



for every child

# UNICEF CLUBS STARTER GUIDE

Everything You Need to  
Know to Start a UNICEF  
Club at Your School or in  
Your Community



To learn more about UNICEF Clubs visit [unicefclubs.org](https://unicefclubs.org).





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## DEAR CLUB LEADER,

We are excited to know that you are thinking about starting a UNICEF Club in your school or community! It is UNICEF USA's goal to empower youth in the United States with the resources and skills to be effective global citizens. We encourage youth to think globally and act locally with and for the world's most vulnerable children.

We hope you will join us as we work to defend children's rights with our national community of college and high school students who are advocating, fundraising, building community and educating others in partnership with UNICEF USA.

As you decide whether the club program is right for you and your group, this toolkit will serve as your guide. You may also use it to prepare your application and get your school ready for the work ahead. Becoming a part of this movement is exciting and rewarding, but we know starting a UNICEF Club isn't for everyone. To make your best informed decision, please review the requirements and guidance documents to understand the responsibilities of leadership.

We have an ever-expanding list of schools, communities and student leaders committed to this work. We're in awe of their accomplishments. Because of our youth, we help realize critical policy changes in the best interests of children. We raise hundreds of thousands of dollars each year and introduce thousands of people to UNICEF's mission. Most importantly, we advocate and help achieve policy changes for issues vital to the survival, protection and development of the world's children.

The staff at UNICEF USA and our National Youth Council are here to assist you. If you have any questions or need additional information, please email us at [volunteer@unicefusa.org](mailto:volunteer@unicefusa.org).

Sincerely,

**The Community Engagement Team**  
**UNICEF USA**

## GETTING TO KNOW US

### What Is UNICEF?

UNICEF was founded in 1946 to help children in countries devastated by World War II. UNICEF works in more than 190 countries and has helped save more young lives than any other humanitarian organization.

### What Is UNICEF USA?

UNICEF works in the world's toughest places to reach the most disadvantaged youth – and to protect the rights of every child, everywhere. Across more than 190 countries and territories, UNICEF promises to do whatever it takes to help children survive, thrive and fulfill their potential. What began in 1946 to meet the emergency needs of children post-World War II, has grown into one of the world's largest children's organizations, with staff who work day-in and day-out to provide equitable healthcare, safe water, quality education, protection and more to the most vulnerable. And while the world has changed, children's needs have not and UNICEF's commitment to children remains as strong ever.

### What Is the UNICEF Clubs Program?

The UNICEF Clubs program is a youth-led grassroots movement. Our high school and college students in the United States play a vital role as the voice for children everywhere. UNICEF Clubs partner with

## UNICEF USA'S CORE VALUES

We believe that pursuing a more equitable world means upholding the rights of all children and empowering every child, everywhere.

We know that sustainable change is attainable, but it can't be achieved alone. It takes a committed team – individuals, governments, corporations, young people and staff.

We will never stop supporting UNICEF to develop smarter, more cost-effective solutions; scaling up proven, data-driven programs; and harnessing new technologies to create measurable change for children.

We believe children should have a voice and role in shaping their futures and the futures of their communities. Read more of our [Core Values](#) online.

UNICEF USA and activate their local community. It is UNICEF USA's goal to support youth-led change to ensure every child is healthy, educated, protected and respected. Young people must have a seat at the table to influence decisions that affect them.

### What Do Our Clubs Do?

Each activity of a UNICEF Club should fall into one of the following categories:

**Advocacy** UNICEF USA advances the global mission of UNICEF by rallying the American public to support the world's most vulnerable children. To enable UNICEF's relentless pursuit of an equitable world for every child, UNICEF USA works in the U.S. to empower policies, practices and programs at the federal, state and local levels to improve the lives of children, starting with our country's most vulnerable and excluded communities. By promoting youth leadership, mobilizing volunteers and championing children's rights, together UNICEF and UNICEF USA have meaningfully improved more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization.

**Education** Build core advocacy skills through workshops and use your voice for youth around the globe by staying civically engaged on a federal, state and local level. Take legislative action online and during key moments throughout the year to push for funding and policies for children.

**Community Building** Find opportunities to promote the work of UNICEF in your local community. Tap into your existing relationships with community organizations, schools or faith-based institutions. You can also extend the reach of UNICEF USA programs and priorities such as Trick-or-Treat, World Children's Day, Advocacy with government officials, Child Friendly Cities Initiative, and more.

**Fundraising** Plan and support fundraisers that generate donations for UNICEF. Contribute to UNICEF's impact for children by hosting a fundraiser, such as a film screening, bake sale or cultural event. All UNICEF Club fundraisers are required to register on our UNICEF USA website ([unicefusa.org/fundraiser](https://unicefusa.org/fundraiser)). To learn more about hosting fundraisers, read our [Fundraising and Event Guide](#).

# STEPS TO BECOME A UNICEF CLUB

## 1 Identify a Core Group of Interested Students

Forming and sustaining a UNICEF Club takes dedication. You need other students who are equally passionate about UNICEF's work and will help you get the ball moving. Including others in leadership roles early in the process will help you reach out to more people and provide diverse perspectives. It will also make the leadership transition easier at the end of your term. Involve students in different academic grades to ensure that all of your leaders will not be graduating in the same year. Remember, we require four leaders when you register to become a club! For ways in which you can structure your executive board, check out our [Leading Your Club Guide](#) at [unicefclubs.org](http://unicefclubs.org).

