



Lions Clubs International

YOUNG ADULT RECRUITING GUIDE

Who Will Carry Your Club's Banner in 2050?



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Contrary to popular belief, young adults want to volunteer and are volunteering at a higher rate than normal. This is good news for Lions clubs because attracting and retaining younger Lions is vital to perpetuate our clubs. To aid this effort, Lions Clubs International has developed this Young Adult Recruiting Guide to teach existing clubs why young adults want to volunteer and what Lions can do for them. Attracting young adults can be a challenge; therefore, your club may need to revitalize how it operates and how your members think in order to get young adults involved.

The principals in this guide for existing clubs can also be used when forming a new club; however, additional considerations may be needed. Therefore, a section at the end of this guide is dedicated to recruiting young adults when chartering a new club.

Why Recruit Young Adults

Recruiting younger members is an excellent opportunity to bring new energy and diverse skills into your club and ensure your club will still be in existence in 40 years. By recruiting young adults into your club, you will:

- Gain fresh ideas for service projects and activities
- Increase hands to do more service
- Promote membership that better reflects the community
- Mirror current times
- Breathe life into your club
- Sustain your club

RECRUITING YOUNG ADULTS

Membership Programs

LCI offers several membership programs that are of interest to young adults. In addition to offering dues discounts, the following programs will encourage young adults to bring family, friends and children along with them to club meetings and activities. Understanding these programs before you begin the recruiting process is important.

Family Membership Program

The Family Member Program encourages quality family time, something highly important to many young adults. The Family Membership Program provides families with the opportunity to receive a special dues discount when they join a Lions club together. The first family member (head of household) pays full international dues, and up to four additional family members pay only half the international dues. All family members pay the one-time entrance fee.

The Family Membership Program is open to family members who are (1) eligible for Lions membership, (2) currently in or joining the same club, and (3) living in the same household and related by birth, marriage or other legal relationship. Common household family members include parents, children, spouses, aunts and uncles, cousins, grandparents, in-laws and legal dependents.

Lions Family Cub Program

Many young adults are working and raising children, and it is important to them that they spend as much of their free time with their children as possible. LCI has developed the Lions Family Cub Program, complete with the *Cub Program Activity Guide* (MPFM-33). Formulated to encourage families to volunteer together, the Cub Program gives children under age 12 the opportunity to build a lifelong dedication to helping others.

By encouraging young members to bring their children to club meetings and service projects, you increase the chances they will participate more often. Children can get involved by helping collect money, cleaning up snacks and refreshments or passing out raffle tickets. Also, consider hiring a local Leo club to babysit during club meetings and coordinate activities with the children. By offering a service like this, you will increase the likelihood of both parents joining the club since no babysitter is needed.

Student Member Program

Many young adults attend college or graduate school. Being able to include Lions clubs on their resume is a good incentive to join, however, the high cost of education leaves many students tight on money. The Student Member Program gives students a dues discount to make joining easier.

Students enrolled in an educational institution and between the age of legal majority and through age 30 pay only half international dues and are exempt of any entrance fees.

Leo Lion Members

Former Leos have experience and knowledge of how a Lions club works, and have a track record for being interested in volunteering. This market can be a great source for recruiting. All former Leos , who have been a Leo for at least a year and a day, are eligible to receive entry fee exemption and former Leos between the age of legal majority and through age 30 pay only half international dues.

Finding Young Adults to Recruit

Finding young adults to recruit may be the one of the easier steps to recruiting young adults. With some helpful hints, you may not have to go far. Use the following ideas for places and methods (keeping in mind the above programs) to recruit younger members into your club:

- Ask current members to recruit within their family. Children and grandchildren of Lions are a great source for membership.
- Visit local colleges and universities. Students are a good resource for your club and many educational institutions require volunteer hours for graduation.
- Attend a local Leo club and find out if Alpha Leo's graduating high school or Omega Leo's turning 30 are interested in becoming a Lion.
- Call or email area businesses and ask if you can post flyers or set up a booth in their lunchroom for a day.
- Partner with a youth group or secondary school to implement a joint service project. Many participants will soon reach the age of legal majority. This will give your club contact with future prospective members.
- Encourage the young adults you are recruiting to invite their spouse, friends and family members to attend a meeting. Young adults enjoy doing activities in a group and will feel more comfortable if they bring others along with them.

