

Starting your own club

Young people in other places have similar experiences to those of Canadian kids. They're frustrated by some of the problems they see in their communities. They talk to their friends about what should be done. They are concerned about the environment. And they think people should listen more to what kids have to say. You can learn from one another. It feels good when others see that you are someone who they can count on, and who can be a member of a team - think about your own global education group as a team.

Kinds of clubs

You probably belong to some kind of a team or club. These people get together to take part in an activity that they all enjoy. There are other groups or clubs that form when people have a special project. Maybe you have a food drive at your school to benefit a local food bank. Or, you might already have an environmental club that works on cleaning up the school yard or preserving an animal habitat like a nearby river or marsh.

Some groups work locally, in their own communities. Others are active across the country. The members of some clubs are concerned about what's happening in other countries as well as what's happening in their own country. Sometimes

these clubs link up with people around the world to work internationally.

Some examples of international groups are clubs that put on cultural displays. Others hold events to tell people about how we can work together to assist people in another country where there is a war or natural disaster. You may also be involved in a project that links you up with young people overseas. Perhaps your class has a pen-pal from another country, or participates in a campaign to raise awareness about some of the problems in countries where people don't have all that they need to live healthy lives.

When there's something to be done, people get together and find they get more accomplished that way. They may decide to form a group. Or, someone has a great idea and decides that he or she needs help to make it happen.

How to organize your club

Get together as a class, or with a group of friends, and decide what you would like to do. Do you want to become involved in an international club? What do you want to accomplish? Keep in mind that others who join your group may have different, exciting ideas. Think about your first ideas as just that - the first ideas that you have.



Getting organized

Some points to think about when you're getting organized:

- Who are the people you would like to involve in your club?
- What additional help do you need? (For example, maybe you want someone to design a website, direct a play, etc.)
- Make an announcement or put up posters inviting people to your club's first organizing meeting.
- The group should talk about how to get others interested in what the club is doing.
- Get support from your school or community, including parents and teachers.
- Discuss with the members of your group what each person would like to get out of the experience of participating in the club.
- Brainstorm (see next section) or hold a contest to decide what to call your club.
- Consult with group members. Brainstorm ideas about projects that group members might want to organize.

What's brainstorming? That's when, as a group, people say everything that comes to mind on a certain topic, in order to get all the ideas out for discussion. One person writes down all the ideas on a large sheet of paper that everyone can see (maybe taped on a wall or blackboard). The rule is that no one is allowed to say that something is a bad idea. Even if something seems like a bad idea at first, it could make sense to someone in the group and may lead to a great idea later on. Everyone adds to all the others' thoughts and you produce a list full of great ideas. Some are ideas you can't use right now, and some ideas are just plain weird. It's all part of the brainstorming.

You can build on your ideas by talking with other people, finding out more about what other clubs are doing and researching what other groups have accomplished. But your club is brand new, so feel free to be as creative as you like.

Now make a list of two favourite ideas per person (ideas can be repeated). Try to decide on one or two projects the club will work on first. The other ideas don't have to be forgotten. You can work on them later. Keep the brainstorm list and look at it from time to time for more ideas.



Brainstorm!!

Everyone has written an idea and taped it to the wall.

Now let's vote on our favourite ideas.

