



**American
Red Cross**

Youth Engagement

Red Cross Club Officer Training Guide

A Toolkit to Support Training



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Overview

At the beginning of every school year, a new Club leadership team has agreed to take ownership of the Red Cross Club. They will commit their time, energy and passion to do more, reach further and increase the Red Cross presence in their school and community.

Being a Red Cross Club Officer is an EXCITING role! Club Officers should be able to:

- **Find a good balance.** It's important to stay healthy by balancing between school, social life and commitments as a Red Cross leadership volunteer.
- **Inspire peers!** Use the power of example and build a reliable team.
- **Implement projects that respond to current community needs and further the Red Cross mission.** Ensuring your Club adheres to the Red Cross mission is crucial!
- **Find available resources, be creative and work on a shoestring budget.** Assess the skills Club members bring forward and find how to make the most of them.

Before the start of a new school year, host a training session for the Club Officers! This training will help set your Red Cross Clubs up for success and will provide your Club Officers or Executive Board members with the leadership skills they need to efficiently run and manage their Club. The training should:

- **Build a solid team.** Set up the fundamentals of working together as a leadership team through the year.
- **Provide new Officers with opportunities!** Allow Officers to plan a meeting and gain insight on what works and areas where they need to improve their skills.
- **Empower Officers!** Encourage them to think proactively while setting rules for efficient collaboration and clarifying roles and expectations.
- **Create an environment for open dialogue!** Provide Officers with the opportunity to ask questions and get prepared for handling difficult situations.

How to Use this Guide

This guide provides an outline for the training and allows you to customize the content according to the needs of the group you are working with. You can choose to complete all the activities in the guide in one day or over the course of several days.

Training Facilitators:

- The Red Cross Club Coordinator and/or Youth Engagement and the Club sponsor/advisor should be the facilitators for this training session. Leadership Volunteers who have experience working with youth can also help facilitate the training.
- Some of the activities can also be led by Club Officers, such as the President or Vice President.

When to host the training:

- Get the year started off on the right track and host your training early in the school year.
- You can also host a mid-year training at the beginning of the new semester.

Who to invite to the training session:

- Club Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Committee Leads)
- Club Sponsor/Advisor
- Red Cross Club Coordinator and/or the Red Cross Unit contact
- Key regional and chapter contacts who may work with the Club throughout the year

Trainings can be held for one Red Cross Club or a larger training can be held for Club Officers of all the Red Cross Clubs in your region. If your region has multiple Clubs, you can host an officer training by geographic location (i.e. by county) or by age group (i.e. all high school Red Cross Clubs in your region). These trainings are also great opportunities for club collaboration!

Activity: Introductions and Ice Breakers

Goal: Get to know each other!

Before officially beginning the training, ask the Club officers to introduce themselves to the group. Use this as a time for officers to learn new things about each other. This will aid in gaining a better understanding of what is important to each individual and provide some insight as to how people think differently and can work together with their diverse skillsets.

Select one from the activities below, or use one to your own liking:

Fun Q&A: Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Pass an object to an officer and ask them a question. Continue passing the object to the next person. Some sample questions:

- If you had a time machine that would work only once, what point in the future or in history would you visit?
- If your house were burning down, what three objects would you try and save?
- If you could talk to any one person now living, who would it be and why?
- If you were an animal, what would you be and why?

Extreme Rock, Paper, Scissors: Ask everyone to find a partner and play a game of *Rock, Paper, Scissors*. Play “best out of one” to keep this game quick. The loser of the duel joins the cheering section of the victor in the next duel. The player and cheering section now face a new opponent. The winner absorbs the loser and their cheering section into their own and play continues. The game eventually gets down to two people and the room is divided half and half cheering on the two players.

Two Truths and a Dream: Ask officers to share two true facts about themselves and one dream without specifying which one is which. Have the others try to guess the dream.

Silver Linings: Pair off team members into groups of two and have one member recount a negative experience (it can be fictional). Then, the other member will try to find a positive silver lining.

Team Doodle: One officer will draw a picture or object that the rest of the group will describe without directly revealing what it is. Time the activity to see how quickly and effectively you can communicate.