Young people gravitate toward others like themselves, and a good approach is to recruit with your youngest members. Seeing someone of a similar age, lifestyle and perspective enjoying Lions service is a convincing reason to join. Once you have two or three young adults in your club, ask them to team up with your club's membership chairperson to form a committee concentrated on recruiting other young adults.

“Talking” Dues

Dues can be a sensitive subject when approaching a prospective member, so it is important to have a plan of approach. The concern of most young adults is where their money is going. Therefore, when discussing dues, explain that there is a one-time entrance fee and breakdown how much of their annual dues goes to the club, the district and LCI. It is also helpful to clarify what the dues are used for. Explain that a portion of their international dues goes towards LION Magazine and insurance coverage.

Verbally partitioning annual dues into monthly payments can also be helpful. Telling a young adult that total dues are approximately \$10/month instead of \$120/year sounds more manageable. Consider offering a monthly payment plan. Also, do not forget to find out if they qualify for any of the membership program dues discounts provided by LCI.

If dues is still an issue for a potential member, consider asking an established Lion to sponsor the first year dues for a young adult that cannot afford to join.

What Not to Wear

Image is important to many young adults. The more you can relate to them, the greater the chances they will consider joining your club. One way to relate is through the clothing you wear when recruiting.

You should always dress to fit the situation. In most cases, you should not wear a business suit because young adults will think of you as a sales person, however, if you are recruiting at a business location then a suit may be acceptable. Additionally, it is advised to stay away from wearing a Lions vest. Young adults are less interested in uniforms and may feel that if they join, they will be expected to wear a vest.

Wearing a Lions polo shirt or a plain casual shirt, khaki pants, dress shoes and a Lions pin is most often the best way to dress.

Tools for Recruiting Young Adults

Lions Clubs International offers several tools to assist in your efforts when recruiting young adults, including the following:

- The *Be a Part of Something that Matters Brochure* (EX-801) targets young adults for membership and is a good piece of information to hand out to potential members. Be sure to add your contact information to the brochure. For example, consider printing labels with your club name, meeting information, website, phone number and email to affix to the back of the brochure.
- The *Young Adult Recruiting Video* (EX-802) features young Lions engaging in hands on service activities and includes interviews highlighting why other young adults joined a club and what being a Lion means to them.
- PR tools are available on the LCI website to assist clubs and districts in running a successful public relations program.
- The *Club Brochure Template* (MK-20A) is a tool for Lions clubs to create and customize their own brochure. The brochure is prefilled with general membership information and offers space for adding information specific to your club. Once the template is filled in, print the brochures and use them for recruiting.
- The *Membership Satisfaction Guide* (ME-301) teaches clubs how to keep members happy and coming back.
- District newsletters may be used as a promotion tool when recruiting. Newsletters should be simple, clean and to the point. Consider asking a Lion with graphic design experience in your club or district to help design the newsletter. Develop a set of newsletter guidelines so the format is consistent.

Follow-up

Follow-up is essential whether a young adult initially accepts or declines invitation to join Lions. Young adults may be hesitant at first, especially if they are not familiar with LCI and do not know anyone in your club. Give them time. Even if a young adult is interested, they are not likely to accept your invitation before they do research or discuss joining with friends and family.

The *Be a Part of Something that Matters Brochure*, or other information given to prospective members about LCI and your club, will lay the groundwork for following up with young adults. Traditional methods of recruitment follow-up, such as sending a letter or a making phone call may be fine, but many young adults prefer being contacted by more modern methods. Consider the following:

- Collect email addresses. Young adults are usually willing to share their email, especially if you communicate your purpose. Keep the email short, or they may become uninterested. Write no more than a few sentences thanking them for their time and linking them to your club website. Here they will find information about your club and projects. Include information about your next club meeting with a linked map to your meeting location.
- Ask for their phone number to send a text message. A day or two prior to your next club meeting, send a text message reminding them of the time and location and that you look forward to seeing them. With busy schedules, a reminder message viewable in their own time may be helpful.

