

Lions Clubs International

Family and Women's Membership Development Chairperson Manual

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Family and Women's Membership Development Chairperson Manual

The Multiple District and District Family and Women's Membership Development Chairperson positions were created to help stimulate the creation of family-friendly clubs and the participation of women in Lions clubs. Because the participation of women and families are the two biggest potential avenues for Lions growth, these positions are critically important to the overall health and vitality of the association.

Responsibilities

Both the Multiple District and District Family and Women's Membership Development Chairpersons serve *three-year terms* in which he/she oversees the growth and participation of women and families in the district and/or multiple district.

District Family and Women's Membership Development Chairperson Responsibilities:

- Establish district goals and action plans for the recruitment of women and families
- As needed assist clubs with their goals to invite family and women members
- Build a team to assist with goal implementation
- Develop new community projects geared toward women and families
- Write one or more articles on recruitment of women for district, multiple district and international publications
- Provide encouragement, coaching and motivation for all Lions who are directly involved in recruitment and extension
- Plan and conduct a symposium or family involvement event(s)
- Coordinate efforts with district membership, district extension chairpersons, and other district activity chairpersons
- Attend training sessions at the multiple district level

Multiple District Family and Women's Membership Development Chairperson Responsibilities:

- Establish multiple district goals and action plans for the recruitment of women and families. These goals should take into consideration the district chairpersons goals.
- Share goals with multiple district membership chairperson so these can be included in multiple district membership plan
- Assist district chairpersons with their goals in these areas, as needed
- Build a team to assist with goal implementation
- Develop procedures for district reporting
- Coordinate training for district chairpersons during the first year of their terms
- Assist district chairperson in the development of new community projects geared toward women and families

- Write one or more articles on recruitment of family and women for multiple district and international publications
- Provide encouragement, coaching and motivation for all Lions who are directly involved in recruitment and extension
- Plan a multiple district symposium or assist with the planning of a district symposium or family involvement event(s)
- Coordinate efforts with multiple district membership and multiple district extension chairpersons

The Family and Women's Membership Development Chairpersons will use a wide variety of skill sets, and will incorporate membership recruitment, retention, extension and leadership into a successful term. Family and Women's Membership Development Chairpersons will possess strong communications skills, enthusiasm, understanding of your district and Lions Clubs International, leadership skills and desire to help develop the participation of women and families in their multiple district or district.

Building a Team

You are not in this alone! Build a team to help support your efforts and achieve success in your district. Your district and/or multiple district MERL team will be an invaluable resource for you. Keep in communication with them and see how your efforts can dovetail into a unified endeavor. Work with the Multiple District or District Public Relations Chairperson to learn about the district/multiple district communications methods available and find out how you can capitalize on the avenues already in place to reach out to clubs and the public.

Enlist some eager volunteers to help you with the following:

- Assist with symposium (information on planning later in this guide)
- Assist with community project identification
- Develop activities for the district convention
- Assist with communications (either the Multiple District or District PR Chairperson or another volunteer willing to work with the chairperson)

You will find that working with a team will make your efforts far more effective. Additionally, motivating a team will help develop your leadership skills!

Goal Setting

Setting goals for your multiple district or district, and assisting clubs with their goal development is an important part of your term. Goals help define your projects and give you a means to measure progress. Since you are serving a three-year term, it is wise to set long-term goals for the years you'll be in office, and break those long-term goals into annual goals. Each annual goal will then be broken down into manageable action steps designed to make those goals a reality.

Before you begin defining your goals and developing strategies to meet those goals, it is extremely important to conduct research.

Identify an unmet community need: Pressing needs in your community may be overlooked by clubs unless they actively seek them out. The best way to identify new community projects is to form a committee consisting of the members with the best community connections in a variety of areas. For instance, educators will be most aware of the needs of the community's schools. Dedicated athletes and coaches will know the community's sports and recreation needs. Clergy members may be most in tune with the needs of the poor and elderly. This committee would be well suited to canvass other community leaders and compile a "needs report" to present to the district officers.

Review LCI Membership Reports: What clubs in your area do may benefit from inviting women and/or family members? Use the GN1569 reports on the LCI Web site. <http://www3.lionsclubs.org/EN/RegisterLogin/HomeLogin.aspx>

Confer with Membership & Extension Chairpersons: How can you coordinate your efforts for extension and membership this year? Are there ways he/she can help? Do they have any advice or insight?

Refer to the International Program: Are there any goals related to family and women's development that have been set forth in the current international program? How can you integrate these goals into your plans for the year?

Review Literature: Do you have all the most recent membership publications and information from Lions Clubs International? If not, obtain the necessary materials and review them thoroughly.

Once you have concluded your research and you feel like you have a good understanding of the status of membership in your district or multiple district, and what community projects are in need of a Lion, you can begin setting goals.