Survival Scenario: This exercise requires officers to communicate and agree to ensure their 'survival.' Tell your group that their airplane has just crashed in the ocean. There is a deserted island nearby, and there is only room on the lifeboat for every person – plus six items they will need to survive on the island. Instruct the team to come up with twelve items and then have them choose which six items they want to take to the island. How do they decide? How do they rank or rate each item?



Activity: Setting Training Objectives

Goal: Determine the goals for the day and explain the purpose of this training

Collectively decide:

- **What do the officers want to take away from the training?**
 - Make a list of ideas or objectives.
 - Display the list in a visible place for reference during the training.
- **What are some guidelines for our behavior and participation during the training?**
 - Make a list of goals. (i.e. Listen to everyone's suggestions, no phones, have fun, participate in all activities, share my thoughts, be an active listener.)
 - Ask participants if they feel they can all follow these expectations throughout the training.
 - Display the list in a visible place for reference during the training.
 - If individuals are not following expectations throughout the training, remind them about the list they created as a group during this activity.

Activity: Red Cross 101

Goal: Determine the goals for the day and explain why this training is being hosted.

To learn and spread awareness of the Red Cross:

- Distribute the mission statement, vision, principles, and values and/or post them in the room so that officers can see them throughout the training.
- Read aloud and discuss the mission statement, vision, principles, and values to help officers better understand that the Red Cross Club is a part of an amazing network to help its community and impact the world.
- Review the five lines of service. Post the lines of service in the room so that officers can see them throughout the training.

Mission Statement: 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.

Principles:

- **Humanity:** The Red Cross, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors—in its international and national capacity—to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.
- **Impartiality:** It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.
- **Neutrality:** In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Red Cross may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.
- **Independence:** The Red Cross is independent. The national societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with Red Cross principles.
- **Voluntary Service:** The Red Cross is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.
- **Unity:** There can be only one Red Cross society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.
- **Universality:** The Red Cross is a worldwide institution in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other.

Values:

- **Compassion:** 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 clear objectives, delivering on our mission and carefully stewarding our donor funds.

5 Lines of Service:

- **Disaster Services:** Helping families and communities recover from disasters
- **Service to the Armed Forces:** Helping service members, veterans, and their families
- **Training Services:** Designing health and safety courses for individuals and companies
- **Biomedical Services:** Hosting blood donations and more opportunities
- **International Services:** Delivering aid and support programs around the world



Activity: Using Volunteer Connection

Goal: Learn about how to use **Volunteer Connection** to manage Club events and hours.

Materials:

- Laptops or computers with Wi-Fi
- *NOTE: Prior to this activity, all Club officers should be registered in Volunteer Connection and the Red Cross Club should be registered/renewed in Volunteer Connection.*

Click [here](#) for the **Volunteer Connection Guide for Red Cross Club Leaders**.

Background: Volunteer Connection is a single organization-wide volunteer management system used to engage, match, train and deploy volunteers to respond to community needs and deliver the Red Cross mission.

- Volunteer Connection will be **extremely important** in helping manage your Club.
- All Clubs need to be **registered and approved** in Volunteer Connection.
- All Club members need to be **registered** as a volunteer in Volunteer Connection.
- Provide a deadline for when all Club members must be registered.
- Each Club has a Club GroupShare page that can be used to help manage your Club.
- Within the Club GroupShare, Club members will be able to add calendar events, files, upload photos, and more.
- Distribute the “How to Manage your Red Cross Club GroupShare” document in the Appendix for further guidance.
- **Log hours** for every event, including meetings.

Practice: Officers should spend time in Volunteer Connection to become familiar with the features. Features to practice:

- Add an event to the calendar and use a color code.
- Upload a file.
- Upload a picture.
- Add a Club event.
- Create a form.

Debrief:

- Officers should decide who will handle each Volunteer Connection function throughout the school year.
 - Who will log completed Club activities, manage hours, upload events, keep the calendar up to date, etc.?

Activity: Red Cross Club - Structure and Constitution

Goal: To set up guidelines for your Red Cross Club

When you volunteer with the American Red Cross, you are supporting one of the largest humanitarian organizations in the world and making a positive impact on your peers and in your community. You can also maximize your talents, learn new skills, improve your resume, and meet new people- all while making a meaningful difference in other people's lives.

A Red Cross Club is a group that will provide you and your peers opportunities for training, leadership development, and the ability to choose Red Cross mission-related activities that address your community's greatest needs. Red Cross Clubs empower you with Red Cross knowledge and life-saving skills to help prepare your school and community to respond to emergencies.