The best follow-up method is that preferred by the the prospective member. Ask which method is best.

POSITIONING IN YOUR CLUB

Club Meetings

Young adults are busy. Between school, work and starting a family, it may seem that they do not have time to be a Lion. However, they understand that giving back to their community is important. This being said, young adults are much more interested in hands-on activities rather than long club meetings. There may be some changes your club needs to make in order to accommodate a young adult's lifestyle. Consider the following:

- Be flexible and change your club constitution and by-laws to allow Lions to remain in good standing even if they are unable to attend every meeting. If your club meets twice a month, only require that members attend one meeting per month. Also, consider changing meeting times to better accommodate young adults. For example, if your club has a meeting at 10:00 a.m. every other Tuesday, most young adults will be at work. You could also consider recording meetings to post on the Internet so members that are unable to attend can listen to or view the meeting.
- Let go of some club traditions. Many young adults are disinterested in club formalities that once were an integral part of a Lions club meeting. Wearing a Lions vest and pin should be optional and other ceremonial traditions such as singing the Lions song can be cut from meetings.
- Do not serve a meal at meetings; rather, serve light refreshments such as cookies and soft drinks. If some existing club members prefer having a full meal, make it optional. Give members two meeting times. For example, dinner is from 6:00-6:30 and club business will be discussed from 6:30-7:00. Some young adults do not have the time or money for a full dinner.
- Stick to the agenda. Young adults are action based individuals and their time is valuable. Therefore, it is important that club meetings are quick and efficient. Consider emailing the meeting schedule ahead of time so that members know what to expect. Use a PowerPoint presentation during your meeting to stay organized and on topic.
- Mix things up. Be creative and consider holding meetings at different locations. Discuss club business while setting up for the blood drive, over a recreational game, during a back yard cook-out or at a local coffee shop briefly before work. Meetings do not always have to be formal or at the same location. A change of scenery may attract members.
- Revamp the format of your club meetings. Instead of Lions all facing one direction and listening to club officers, sit in a circle and encourage open communication between all Lions. Young members want to feel involved and are not concerned with hierarchy.
- Instead of the tail twister position penalizing members for not wearing a vest or pin, reinvent the position. For example, the tail twister can come up with a fun "ice breaker" game to start each meeting. Search "ice breakers" on the LCI website for ideas.

Get Online

Young adults use the Internet for just about everything, from paying bills and shopping online to communicating with friends and family. The Internet also serves as the go-to resource for young adults when researching just about everything. Before deciding to join or attending an informational meeting, young adults will use the Internet to learn about your club. Make sure they find a club website that is attractive, up-to-date and provides all the information they want, including meeting information, a calendar of events and service project descriptions with pictures. Stay away from animated images and clip art.

e-Clubhouse

Lions Clubs International makes having a nice looking website easy by providing clubs with the free e-Clubhouse. The e-Clubhouse offers clubs predesigned templates with fill-in-the blank fields for even the least Internet savvy. The site comes preformatted with a club home page, calendar of events, club project page, photo gallery and contact page. Additional pages may be added.

Young adult members of your club will want to continue using technology throughout their membership. Therefore, use the Internet to communicate to members by email, such as sending the meeting minutes after each meeting, or to create a club Facebook fan page.

Service

Your club should market its benefits. To many young adults, the most important benefit of being in a Lion is the service aspect of the club. When recruiting, give young adults examples of past and future club projects. When promoting your club at a booth, display a few photos of club members doing service rather than bringing your club banner. Additional ways to emphasize service as a priority is as follows:

- Highlight hands-on projects with tangible efforts. Young adults are more inclined to want immediate results. Fundraising is important, but young members want to use their hands to build, feed or help someone; they do not want to spend all their time barbecuing or serving pancakes.
- Be involved in several projects so young members can pick and choose which interest to them. Keep in mind that everyone may not have time to attend all projects.
- Make a global impact. Many young members are looking for projects that make a difference in other parts of the world but are performed on a local basis. Consider projects such as collecting and sending supplies to natural disaster victims in another country.
- Go green. Young adults are interested in helping the environment; therefore, engage in and promote community projects that reduce your carbon footprint. Ideas include developing a neighborhood compost pile, planting trees or distributing energy efficient light bulbs.