Effective goals often have three characteristics in the common:

- They are definable
- They are realistic, but offer a challenge
- They are measurable

After your goals are completed, you should create action plans for meeting those goals. To help you with these tasks, refer to the reproducible form included in this guide. Your completed goals and action plans will serve as the blueprint for success for all your activities throughout the year. These forms can also be used to help clubs in need of assistance develop their goals.

Motivating Others

In addition to being a vital resource and leader for the chairpersons in your district/multiple district and keeping the lines of communication open, a significant part of your job will be motivating club officers, region and zone chairperson to do an outstanding job developing the participation of women and families in their clubs.

Keep in mind that every member has a different personality and different factors that motivate him/her to do a good job. An effective chairperson will foster those motivational factors and keep the people he/she supervises focused.

Some typical motivators in a volunteer opportunity include:

- Desire to do a good job
- Desire to help those in need
- Desire to give back to one's community
- Sense of achievement
- Recognition/praise
- Social acceptance/popularity
- Influence/leadership
- Opportunity to develop skills
- Opportunity to try something new
- Enjoy challenges
- Opportunity to learn/discover
- Feeling of well being
- Improve physical and mental health

Good communication provides a solid foundation for motivating your club/district chairpersons to do their best. Offering praise for a job well done, encouragement through tough tasks and advice when needed will go a long way in keeping your team members motivated and focused. Some other tips for successfully motivating others include:

- Keep team members informed regarding policies, procedures and program updates
- Develop an e-newsletter to distribute to your team and club officers
- Delegate activities to challenge chairpersons
- Give praise freely and promptly for a job well done
- Have a positive, caring attitude
- Be a good listener
- Treat your team members with respect
- Ask for their suggestions and input
- Maintain high standards
- Connect one-on-one with other chairpersons
- Celebrate achievements

Communicating with Club Officers

After you have researched your position and organized for your three years, the next step is reaching out to the club officers in your district to inform them of your plans for the district/multiple district and offer your help with their efforts growing the participation of women and families in their clubs. Consider the following ideas for communicating with club officers:

- Introductory letter listing valuable resources (or including them if appropriate) and district/multiple district goals. Be sure to include your contact information and indicate your willingness to help chairpersons with their family/women

- recruitment and extension efforts.
- Visit clubs to present district/multiple district-wide ideas and goals for family and women's participation.

However you choose to contact chairpersons and club officers, the most important consideration is timeliness. You do not want to wait until halfway through the year before making contact – too much valuable time will be wasted by that point.

Once you've made the connection, be sure to sustain it by regularly contacting the clubs that have indicated they would appreciate your guidance. Share updates on the progress the district has made on its goals, as well as ideas, suggestions and best practices gleaned from clubs around the district.

Communicating with District/Multiple District Officers

- Early on in the fiscal year, schedule regional coffees. Invite region, zone, membership and extension chairpersons to attend and discuss goals and ideas. These can be held at a local café or coffee house. Depending on the size of your district, 3 or 4 coffees should cover everyone.
- Plan a meeting with the membership, extension, and various district activity chairpersons in the entire district. Keep it simple and informal, but be sure to allow plenty of time to plan the event as well as make sure details are addressed. The half-day meeting can set the tone for the year, and participants can set goals and create action plans.
- Ask district membership and extension chairpersons if you can participate in their training session(s) to present the district's/multiple district's goals for the development of women and family participation and offer your assistance.

Workshop Quick Planning Checklist:

- Plan 6 weeks in advance
- Ask invitees to RSVP
- Find a location that promotes small group exchange of ideas
- Serve refreshments
- Have resource materials on hand for participants
- Discuss goals, create action plans, share ideas, set up communication plan for year

However you choose to contact district chairpersons, the most important consideration is timeliness. You do not want to wait until halfway through the year before making contact – too much valuable time will be wasted by that point.

Once you've made the connection, be sure to sustain it by regularly contacting the district and multiple district officers to share updates on the progress the district has made on its goals.

During the year, write articles for your district and multiple district newsletter and website. You may also offer articles to clubs for their newsletters and websites as well. If your district has significant success, share your story with the Editors at THE LION Magazine. Visit the Lions Clubs International website at www.lionsclubs.org to learn how to submit information to THE LION.

Be sure to inform your multiple district or district's MERL team chairpersons and your district governor and council chairperson as well!

Learn More! Excellent resources to have on hand to use throughout your term include: (All of the below materials may be found on the Family-Women Chairperson web page)

The Family Club Concept Guide (MPFM1), has detailed information for clubs interested in learning more about incorporating the family initiative into their club, including tips for marketing the club and planning a family club launch event; as well as planning forms.