During this time, we will discuss what makes a successful Red Cross Club and how to create a Club Constitution.

If you are creating a new Club: Learn about creating a constitution from scratch in **Club in a Box**. Feel free to use the Red Cross Club Constitution **template** as well!

If you are a new Officer for a returning Club: Revise your previous constitution, and be sure to connect with your regional Red Cross contact.

As a review, your constitution should outline how often the Club and the officers will meet, and the specific roles and expectations of each officer. More information on Club structure and Club constitutions can be found in **Club in a Box**.

Activity: Mock Red Cross Club General Body Meeting

Goal: Practice facilitating general body meetings

*NOTE: If you are a new Club, refer to **Club in a Box**.*

Discuss: Club Officers should work together to create an agenda for the first general body meeting of the academic year.

Practice: Officers should take turns facilitating the meeting while the rest of the group acts as Red Cross Club members.

NOTE: Remember to save all great ideas discussed during the mock meeting to reference during the academic year.

Select one from the activities below, or use one to your own liking:

- New member recruitment ideas.
- Planning a joint event with another organization on campus.
- Hosting a preparedness event for the student body.
- Planning events for March is Red Cross Month.
- End of the year recognition event for Club members.

For more activity ideas, as well as an outline of events in which your Club can partake in every month, refer to the **activity guides and yearly calendar**.

Debrief:

- Ask Club members to decide how they will plan meetings during the school year.
- Develop a calendar draft for potential meeting topics and save for reference during the school year.

Activity: Team Building Exercises

Goal: To build trust and practice teamwork.

Materials: Bandanas or scarves, a small rug or large sheet of paper

Select one from the activities below, or use one to your own liking:

Trust My Voice: Make sure the leader has bandanas or scarves to use as blindfolds. This trust exercise requires some setting up before it can be executed. It also requires a large, open area such as a room without furniture or an empty parking lot. The leader must randomly place small tennis balls, cones, or bean bags around the area. Ask the officers to pair off in twos. One team member will be blindfolded and cannot talk and the other can see and talk but cannot enter the area or touch their blindfolded teammate. The challenge requires each blind-folded person to walk from one side of the area to the other, avoiding the placed objects by listening to the verbal instructions of their partners. Penalties can be applied for each time a blind-folded person steps near or on an object, but the real idea behind the game is to get the team members to trust their partner's directions and to teach them to communicate in more effective way.

Dynamic Duo: Have two (or more) officers stand on a rug or large sheet of paper. Ask them to completely flip the rug or paper while still standing on top of

it. Throughout the flipping process, they cannot touch the ground and must work together to coordinate their movements to successfully turn over whatever surface they are standing on.

Debrief:

- Ask each Club member to share what worked best in helping accomplish the goal of the activity.
- Which communication styles worked best?
- What did they learn about each other?



Activity: Problem Solving and Planning Ahead

Goal: To predict and prepare for future obstacles the Club could face.

Every Club will meet challenges that require the collaboration and teamwork of all its members to overcome. While some of these obstacles are region or Club specific, there are often universal considerations to make when leading a Club.

These frequent questions include:

- How will we recruit new members?
- How can we effectively retain members and keep them engaged?
- How can we stay connected to our local chapter?
- What are ways we can ensure the Club has enough funding to support our activities?
- How can we ensure the Club's continuity after our officer term?
- How can we best support the Red Cross mission?

As Club officers, you handle the long-term well-being and success of the Club. It is important to consider these questions and plan accordingly. Together with your Club officers, lead a brainstorming session to address these universal issues and any Club-

specific issues. Please refer to the wonderful resources at RedCrossYouth.org for more information and problem-solving support.

Closing

Goal: Review the outcomes from the activities of the day.

Discuss:

- Revisit the list of goals provided at the beginning of the training.
- Provide any region-specific information.
- Answer/discuss any remaining questions.
- Provide further contact information and resources
 - [American Red Cross Youth Network Facebook Group](#)
 - [@americanredcrossyouth](#) on Instagram
 - [YouthWire](#)- Monthly Newsletter
 - www.redcrossyouth.org



Impact Starts Here

Now the Red Cross Officers have the skills to lead a successful Red Cross Club.

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