## 2 Choose an Advisor

All UNICEF Clubs are required to have an advisor. This can be a responsible adult who is 25 or older. It should not be a UNICEF staff member. Take time to select someone who cares about UNICEF's mission and has time to dedicate to your success. Be prepared to outline your goals for the club in the year ahead and be honest about the level of support you think you'll need to get things off the ground.

## 3 Register!

To be an official UNICEF Club, you must register your club! **Registration for the 2023–2024 school year launches in August** and is accepted throughout the year. Once you register, you'll be sent an awesome Back-to-School Kit, while supplies last, with materials to help get you started, like posters, flags, pins, T-shirts and more. To register, you need to have four leaders, an advisor and their contact information. Register at [unicefusa.org/clubregistration](http://unicefusa.org/clubregistration).

## 4 Educate Yourself About UNICEF's Work

UNICEF has helped save more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization! Now you get to be a part of our UNICEF USA family. Read more about UNICEF's work at [unicefusa.org](http://unicefusa.org) and [unicef.org](http://unicef.org).

## 5 Recruit Members

Now that you have your core team, it's time to recruit members for your club. Members help execute events and spread UNICEF's message throughout your school. Register your club members using your personalized form and be entered to win UNICEF USA merch! Leaders can access this link via email.

Check out our [Membership Tips](#) two pager!

## 6 Plan Your Year

UNICEF Clubs hold events focused on fundraising, community building, educating and advocating in support of children's rights.

Take a look at our [2023-2024 Year-long Calendar](#) for event ideas and action items to do throughout the year!

## 7 Talk to School Administrators About Becoming a Club

Having support from your school can bring a wealth of knowledge and resources. Some student groups can even receive funding to help operate their club. Bring the administration into the process early. Being aware of your school's guidelines for club formation is essential. Keep in touch with your administrators to navigate a smooth club founding, as guidelines vary at every school. You'll find a [sample letter](#) to send to your administration at the end of this guide!



## THINGS TO KNOW

### Uphold the Mission and Name of UNICEF and UNICEF USA

Protecting the names and reputations of UNICEF and UNICEF USA is the responsibility of every student leader. Please make sure you read, understand and abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this Starter Guide.

### Yearly Requirements

- Register your UNICEF Club every school year.
- Submit your funds to [unicefusa.org/clubremit](https://unicefusa.org/clubremit).
- Fill out the End of Year Survey to provide UNICEF USA with feedback on the clubs program and receive graduation cords for your seniors leaders.
- Participate in our Child Right and Advocacy workshops throughout the year and organize 3 events with your club related to Community Building, Fundraising, Education or Advocacy. Now that you have your core team, it's time to recruit members for your club. Members help execute events and spread UNICEF's message throughout your school. Register your club members using your personalized form and be entered to win UNICEF USA merch! Leaders can access this link via email.

### UNICEF Clubs Yearly Awards

UNICEF USA provides recognition to clubs that go above and beyond the yearly requirements. Our awards highlight outstanding leaders, members, advisors and clubs. Events and activities will be rewarded in the following categories: Fundraising, Advocacy, Education and Community Building.

### Organizational Structure and Membership

All clubs should have a minimum of at least four officers but can choose to have more if desired. These positions may not be filled by the same person. The transition of leadership typically occurs in the early spring. New leadership should be communicated in the registration form each year. If leadership changes mid-year, the club should email [volunteer@unicefusa.org](mailto:volunteer@unicefusa.org). Look at the [Leadership Transition](#) guide for more tips.

### Event Registration

All events carried out by a UNICEF Club must be registered and approved via the [Fundraiser and Event](#) application process at [unicefusa.org/fundraiser](https://unicefusa.org/fundraiser).

### Financial Accountability

We require all clubs to submit funds to UNICEF USA within 30 days after a fundraiser. Work with your advisor to manage funds responsibly and build a system of accountability, such as creating a budget. Make sure you learn about your school's fundraising and budget policies. Please read our [Policies](#) two pager for more details.

### Logo Use

Using our UNICEF USA logo on flyers and banners is a great way to advertise your club and its activities at your school and in the community. Our brand's reputation is what allows us to be there for every child.

As a UNICEF Club, you are encouraged to use our logo, but you are also responsible for protecting it and treating it with respect. Please ensure you are using the most updated UNICEF USA logo. All design templates must be emailed to [volunteer@unicefusa.org](mailto:volunteer@unicefusa.org) for approval. Check out our brand guidelines to learn more at [unicefclubs.org](https://unicefclubs.org).

### Member Responsibilities

As a UNICEF Club member, you agree to a set of terms and conditions that will help UNICEF maintain its high standards of professionalism. You agree to uphold the positive image of UNICEF USA and UNICEF.

### Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of UNICEF USA that there will be no discrimination or harassment in its programs, activities or employment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or any other basis prohibited by law. We expect your club and each member to uphold this policy.

