

What If We Want to Start an On-Campus Club?

*If your team is at a place where
you are interested in starting an on-campus club,
this is the chapter for you.*

Starting a Club: The Checklist

Before beginning a club on your campus make sure you meet the following requirements:

- You have assembled a ministry “team/community.”
- Your team has worked through the first half of this workbook together.
- Your team is regularly practicing abiding in Christ together.
- Your team members are already actively loving, serving and reaching out to other students on your campus through relationships.
- Your team has spent time in prayer and you feel that the Holy Spirit is leading your team to start a club on your campus.

The reason we have put this list before you is because, often times, students jump into starting a Christian club on their campus right off the bat. The problem is, unless the students are already practicing sharing Jesus through loving others, their club won't be effective in reaching out to their campus. Relationships are the foundation. Organized ministries, like clubs, should be used to ENHANCE the relational ministry you're already doing.

Warning:

Christian clubs can often become “Christian bubbles” that hardly make any difference at all. At the minimum, Christian clubs should be a place encourage each other, spur each other on to serve your campus and to create a welcoming community for your friends and peers who don't yet know Jesus.

Tip:

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX! You don't have to create a “Christian” club to have a presence on campus. Think about other creative outreach-oriented clubs you could start that would appeal to more than just Christians. Like a service club, an athletic club, etc.

Now that we've covered all of that, we will release you to get started.

DREAM TOGETHER...

- If you feel the Lord is calling your team to create a club, get together with your team, and anyone else who is interested, to discuss WHY you want to start a ministry or outreach... WHY have a club?

- Discuss what the PURPOSE of the ministry will be. What has God laid on your heart to accomplish through this campus club?

- Discuss and pray about the TYPE of club you're interested in starting. Whether it's a Christian club, a service club, a prayer club, a club dedicated to a specific cause (like providing clean water), an athletic club (like FCA), etc!

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PRAY TOGETHER...*really ask Jesus for Him to lead your team*

- Thank God for all He desires to do on your campus.
- Pray that He would give you a bold vision for non-Christian students and your campus.
- Pray that He would prepare your hearts and walk you through the beginning of this process.
- Pray that God would open doors on your campus for effective ministry.
- Pray that He would prepare the hearts of the school administration and make them open and receptive to your club.
- Pray that He would use your club to bring many to Christ on your campus!

DO RESEARCH...*get a feel for the needs on your campus and what's happening there already*

- Find others on your campus who have the same heart and vision and will join your team (be sure the group includes members from different churches and backgrounds for balance).
- Notice where God has already been working on your campus
 - See if there are any existing, effective Christian Outreach ministries you could join or partner with before you begin a new one).
- Know the situation at your school:
 - Is your school government-funded?
 - Are there any extra-curricular clubs at your school?
 - How do they promote themselves?
 - Where/when do their meetings take place and what do they look like?
- Take a survey of students who would be interested in your type of club and what times they are able to meet.
- Collect information you will need:
 - School district policies, applications
 - A copy of the Equal Access Act, which is in the "Legal Issues" section of this workbook.
- If you don't already have a teacher sponsor, begin looking for Christian teachers/coaches/staff at your school that would be willing to sponsor and support your ministry.
- Delegate responsibilities and assign necessary tasks.

GET READY...

- Call a meeting with like-minded students who will be a part of the leadership team.
- Commit to being dedicated to the ministry even when times are tough and things are hard.
- Communicate the vision for the club and make sure everyone understands its purpose.
- Decide on a mission statement for your club.
 - It should be short.
 - It should say why you want your club to exist.
 - Everyone should agree on it.
- Pick a name for your club. (Names say a lot and will be the first impression people have.)
- Discuss the best day/time for the club and the leadership team to meet.
- Complete all necessary applications required by your school.
- If you need it, a sample Christian Club constitution is on page 49 of this workbook.

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Starting a Club: The Checklist

GET SUPPORT...

- Ask ten Christian adults to pray for your team as you begin to plan your ministry.
- Ask one of the Christian faculty members at your school to be your club/ministry sponsor (if you don't already have one). If there are no Christian faculty members interested, look for another interested faculty member...who knows, the club might even witness to them!
- If you don't already have a coach or mentor for your team, ask a Christian youth worker from your church and/or a Christian organization (such as Youth For Christ NSP, FCA, Young Life) to "coach" your team.

PRESENT IT...*if you need to present a club proposal to ASB, the Activities Director, etc.*

- Know your legal rights before you begin (see the "Legal Issues" section of this workbook on page 57).
- PRAY!!!
- Make sure you go together as a team.
- Make an appointment and be on time.
- Be polite, knowledgeable, respectful and persistent. Don't be apologetic, combative or defensive.
- Ask "when and where" and not "may we."
- Present a list of interested students.
- Share about what the club will do for the school.
- Make sure they know the club will be student-led although there may be adult visitors and speakers from time to time.
- Thank them.
- If they say NO**, you can write a letter to the School District Superintendent stating your request and your understanding of the Equal Access Act. Ask for their involvement.
- If they STILL say no**, you can seek legal support (see the "Legal Issues" section on page 57). Many schools have been able to find great, prompt, and FREE legal help.

GET STARTED...*once your club is given the "go ahead," you can...*

- Plan your first meeting! (Have your coach help you with this if you aren't sure what to do!)
- Find creative ways to promote your club and bring friends!
- At your first meeting, present your vision for the club and ask the other students if they have any suggestions or ideas.
- Meet with your ministry team after your first meeting to talk about how it went!
- PRAY!!!!!!

AND REMEMBER...

- ALWAYS build an atmosphere of unconditional love and acceptance in your club.
- NEVER exclude people from your meetings. You are on a public school campus.
- Always keep your vision and mission statement in mind.
- Always work together as a team and never depend on just one person for leadership.
- Always proceed with prayer and move in prayer, abiding in Jesus together.
- Make your club one big Holy Experiment.

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Starting a Club: A sample club constitution

NAME

The name of our club will be _____

PURPOSE

To assist students in balancing the physical, mental, relational and spiritual parts of their lives at (name of school) by providing regular opportunities for worship, prayer, Bible study and open discussion of their values.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

This statement is adapted from the Constitution of the National Association of Evangelicals.

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God.

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father and in His personal return to glory and power.

We believe that, for the salvation of lost and sinful men, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary.

We believe in the resurrection of all people to face God at the end of time.

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.

MEMBERSHIP

The active membership of _____ club shall consist of any student who regularly attends the meetings. There are no dues.

STRUCTURE

The officer and student leaders of the _____ club shall agree to the statement of faith of _____ club.

Officers and student leaders shall be selected from the membership.

The club will meet weekly at the non-curricular times the school administration allows.

(optional sections)

The _____ club shall have a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. (other officers are optional)

Student leaders are those students who assist the officers in giving direction to the _____ club.

COMMITTEES

Committees shall be designated as the _____ club leadership chooses

AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at a meeting with a majority of members present.

A two-thirds majority of those members present is required to approve any amendment.