Leadership

Many young adults are interested in becoming involved by holding a leadership position or being a part of a committee. This allows them to build their resume and improve their presentation, business and management skills.

Make sure the young members of your club have a voice. Ask for their ideas and provide them with meaningful participation in club business and activities. Consider having committee positions available for them to join or chair as soon as they become a member.

Providing opportunities that utilize the skills of young members is important. For example, ask a member in the technology field to manage your club website, or a member in marketing to design a newsletter for your club.

STARTING A NEW CLUB WITH YOUNG ADULTS

A good way to get young adults involved with Lions is to open a new club in your community. A new club consisting of mainly young adults will attract new members and allow young members to operate the club in a way that suits their lifestyles. In addition to the information provided for recruiting young adults, LCI offers various club types and resources for forming new clubs.

Club Types

Young adults look for new opportunities to become involved in issues that are relevant and serve in a way that fits their ever-changing lifestyle. While community-based clubs are our tradition, LCI realize that one size does not fit all. That is why LCI also offers the following club types in addition to a traditional Lions club:

- **Campus Lions clubs** are designed for college and university students, administrators, faculty, alumni and other community-minded individuals. Members serve the campus community while developing valuable leadership and business skills.
- **Leo Lions clubs** provide an easy transition from Leo to Lions clubs by offering a special dues discount to graduating Leos and their peers. To charter a Leo Lions club, a minimum of 10 graduating Leos is required.
- **Club branches** enable a small group of five or more people to form a Lions club and start making a difference in their community sooner. Members become a part of an existing “parent” Lions club, but select their own projects and activities. Consider a club branch consisting of young adults for a club that wants to keep its traditions. You may also start a branch with Alpha Leo’s graduating high school or Omega Leo’s turning 30 that are interested in becoming a Lion.
- **Special interest clubs** are based on a common interest or circumstance. Perhaps potential members share a hobby or a community project they would like to work on. If so, form a special interest club that focuses on an element that many potential members have in common.
- **Cyber clubs** can include members from distant geographic areas or hold club meetings online for convenience. At least 75% of charter members must work or reside in the multiple district in which the club is formed.

For step by step information on starting a new club, refer to *The Guide to New Club Formation* (TK-1).

Extension Workshops

The Extension Workshop Program is designed to help Lions start new clubs. Lions learn key strategies for identifying potential club locations and how to approach and recruit important community leaders into a new Lions club. Your district can hold either a Traditional Workshop or Level 2 Workshop targeted towards opening a new club consisting of young adults.

Traditional Workshops

Traditional Workshops focus on proven methods for recruiting and incorporate fieldwork to build confidence and share skills over three days. The goal for each workshop is to form at least one new club, near the training site, while simultaneously training 10 to 30 Lions per session.

By holding a traditional workshop, participants engage firsthand in the formation of a new Lions club, making the workshop informative and exciting. Participants also learn to involve charter members in meaningful activities to build a strong foundation.

Level 2 Workshop

In the level 2 workshop, districts identify four to five new club organizers that will make a commitment to form one new club close to their area. The one day training will cover identifying a good location for a new club, distinguishing the different types of clubs to form, identifying a good sponsoring club and guiding Lions (to suggest to the district), developing an extension team, and how to organize a new club.

Level 2 Workshops are a good way to form multiple clubs in your district from one-day of training. The key is identifying good club organizers that will make the commitment. Consultants will be available after the training by phone or email to answer any questions or provide guidance.

There is no cost to hold a workshop. All you need to do is determine a location where to hold the training. LCI will send a new club development consultant free of charge to your district.

Notes



Lions Clubs International

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