and a poster.	Grades 1-12	Social studies, language arts and health
The Party	This HIV-prevention education package includes a video, users' guide and four double posters. Designed for use with young people who already know the basic facts about HIV and AIDS.	Grades 7-9	Social studies, language arts and health
"Don't Forget Sherrie"	Two video segments model decision-making skills and demonstrate positive interaction between two sisters talking about sexual activity and HIV infection. Materials are suitable for young people, parents or guardians living in African American or multicultural communities. Can be used to start discussion about HIV, AIDS, human sexuality and decision making.	Grades 7-12	Social studies, language arts and health
<i>The Talking Drums</i>	<i>The Talking Drums</i> is designed to build HIV prevention skills in African American communities. Key ring cards promote decision-making, negotiation, problem-solving and refusal skills.	Grades 7-12	Social studies, language arts and health
<i>Bridging the Gap Between Knowing and Doing</i>	This includes a leader's guide for building HIV prevention skills in Hispanic/Latino communities.	Grades 7-12	Social studies, language arts and health

