

Establishing a Youth Division

This section will enable you to:

- determine whether a Youth Division should be established;
- find the current community support you require;
- form the division.

C.1 ASSESSING THE COMMUNITY

Before setting out, you must determine whether to establish a Youth Division within a community.

Is there sufficient interest in youth?

Determine what the sustainable membership number will be. (How many active members do you need to make a program worth running?) Calculate the attrition rate (how many members will leave in a year) and how many youth you anticipate to recruit each year.

Is there an adult division in the community?

Make a connection with them. Experience has demonstrated that successful youth divisions provide youth with opportunities to experience voluntary community service, a chance to demonstrate first aid and health care skills and a place for graduating members to render further service to St. John Ambulance.

Are leaders available?

There is a resource of leaders from the adult community and from the youth themselves. Potential leaders can be found among adult division members, parents of the youth, health care workers, college or university students, and educators. Check with local volunteer centres for the names of other people interested in working with youth.

Is there space?

Look for a place to hold weekly training and social meetings. Remember if you rent or borrow accommodations there should be some secure storage for supplies.

Can the Division be financed?

Equipment, uniforms, and accommodations cost money. The Provincial/Territorial Council is responsible for the financial operation of all Brigade units in their province. In those provinces where a Branch system is in place, the Branch is given responsibility for the financial management of Brigade units. It is crucial that the financial relationship between the Brigade and the Council is well understood before any new division is established. This relationship cannot be taken for granted by the members who wish to start a new Youth Division.



See ***DID YOU KNOW?*** on ***Community Needs Assessment***, Vol. 5, No. 12, December 1998

If the answers to these questions are mostly positive, then establishing a successful new Youth Division is likely. If there is serious doubt in any of the areas, then consideration should be given to other options including:

- any one or two of the Junior, Cadet or Crusader portions of the youth program;
- a combined youth group;
- a combined youth/adult group;
- a family group or;
- establishing the youth program as part of an existing Adult Division.

A separate Youth Division can always be established later when conditions are more favourable.

C.2 SUPPORT

C.2.1 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Every Division needs support from the community if it is to thrive. Branches, where they exist, can provide invaluable support and guidance. It is important that you work through the Branch, to help assure their continued liaison and support. Once you have a location in which to meet and a number of interested young people, you can begin letting the community know you are there. The best way to recruit is to sell your own enthusiasm. Take advantage of any community resources for informing the people about the program:

- participate in community events, local parades, radio interviews;
- hold a photo exhibit/display that shows all aspects of the youth program from training sessions to outdoor activities;
- write newspaper articles to get you noticed, be sure to include some pictures;
- contact service clubs such as the Jaycees, Kiwanis, Lions, Junior League, and the Rotary clubs;
- contact Labour unions (some Labour groups can offer financial as well as other types of support and assistance);
- contact your local volunteer centre;
- establish contacts and maintain them by inviting the community to any ceremonies you hold, graduations and other events/classes of interest;
- arrange for recognition to local businesses or service clubs that provide support (eg. Provincial/Territorial or Priority Votes of Thanks).



C.2.2 PARENTAL SUPPORT


Involving individual parents can be of considerable help in enlisting the active interest and co-operation of other parents and friends, help with social amenities for the youth and sometimes assist in their training, particularly in Proficiency subjects and outdoor pursuits.

C.3 FORMING A DIVISION

If you have established that a Youth Division is both desirable and sustainable, the following steps should be taken:

1. Recruit and instruct a leader for the Division. Ensure they complete the St. John Ambulance Youth Leaders' Program.
2. Recruit youth members.
3. Obtain parental consent.
4. Establish a program.
5. Obtain a meeting location and determine the time and conditions for its use (consider the age of your youth members, their school schedule, ease of transportation, etc.).
6. Train and qualify members.
7. Register the Division.
8. Confirm insurance coverage through your Provincial/Territorial Council.
9. Establish financial support and determine a realistic budget.
10. Obtain supplies, equipment and uniforms.
11. Begin a public relations campaign.

See **Section E.6**
Insurance

 See **Sample 5**
Supplies for
Starting a Youth
Division

C.3.1 REGISTERING A DIVISION



In order to use the St. John Ambulance trademark, and for the service performed and the qualifications of the members to be recognized and rewarded, the Division and its members must be registered with National Headquarters.

A Registration of a Unit form must be completed by the prospective Divisional Superintendent and submitted to your Provincial/Territorial Council, who will record it and pass it on to National Headquarters.

 See **StJCI 2-8-2,**
Unit
Administration

When completing the form, be sure to include the locality in the title. NHQ will automatically assign the Division a number and send a Registration Certificate acknowledging the new Division through the Provincial/Territorial Council.

See **Resources**
Appendix 4
Enrolment
Ceremonies

Once a Division has its Registration Certificate, officers and qualified members, an Enrolment Ceremony may be arranged to celebrate the establishment of the new Division and the accomplishment and dedication of each member.

C.4 SUPPLIES

C.4.1 EQUIPMENT

See **Section C.3**
Forming a Division
for possible
community
resources.

Equipment for training must be obtained before you begin a program. You may be able to borrow equipment from a nearby Division. Depending on your eventual training program, you may be able to procure equipment slowly. Contact your local community supports as they may be valuable resources during this period.

C.4.2 UNIFORMS

Youth members wear a uniform to show that they are part of St. John Ambulance. The distinctive black and white Brigade uniform is easily recognized by members of the public requiring first aid assistance. Uniforms also help to build team spirit and encourage a sense of belonging.



Check with your
Provincial/
Territorial Council
for the uniform in
your area

The Provincial/Territorial Commissioner in each province is responsible for the design of the working uniform for Brigade members including Crusaders, Cadets and Juniors. Across Canada, the St. John Ambulance uniform is black and white, uses the logo appropriately and promotes a positive image of St. John Ambulance.

The Crusader uniform is the same as for Adults, however, Cadet and Junior uniforms vary slightly from Council to Council. Some of the most common examples include: black pants/skirt, white shirt/blouse, black tie, white jacket/coat, black beret, black shoes/boots, black socks, black sweater, red sash, tunic, hat or baseball cap and badges and crests.



Junior and Cadet crests can be purchased through your Provincial/Territorial stores.