PLANNING YOUR RED CROSS CLUB YEAR
**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: 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 gain momentum and represent great service opportunities, i.e. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Veterans Day, etc. You should consider hosting events on the following days:
  - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
  - Presidents Day
  - Memorial Day
  - Labor Day
  - 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance
  - Veterans Day
  - Thanksgiving Break (Giving Day)

- **Step 3: List all major school events.**
  There are a few places where you can get the best information: check your school’s website or task club members to cover the sports events and social activities. Be as specific as possible. Some events you should capture:
  - 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 (Seniors Day)
  - Pep rallies/School-wide assemblies
  - Dances
  - Career Fairs
  - Volunteer Fairs

**Red Cross Club Calendar and Important Red Cross Dates**

From increasing your Club’s visibility to keeping your members engaged, there are a number of things already on your agenda at the start of a new school year. 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 for your school or campus and avoid scheduling Club events on the same day. 
  *Ex. If you plan a blood drive the same day as a career fair, you will get low participation rates.*

- 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.

- Make a calendar that is easy to customize and update. Since all club members are required to have a Volunteer Connection account, you can use Volunteer Connection for organizing all your upcoming events.
  - Set up email alerts and reminders for upcoming events.
Step 4: Identify all major events for your community.

The best places to find relevant information are on city, county and state government websites. Community events you might consider:

- Festivals
- Sporting Events
- Town/City Meetings
- Holiday Events
- Parades
- State Fairs
- Red Cross Region Events

Step 5: Mark all Red Cross relevant dates.

You can also add additional dates that have a special relevance for youth volunteers:

- International Youth Day—August 12
- National Preparedness Month—month of September
- Make a Difference Day—4th Saturday in October
- National Youth Involvement Month—month of November
- March is Red Cross Month—month of March
- National Volunteer Week—usually early-mid April
- Global Youth Service Day—usually the 4th weekend in April
- World Red Cross and Red Crescent 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 items like recruitment or recognition events!

Contact your local Red Cross Region for more information.