Your Family Can Make a Difference (MPFM8) and Family Volunteer Activity List (available online only)

I Am a Lion (ME37) – a brochure developed specifically for prospective female members and Lions Make a Difference (ME40) – an all-purpose recruitment brochure.

Planning Events for Family-Women Participation

There are two major events clubs and/or districts can plan that will specifically target families and women. The first is a symposium that will uncover community needs appealing specifically to women and families. The second is a family involvement night that is an excellent recruiting tool for clubs interested in the family club concept.

Community Symposium – Service Activity Development

When focusing on recruiting more women and families into Lions clubs, one of the most crucial elements is to pinpoint additional local needs within communities that would provide relevant service opportunities and spark the interest of women and families. An excellent avenue for discovering these needs is to hold a symposium.

A symposium is a gathering at which there is a free interchange of ideas, or a formal meeting at which several experts deliver short addresses on a topic or related topics. The purpose of a Lions Family Service and Volunteerism Symposium would be four-fold:

- 1) Identify new community projects that are of interest to women and families;
- 2) Identify potential members; and
- 3) Promote Lions clubs within the community.
- 4) Chartering of a new club/club branch to develop the new community projects that has been identified.

Holding a Lions Family Service and Volunteerism Symposium in your area requires careful preparation, but the time invested in a well planned and executed event will reap many benefits for Lions clubs and the community.

Learn More! To receive complete guidelines for planning and conducting a community symposium – including instructions for receiving a maximum US\$1,000 to cover expenses, refer to the Lions Family Service and Volunteerism Symposium Planning Guide, available from the Family-Women Chairperson web page on the Lions Clubs International website at www.lionsclubs.org.

FYI – Women’s Development and Participation

While women have been involved for many years with Lions as Lioness club members, it wasn’t until July 1987 that the doors were opened for them to become full-fledged Lions with all the rights and privileges bestowed upon Lions club members. Since that time, the number of women Lions has grown at a steady rate, and more and more women are assuming leadership roles within the association. Still, with as many women that are involved today, there is a great potential for growth in this area.

Lions Family Membership Initiative

FYI: Lions Family Membership Initiative

Family-centered Lions clubs are one of the freshest twists on Lions clubs. They offer a terrific way for clubs to reach a new demographic, grow their membership and implement new service activities. The benefits of clubs incorporating a family-friendly environment are numerous. However, because clubs are inviting minor children into their fold, there are many considerations that must be made. Following is some important information regarding the Lions Family Membership Initiative that you’ll find invaluable during your term as Family-Women Membership Development Chairperson.

What is a Family?

As defined by the Vanier Institute, family is:

“Any group of two or more people that consider themselves to be a family: parents, children, siblings, foster parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, and any other who consider themselves a family.”

One of the best attributes of the family membership initiative is that it encompasses a wide range of family members, including:

- Nuclear family
- Married, childless couples
- Step family
- Guardian and child/children
- Grandparents and grandchildren

The definition of a family member for the Lions Family Membership Dues Rate is

provided later on..

Benefits of Lions Family Membership Initiative:

- **Clubs** benefits by increasing its membership and attracting younger members.
- **Members** benefit by the infusion of new, enthusiastic members, different service activities and a fresh direction for your club.
- **Adult Family Members** benefit by having a volunteer activity that fits their lifestyles and needs for flexibility and offers them more opportunities to spend time with their families.
- **Younger Family Members** benefit by being exposed to the importance and joys of volunteering at a young age.
- **The Family** benefits by spending more time together and sharing the volunteer experience.
- **Your Community** benefits by having more members involved in activities to help meet community needs.
- **Lions Clubs International** benefits by the legacy of volunteerism being created through family centered Lions clubs, which can help grow Leo and Lions clubs well into the future.

Considerations for the Lions Family Membership Initiative

Even with its many benefits, the initiative is not right for every club. In order to successfully implement the Lions Family Membership Initiative, clubs need the acceptance and enthusiasm of the entire membership. Before proceeding, clubs need to thoroughly understand, and be prepared to make, the changes necessary to foster families within your Lions club.

There are several issues that need attention before adopting the Lions Family Membership Initiative. These include:

Club Meetings: Club meetings would need to be altered so that they offer a hospitable environment for families and still be productive. Some considerations:

- Club meetings will need to take place at a time that is convenient for families to be involved.
- The meeting location will need to be appropriate for children.
- Traditional sit down dinner meetings would not necessarily be conducive to meetings with younger children. Consider something more casual, such as a buffet or pot-luck type of meal.
- Meetings would need to be shorter.
- While children would be part of the meeting, their attention spans are such that childcare and alternative activities will be needed to keep them interested and allow the adults to finish the business at hand.