See our [Policies](#) two pager to make sure you are aligned with UNICEF USA's values.

**Follow us @UNICEFClubs and @UNICEFUSA on Instagram and Tiktok for monthly actions, opportunities and club spotlights.**



# HELPFUL TIPS FOR YOUR ADVISOR

## Advisor's Role

UNICEF Clubs are student-led initiatives. The role of the advisor is to be a mentor, help guide students through decision-making processes, help brainstorm through challenges, navigate finances, build relationships with school administrations and make any legal request with venues for events. Every club is unique, and the role of each advisor is different. We encourage you to meet with your advisor and create an agreement on the roles and responsibilities that the advisor will take on for the year. Have an honest conversation about their capacity to support you, the type of help that you need from them and your expectations. Below are some tips and conversations you should have with your advisor to have a successful relationship:

**1 Availability** Advisors tend to be busy people. Understand their availability by asking them how many hours they can commit to the club per month. Schedule regular meeting times with the executive board and the advisor where you can discuss plans, challenges and club highlights all at once. Setting times for club office hours with your advisor is a great way to respect their time.



**2 Active Participant** The most successful clubs are the ones that have active club advisors. Advisors can help recruit members through their classes, bring valuable input to club meetings and help the team stay accountable to your goals. Encourage your advisor to go to your meetings and events, ask them to present to the club on an issue that is important to them and go to them when you need help. When you engage your club advisor, they will want to stay involved.

**3 Communications** You should keep your advisor up to date on all communications with your club. Establish the ways in which your advisor would like to communicate: in writing, through meetings, via text or phone calls. Make sure you are on the same page.

**4 Feedback** The role of the advisor is not to run the club, but provide feedback on what you are doing well and what you can do to improve. As a general rule, you should always have positive conversations in public and provide criticism in private.

**5 Keep It Going** Advisors are usually great people to help keep the club going even after you graduate. Make sure they have access to all of your records, know where to find materials, and are familiar with club members and the executive board. They are a great neutral source to help you through leadership selection and transition.

**6 Know Your Stuff** While some advisors know a lot about both UNICEF and your school, you may want to provide them with basic information about the organization, the club program, school policies and where to find more information. Encourage them to learn about UNICEF USA's policies and procedures. The more they know, the more they can help.

**7 Background Checks** UNICEF USA is committed to Child Safeguarding, and for that reason, we require background checks for all organizational club advisors that are not teachers or school-based. If you would like to serve as a UNICEF Club advisor, and you are not a teacher or high-school employee you are required to take a one-time background check through UNICEF USA's Vendor, Sterling Volunteers. If we do not receive a background check from your advisor within 30 days of registering your club, we will have to reject your application. [Learn more](#) about why we conduct background checks.

## KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

We're here to help **YOU** so you can make the biggest impact for children around the world.

### Helpful People on Your Side

You're not alone! We have a great support system to help you every step of the way.

#### National Youth Council Members

Student leaders are here to help you, email [council@unicefclubs.org](mailto:council@unicefclubs.org).

#### Community Engagement Team

To contact UNICEF USA staff, email [volunteer@unicefusa.org](mailto:volunteer@unicefusa.org).

#### Community Engagement Associates

In each of our nine regions, we have staff ready to support you through meetings, presentations, info and more. mail our volunteer account to get in touch with your associate!

## Now What?

You just started your club, and there are SO MANY resources to read. You've read this Starter Guide, but now what? Here's what we suggest you read next:

- [2023-2024 Calendar](#) Overview of the year with month-to-month ideas
- [Membership Tips](#) Tips to recruit new club members
- [Policies](#) and Best Practices A few rules to stay on track as a new UNICEF Club
- [Event Ideas](#) Stumped on what event to hold? Find some great socially distanced and online ideas
- [Fundraising & Events](#) Best practices in fundraising

You and your advisor are never alone, reach out to our team for questions or help at [volunteer@unicefusa.org](mailto:volunteer@unicefusa.org).



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Dear School Administration,

I am interested in establishing a UNICEF Club at our school.

United Nations Children’s Fund is a United Nations organization that was established after the devastation of World War II in order to provide humanitarian and developmental assistance to children and mothers across the globe. For nearly 70 years, the United Nations Children's Fund has been putting children first, protecting their rights and providing the assistance and services they need to survive and thrive. By establishing a UNICEF club, we will empower students to become global citizens. Through local actions focused on fundraising, awareness, and community service, we will be able to help the millions of children who need our help.

A UNICEF Club will benefit our school in several ways. The club will first serve as a space to discuss global and local issues impacting children and young people. As a club, we will brainstorm unique methods to engage students to activate and advocate to support children and young people in the US and all over the world. Discussing global issues will also leave the members with a better understanding of current events. The club will cover a wide range of UNICEF’s Program Areas, such as child protection, education, and water. These may align with certain areas of study, allowing for a more insightful, understanding life outside of the classroom. The club will also provide students with an opportunity to gain leadership skills.

I hope that the UNICEF Club program is appealing to you and you will allow us to establish a UNICEF Club at our school.

Sincerely,