



KEY CLUB LEADER

Be the

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Be the Advisor

Thank you for your dedication to Key Club. Advisors help members of the world's oldest and largest high school service association help others while developing leadership and building character. They also ensure that our student-led organization will continue to inspire servant leaders for generations to come. For that, we can't thank you enough!

The Key Club advisor guide is meant to provide you with the essential elements to support your work. Reference the Key Club mission statement, core values and objectives at keyclub.org/about. In the same spirit, we provide guides for Key Club officers to encourage success in their roles. These guides are meant to encourage club leaders' success for next year. Each guide is unique, but they all contain common elements: job descriptions, tools to help them plan or prepare, identified resources, websites and checklists. Officers are also encouraged to connect with their lieutenant governor and other district officers for support.

Each club is to be led by a student board consisting of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, editor, webmaster and class directors. These club officers are elected by their fellow club members.

Be the mentor.

As an advisor, you take on the responsibility to mentor Key Club members as they develop and practice skills, find and pursue interests and become engaged in the world around them in meaningful ways.

To best mentor Key Club members:

- **Let them lead.** Key Club members best learn leadership by taking the lead — even if it means they don't do it the way you would or could possibly fail. We can learn a lot from our mistakes. You can help members the most by helping them analyze what worked and what didn't.
- **Practice and assess.** Members learn to lead through practice and assessment. Review the officer guides, provide time for outgoing officers to work with new officers and let the latter practice taking on new responsibilities. Your role is to provide support, answer questions and cheer them on.
- **Be a role model.** Demonstrate Key Club's core values in your own behavior. Empower your club officers to be the best leaders they can be by modeling the behavior and skill sets you want to see.
- **Listen, then advise.** Hear members and ask for their point of view before offering your opinion. Even better, guide them to find their own answer to a problem instead of solving it for them.
- **Establish expectations and ground rules.** Answer any questions members have about your role, explain how you plan to work with them and set a schedule on when and how you will connect.

Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story.

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Be the coach.

Mentoring is only half of your job as an advisor. You also serve members by coaching them to be their best.

To best coach Key Club members:

- **Build self-esteem.** Great coaches inspire students to believe they are capable of more than they think they are. Always build students up. There is never a reason to embarrass a member to teach them a lesson.
- **Teach them to keep things in perspective.** Help members learn from setbacks instead of getting hung up on them. Mistakes are nothing more than feedback on what you can do better or differently the next time.
- **Don't let your ego get in their way.** Key Club is a student-led organization. Let members own their successes and failures.
- **Treat everyone equally, but individually.** Every student is motivated differently. Get to know members so you understand the best way to motivate and help each one.
- **Be a great communicator.** Communication works both ways. Take time to really listen. Ask questions when things are unclear. Be clear and concise when you speak. Address problems early so they don't fester.
- **Be flexible.** We don't all receive information or learn in the same way. If something is not working, don't assume it's the members' fault. Work with them to figure out a better way to communicate or accomplish what needs to be done.
- **Challenge members to excel.** Push them to set bigger, more difficult goals. No one becomes a great leader by reaching for mediocrity.



WHO DOES WHAT?

Each club is led by a student board consisting of the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, editor, webmaster and class directors. Descriptions for these positions can be found in your advisor guide at keyclub.org/advisorguide.

A good coach sees in you what you can't see in yourself.

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The election process

As an advisor, you support your club's leadership through the election process. Begin this process in January so officers are elected, trained and prepared to take office by May.