Service Activities: Club service activities would need to be family-friendly. The

following are generally conducive to family-centered service activities:

- Require involvement of the family for a specific length of time
- Flexible, episodic assignments
- Single function tasks that can be broken down
- Projects that take place over a set period of time and provides breaks for families with young children
- Projects that have a limited amount of physical movement may be more suitable for senior citizens

Activities that work well for family centered clubs generally offer:

- Fun, provide hands-on opportunities for children
- Use of multiple skill levels, talents and knowledge
- A flexible schedule that allows more than one family be involved at one time
- Provide families the opportunity to work together and share the experience
- A direct impact on the community

Some examples of these projects include:

- Lions Clubs International Youth Programs
- Other community children's activities – scouting, sports, schools, etc.
- Helping senior citizens
- Working with the homeless
- Literacy projects
- Environmental projects
- School sporting events
- Teen babysitting clinics

Leadership: To help facilitate the Lions Family Membership Initiative, clubs may need to add a few leadership positions, including Service Event Coordinator, who schedules families for service activities and the Family Coordinator, who is responsible for setting up activities and childcare for children during meetings. You may also want to consider creating a “cub coordinator” position that is filled by one of the children attending the meeting.

Legal/Insurance Issues: When involving children in community service activities, it is wise to investigate local child labor laws and acts. It is also important to review any insurance liabilities and increase insurance coverage, if necessary. Also, when involving children in volunteer activities, it is important to perform background checks on the adults that will be participating in activities with children. Local officials should be consulted about the best course of action regarding how to proceed.

Fiscal Responsibilities: In addition to the potential increased insurance costs as mentioned above, other financial considerations include the possible cost of childcare during meetings and changing the dues structure to offer a family discount (dues should not be levied on minor children).

Reporting: Reporting the activities of the club will be similar to that already used by other Lions clubs. Clubs will want to keep track of which family members participated in activities.

Recognition: As with other Lions club members, family club members appreciate being acknowledged for their hard work and dedication to the club. However, clubs may consider some different types of recognition for family members, including:

- Recognition during club meetings
- Inclusion in public relations materials
- Unexpected notes of appreciation
- Certificates
- Movie tickets
- Sporting event tickets
- Holiday cards
- Special meals and gatherings

Continuing the Legacy: As younger members grow up with the club, having learned the importance of volunteering, it is important to have a way of continuing their involvement. If clubs do not yet sponsor a Leo club, this would be a very natural progression for older children. From there, young members can consider involvement in a Campus Lions Club or a Branch Lions Club.

Lions Family Membership Dues Rate

The association has established a special dues rate structure for family friendly Lions clubs. The first family member (Head of Household – HH) is required to pay the full International Dues (US\$39.00) and any applicable entrance fee. Up to four more subsequent qualifying family members over the age of majority in the same household and the same club shall pay one-half of the standard annual dues (US\$19.50) and no association entrance fees.

Note: for a newly chartered club to institute the family dues structure, there must be at least ten regular-paying dues members in the club. All of the regular paying dues members do not need to be in a family unit.

Dues paying family members who are above the age of majority are full-fledged Lions with all the rights and privileges of an Active Lion.

For more information on the family dues structure, visit the association's website at www.lionsclubs.org.

Family Involvement Event -- Recruitment

A Family Involvement Event is an outstanding opportunity to introduce new community members to clubs and promote the family initiative. Similar to hosting a membership night or dinner, a Family Involvement Event opens clubs to a large number of interested individuals at one time.

This successful strategy requires careful planning and needs to be started at least 6 weeks ahead of the scheduled event. However, it is well worth the time and effort – families with the community will get a first-hand look at the value of being Lions club members.

If a current club in your area isn't interested in converting to a family club, consider having the district extension team and volunteers from local clubs help out with this event and consider it a potential launch to forming a new family-friendly club.

Learn More! The *Family Friendly Lions Club Concept "How-to Guide"* (MPFM1) has step-by-step instructions for putting together a Family Involvement Event. Download the guide from the Family-Women Chairperson web page on the Lions Clubs International website at www.lionsclubs.org.

Best of Luck!

Your contributions this year will be extremely valuable to the overall success of the membership development goals of your district/multiple district. The Family and Women's Membership Development Chairperson is a key leader for our association's growing membership in these areas. With your commitment, Lions clubs in your district and multiple district will experience new growth and opportunities and will continue thriving and serving their communities.

Thank you for your dedication and best of luck with your year!

For More Information and Assistance:

The Membership Programs Department at Lions Clubs International is available to answer any additional questions you may have. Contact staff at:

(630) 571-5466, ext. 390

or email: memberprog@lionsclubs.org

Family and Women's Participation Annual Goals/Action Plans

Name:

MD/District:

Date:

List annual goals:

Action Plan:

Goal _____

Priority: _____ Timeframe: _____

Steps to Completion:

Who is Responsible : _____ Completion Date _____

Significant Results:

Comments: