

KEY SOLUTIONS

KEY CLUB MEMBERSHIP RESOURCES

Effectively sponsoring a Key Club

The most important part a Kiwanian and/or Kiwanis club can play in a Key Club is that of mentor. To keep a club strong, the club needs plenty of support, interest and projects. The following material explains what it takes to maintain a Key Club and help it prosper and grow. It also provides an outline to keep the sponsoring Kiwanis club involved and keep the Key Club growing.

Building a strong club takes a lot of time, patience and nurturing. Only with the ongoing help of the sponsoring Kiwanis club can a club survive.

I. Why maintain effective sponsorship?

Maintaining and supporting an existing Key Club is an often overlooked but extremely important task. Key Club is structured to give high school students the opportunity to learn responsibility through a dynamic process of trial and error. All too often, however, after a Key Club is built, the close ties between the Kiwanis club and the Key Club falter.

1. Because Key Club leaders are learning as they go along, strong Kiwanis support is a must. Guidance is appreciated when offered in a non-threatening, thoughtful manner. If things go wrong, a Kiwanian should be there ready to pick up the dropped baton and help get the club back on track.
2. A Kiwanis club and its service potential is increased through close interaction with the members of your Key Club.
3. Only through a Kiwanis club's support can the members of the Key Club gain from the knowledge and guidance of Kiwanians.
4. Only through a Kiwanis club's continued support of the Key Club in the community can the Kiwanis club reap the rewards of sponsorship.
5. Through strong support, a Key Club is sure not to falter and will grow and prosper, thus offering more high school students this great opportunity.

II. How does a Kiwanis club maintain effective sponsorship?

1. **Relationship building.** The relationships between the Kiwanis club and the Key Club are called Kiwanis-family relations. They are vital to the success of the Key Club. Some ideas for increasing or strengthening K-family relations include:
 - a. **Key Pal Project.** A program designed to build strong, personal relationships between a Kiwanian and a Key Club member. Through developing personal concern between members of the two organizations, the two groups will work together through a series of personal relationships. This program also offers an opportunity for you and the Key Clubber to learn from each other.
 - b. **Visitation.** A basic but important part of your local Kiwanis-family relations, visitation is the only way your two organizations can maintain an ample understanding of each other's activities and concerns.

Key Clubbers should visit and speak to Kiwanis meetings, but just as important is visitation by Kiwanians at Key Club meetings. One way to facilitate this activity is by adopting an object or mascot that can be brought from Key Club meeting to Kiwanis meeting and vice-versa and handed to a person that has not yet attended the other's meeting.

- c. **Co-sponsoring projects.** One of the best ways to increase relations between the two clubs is to hold joint projects. When the two clubs work toward a common goal, often dynamic relationships/bonds are formed. (Not to mention that a double positive is achieved as a service project is accomplished at the same time.)
- d. **Competition.** Often the two clubs can engage in a challenge to see who can make the biggest dent in a task or problem. Who can raise the most for a certain cause? Who can collect the most for an area food pantry?
- e. **Social/fun activities.** Often Key Club members have a hard time relating to Kiwanians because they feel that they don't have anything in common. Get together and just do something fun and build some enduring bonds.
- f. **Knowledge and understanding.** It is important for you as a Kiwanian to have knowledge of the general responsibilities of the officers of your Key Club so you can step in if need be and recommend an alternative action or even request that a shirked duty be completed. Possibly even more important is your knowledge of your responsibilities as a Kiwanian to your sponsored Key Club.

III. What do you need to know?

1. **Officer duties.** Each Key Club has leadership positions that must be filled. These positions include president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, a representative (generally) from each grade in the high school and committee chairmen. It is just common sense that not all Key Club officers will live up to their responsibilities. Therefore, it is to your benefit to educate newly elected officers early in their term, as well as be aware of their responsibilities, in case duties are being shirked. By downloading the Duties of Key Club Officers, a sponsoring Kiwanis club can become educated on each officers' responsibilities.
2. **Dues.** Each year the club member must pay international and district dues. Clubs receive dues information in the early fall from Key Club International. Both international and district dues are payable October 1 and since one of the sponsoring Kiwanis club's obligations is overlooking financial concerns of the Key Club, it is especially important that you monitor dues payments.
3. **Report of club activities.** One responsibility of the Key Club is to report the monthly activities to the district. By the 10th of each month, depending on your district's deadline, Key Club officers are to send in a completed report form as well as the club minutes from each of the Key Club monthly meetings.
4. **District and international meetings/conventions.** Each district holds many informative and motivational meetings open to the membership of the district. It is your responsibility to encourage members or officers of your club to attend and benefit from these dynamic and informative opportunities. Contact your Key Club district administrator or district governor for the district meeting schedule. International also holds meetings, however most are open to district officers only. International convention is an exception to the rule. In early July, club members from across the United States and world congregate and experience a motivating and educational chance of a lifetime. For more information on international convention, contact the Key Club International Office in Indianapolis, Indiana.
5. **Gaining more information and understanding.** The best way to assist your sponsored club is through gaining a thorough understanding of the entire organization. Attend district and international meetings and conventions, and if you ever have any questions, contact the district administrator or district officers.

6. **Recognition and awards.** One way to support your Key Club is to encourage their actions through recognition and rewarding their achievements. Often Key Club members, especially officers, feel that the work they put in is not appreciated, so a friendly word from a Kiwanian can mean a lot. Holding a joint awards banquet with your Key Club is a great idea to boost the excitement in the club.

But most important of all to remember, Key Clubbers appreciate what you do for them. You give them an opportunity to learn, grow, meet new people and even have fun. Kiwanians are looked up to, and through close interaction with the club, you are making a difference.

a Kiwanis-family member
www.keyclub.org

3636 WOODVIEW TRACE INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46268 USA
317-875-8755 US AND CANADA: 800-KIWANIS e-mail: keyclub@kiwanis.org