

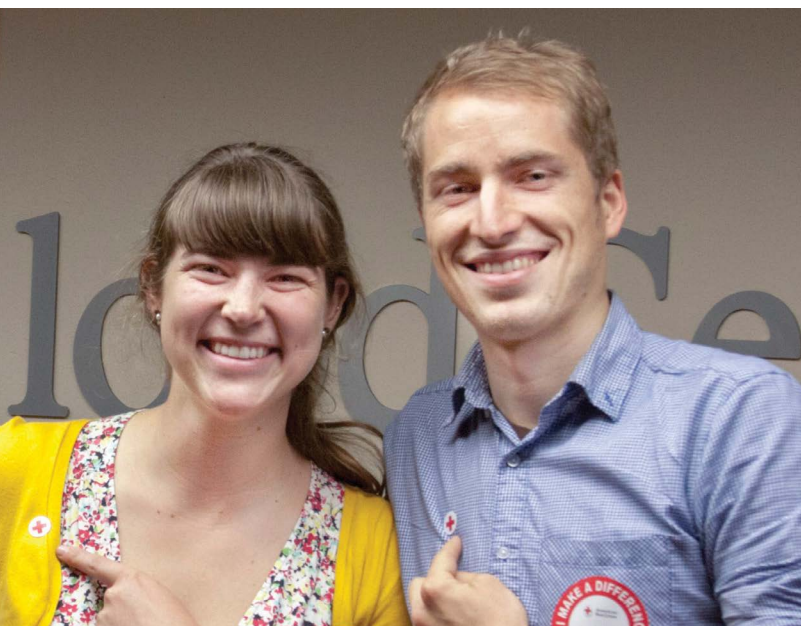
# RED CROSS CLUBS: PLANNING YOUR RED CROSS CLUB YEAR

## Red Cross Club Calendar and Important Red Cross Dates

When starting a new school year, there are a number of things already on your Club agenda: keeping your members engaged, planning and implementing at least three activities a year, and staying focused on the mission. So *how* do you keep track of it all?

A great tool to help you in this planning process is the *Red Cross Club Calendar*. There are a few elements that you need to consider before identifying major events and writing down the dates.

- Research and identify what is happening in your school. For example, list some annual events on your campus that your Club should *avoid* scheduling Club events on the same day.
  - *Ex: If you plan a blood drive the same day as the career fair you will get low participation rates.*
- Research and identify what is happening in the Red Cross. Each month, the organization has different focus areas.
  - *Ex. January is blood donor appreciation month. Your Red Cross Unit Contact should be able to help you find this information. Try to match your calendar of events with the organization's activities.*
- Identify the events that are taking place in your community and take them into account when planning your activities.
  - *Ex: For high school, selling first aid kits at a Parent's Night as opposed to during a lunch period can make all the difference.*
- Come up with a number of projects you want to implement throughout the school year. Remember: It is mandatory that you complete at least three mission-related projects per school year. The projects should focus on blood services, fundraising, and/or preparedness.
- Make a calendar that is easy to customize and update. You can use Volunteer Connection for organizing all your upcoming events.
  - *Ex: Set up email alerts and reminders for upcoming events.*



## Building your Club Calendar

We will walk you through a step-by-step process that will enable you to build a customized calendar for your Club. Feel free to set up your calendar in accordance with the events that are relevant for your school and community.

**Step 1.** Look at your *school calendar* for the year and **mark down all major school breaks**. You should keep in mind the *summer, winter and spring breaks*. With some minor exceptions, you should avoid scheduling events during school breaks.

**Step 2. Mark down all major holidays.** Some of the official holidays have a lot of momentum and represent great service opportunities, i.e. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Veterans Day, etc. Contact your local Red Cross Unit to learn if there are service projects being planned for particular holidays in which your Club can participate. You should consider hosting events during these holidays:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial Day
- Labor Day
- 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Break

**Step 3. List all major school events.** There are a couple of places where you can find this information, such as on the school website or by tasking Club members to track down sporting event and social activity schedules. Be as specific as possible. Some events you should capture are:

- Club Registration Day/Week
- Freshman Orientation
- Sporting events (i.e. Homecoming, Playoffs, etc.)
- School holidays (Teacher Service Days)
- Finals, Midterms
- Other Clubs' events (major fundraisers)
- PSAT/SAT/ACT testing, AP/IB Exams
- Special school days (Career fair, Seniors' Day)
- Pep rallies/School-wide assemblies
- Dances
- Career Fairs
- Volunteer Fairs

**Step 4.** Identify all **major events in your community** that would be relevant to your Red Cross Club. The best places to find this information are on city, county and state government websites. Some of the events you might consider are:

- Festivals
- Sporting Events
- Town/City Meetings
- Holiday Events

- Parades
- State Fairs
- Local Red Cross Unit Events

**Step 5.** Mark all dates that are relevant to the **Red Cross**. Work with your Red Cross Unit Contact to make sure you don't miss any. You can also add additional dates that have a special relevance for youth volunteers:

- International Youth Day—August 12
- National Preparedness Month—September
- Make a Difference Day—4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in October
- National Youth Involvement Month—November
- March is Red Cross Month—March
- Global Youth Service Day—usually the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in April
- World Red Cross Day—May 8

**Step 6.** List **all projects and initiatives your Club** is planning to implement for the upcoming year.

*Advice from the Pros:* Don't forget to make time for social activities and other events like recruitment or awards!



**Contact your local Red Cross Unit for more information.**