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STUDENT STEPS FOR STARTING A RED CROSS CLUB

Step 1: Contact the Red Cross office nearest your campus for guidance and approval.

Visit www.redcross.org and enter your zip code at the prompt to find the office nearest to your campus.

Step 2: Get your school's approval.

Most colleges and universities have procedures that must be followed before any group can form an officially recognized student club on campus.

Step 3: Name your club.

Your American Red Cross campus club should be officially titled, "American Red Cross Club of [school name]." This will help ensure consistency across the country. Plus there's the added benefit of having your club listed at the top of the alphabetical club list at your school!

Step 4: Begin thinking of Red Cross-related activities in which you'd like to see your club become involved.

Your Red Cross campus club's activities and projects should mirror the services offered by your sponsoring Red Cross unit. Your Red Cross liaison should be able to provide you with an abundance of ideas to get you started.

Step 5: Develop a structure for your club.

Red Cross campus clubs typically have a president and other officers, such as a secretary and a treasurer, who form the executive board. Many clubs have various committees that represent the club's areas of focus, with a chair heading each committee. This type of structure builds in numerous opportunities for leadership roles.

Step 6: Create job descriptions.

You will need individual job descriptions for leadership positions as well as group job descriptions for committee members.



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Step 7: Create a budget for your activities.

Start developing a preliminary budget. This will help you prioritize activities. Also, having a budget is often the first step to obtaining funds from your college or university. Your Red Cross unit liaison should be able to help you. In addition to budgeting for service projects, you'll want to plan for things like recruitment campaign costs, refreshments and recognition.

Step 8: Write a constitution for your club.

A constitution (or a statement of purpose) will help formalize the club's structure and spell out procedures that have been agreed upon, such as the election of officers, code of conduct, meeting schedule and so forth.

Step 9: Communicate with your local Red Cross unit.

Designate one of your members (usually it's the club president) as the primary contact with the unit. This student leader could provide reports to the local unit's board of directors and perhaps even serve as a board member, if invited by the unit. The important thing is to make sure the lines of communication stay open between your club and your local Red Cross unit.

Step 10: Start recruiting members for your club.

To initially recruit members, try flyers, e-mails, ads in the student newspaper, volunteer and club fairs and table tents in the cafeteria. Word of mouth from your core group of founding members is invaluable. Their enthusiasm and passion about the club is probably your best form of advertising.

Step 11: Use your first meeting as a brainstorming session.

Ask those who attend the meeting for their ideas about the kinds of projects they'd like. The more your club's activities mesh with its members' interests, the more successful it will be.

Step 12: Register your Red Cross campus club with American Red Cross national headquarters!

Visit the Red Cross Club site at www.redcross.org and fill in the short registration form. This will ensure that national headquarters is aware of your club and that your club will be informed of Red Cross opportunities at the national level. Your Red Cross club will become part of the growing club network that shares ideas and best practices.