To set Key Club officers up for success:

January

- Spread the word about upcoming elections. Encourage club members to consider running for an office. Detailed officer responsibilities can be found in the Key Club advisor guide.

keyclub.org/advisorguide

February/March

- Elect officers. The Elections Committee should oversee this process. Once elections are completed, update the officer information in the Membership Update Center at keyclub.org/muc.
- Connect with each newly elected officer and set goals. Meet with each officer individually and review their officer guide. Make sure they set personal goals for their time in office.
- Encourage current officers to mentor new ones. Create opportunities for new officers to shadow those currently in office.
- Reference the Key Club district website for any additional officer duties and award programs. keyclub.org/districts

End of April/May

- Install new officers. Thank retiring officers for their hard work and install newly elected officers. A suggested outline is available in the advisor guide.
- Establish club committees. Spread the workload and keep all club members active. Suggested committees are outlined in the advisor guide.

August/September

- Elect the class representative at the first meeting of the new school year and update officer information in the Membership Update Center.

keyclub.org/muc



Keeping students and advisors safe

All adults working with youth under the age of 18 at any Kiwanis event are expected to read and understand, agree to and abide by these guidelines. This is an abbreviated overview of the guidelines. Please read the entire document. For the full guidelines and latest resources, refer to [kiwanis.org/youthprotection](https://www.kiwanis.org/youthprotection).

Criminal history background checks and training. Every adult who works with children under 18 is required to get a Kiwanis-conducted and -verified background check. All advisors are required to complete the Kiwanis International Youth Protection training annually. You can find the training at [kiwanis.org/youthprotection](https://www.kiwanis.org/youthprotection).

Overnight stays and chaperones. A clear background check is necessary for all adults (Kiwanis members and nonmembers) registered for or staying overnight at any service leadership program event organized by Kiwanis International, a district, a division or a club that involves direct interaction between adults and youth under age 18. Except for a parent sharing a room with their own child, no adult should share a hotel or dormitory with a youth. If staying in a bunkhouse or camp cabin, adults may share sleeping quarters with youth of the same gender, provided that two or more adults are present. Remember the rule of three, and be sure to include a third person in all texts, emails and communication with Key Club students.

Transportation. When transporting youth, best practice is to have at least three people in the car at all times with documented approval.

Medications. Prescription and nonprescription medications are only permitted at a Kiwanis event with the written permission of the parent/guardian.

Use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, marijuana and other substances. Adults are expected to refrain at events and use is prohibited by students, even if prescribed for medical use.

Personal information. All documents bearing personal information of any youth should be treated as confidential.

Youth and social media. Adults should never initiate a connection with youth. Treat interactions on social media as if you are speaking in a public setting. Prior to posting photographs, obtain permission from any and all individuals pictured (and their parent/guardians if they are minors). Keep all email communications with students on your official Kiwanis-related email.

Behavior/health issues. Kiwanians should refrain from counseling youth. Instead, find or assist the young person in finding appropriate assistance.

Key Club e-learning education resources

Interactive online training sessions offer new and experienced advisors alike the knowledge and resources they need to support Key Club members. These sessions provide information to fully understand the scope of the Key Club organization and training to prepare advisors to mentor Key Club members successfully.

Youth Protection

Kiwanis International provides training for all adults (members and nonmembers) working with students. Kiwanis Youth Protection guidelines, along with updated training and information, are available at kiwanis.org/youthprotection.

Key Club 101: Coach. Mentor. Role Model.

Explore how Key Club works at the club, district and international levels. The interactive experience also clarifies the important role an advisor plays at each level. While recommended for first-time advisors, it's also a great refresher for more experienced ones.

Key Club Advisor: Developing Leadership through Key Club

This interactive experience takes an in-depth look at leadership. You'll learn the skills of an effective leader and five strategies Key Club advisors can use to help members develop these skills. Recommended for all advisors.

Ready to get started? Visit keyclub.org/advisoreducation for four easy steps to begin.

KEY CLUB ACRONYMS

Below is a list of our most commonly used acronyms.

AAR — Annual Achievement Report

CKI — Circle K International

CMN — Children's Miracle Network

DCON — District Convention

ICON — International Convention

IP — Immediate Past

KCI — Key Club International

LTG — Lieutenant Governor

OTC — Officer Training Conference

YOF — Youth Opportunities Fund

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keyclub.org



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