How to Start a Chapter

While starting your own Cardz For Kidz chapter may seem like a daunting task, we made a step-by-step guide to make this process easier.

Step 1: Find Out How to Start a Chapter at Your School

Because the process varies by school, it is essential to know the requirements for starting an organization at your school before anything else.

You can find this information by contacting an administrator or consulting your school's website.
Step 2: Gain Approval from Your School

As previously noted, the requirements and processes of founding a club vary by school; however, here are a few items your school will likely require:

1. **A sponsor**

2. **A club constitution and/or mission statement**

With these in mind, here are the next steps you might take to secure approval for your chapter:

1. **Recruit several friends**

   Having the help of friends makes starting a club easier.

   Reach out to 1-3 people who share your passion for service and with whom you work well.

2. **Find a sponsor**

   At most schools, having a sponsor is an absolute necessity for starting a club. Find a faculty member at your school who:
   - Shares your passion for the mission of Cardz For Kidz and helping others
   - Is willing and able to host weekly or bi-weekly meetings in their classroom at lunch or after school
   - Is willing to assist with tasks such as mailing cards and obtaining materials

3. **Write a club constitution, a mission statement, or both**

   Some schools require prospective organizations to submit a constitution detailing their purpose and structure, a mission statement, or both. Find out if either of these is required.

4. **Ask for approval**

   Complete anything else you must do and ask your administrator for approval.
Step 3: Register Your Chapter

Once your chapter has gained approval from your school, register as an official chapter using this Google Form.

Registration allows your chapter to receive important information about the program, receive a Give Lively fundraising page, and have a spot on the leaderboard.

Step 4: Grow Your Chapter

For your club to flourish, it must have a large membership. For smaller schools, aim to attract 10-15 members; for larger schools, aim for 20-25. **Try your best to recruit beyond just your friends.**

Some fruitful ways of recruiting members are to:

1. **Promote your chapter on your social media accounts**
   Your social media accounts are an effective way to reach your classmates.
   - For optimal engagement, individually message friends and classmates: personalized messages capture their attention
   - Share a message about your chapter on your Instagram or Snapchat story

2. **Reach out to friends and classmates**
   Cast a wide net; you never know who may be interested.

3. **Ask your school to promote your chapter on its social media accounts**
   Many schools have social media accounts; reach out to whoever manages them to promote your chapter.

4. **Post a flyer around your school building**
   Capture students’ attention while they walk through the halls.

5. **Advertise in your school newspaper and daily announcements**
   Both are effective means of reaching the student body.

6. **Showcase your chapter at your school’s club fair**
   Club fairs are a great way to connect with prospective members.
Step 5: Prepare for Your First Meeting

What you need to do before meeting:

1. Establish a Consistent Meeting Time

   Chapters are strongly encouraged to hold 30-minute to 60-minute meetings once a week or once every other week.

   Establish a time that works for you, your sponsor and the plurality of your members. It is essential that you maintain this time throughout the year to ensure consistency and minimize confusion.

2. Establish a leadership team

   For your club to run smoothly, it must have a leadership team to manage logistics, fundraising, recruiting, quality control, and card shipment.

   While your chapter has the freedom to choose its leadership structure, here is a model of what it could look like:

   1. President
      - Prepares for and leads meetings
      - Oversees leadership team meetings
      - Responsible for packaging and shipping cards
      - Serves as main contact between Cardz For Kidz and chapter

   2. Vice President
      - Ensures design standards are upheld
      - Oversees the collection of cards after each meeting

   3. Secretary
      - Oversees intra-chapter communication
      - Leads recruitment efforts
      - Operates chapter’s social media accounts
      - Manages contact with school administrators

   4. Treasurer
      - Plans and directs fundraisers
      - Manages funds
      - Oversees the acquisition of materials
3. Gather card-making materials

Before your club holds its first meeting, it must gather enough materials for all of its members to make quality cards throughout the year.

How you can help Cardz For Kidz by purchasing your materials on Amazon:

1. Visit AmazonSmile and click “Get Started”
2. Search for and select Cardz For Kidz as who would like to benefit
3. Begin shopping!

We **highly recommend** gathering beyond the basic materials—card stock, scissors, markers, and glue sticks. **Make sure to avoid fuzz balls, pipe cleaners, band-aids.** Here is a poster with recommended supplies:

![Recommended Supplies Poster](https://cardzforkidz.org/a-bit-fuzzy)
Step 6: Hold Your First Meeting

Congratulations! Now you are ready to hold your first meeting!