



**LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL**



# **Healthy Club Toolbox**

Key Lion User Guide

## *Inside this Guide*

- Development
- Responsibilities
- How to use the Healthy Club Toolbox

Fiscal Year 2004-05

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

◆ DEVELOPMENT OF THE HEALTHY CLUB TOOLBOX	4
◆ CHARACTERISTICS OF A WEAK/STRUGGLING CLUB	5
◆ RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERNATIONAL DIRECTORS AND DISTRICT GOVERNORS	6
◆ RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUB-DISTRICT KEY LIONS	7
◆ FORMAT TO FOLLOW WHEN CONTACTING A CLUB	8
◆ FORMAT TO FOLLOW WHEN MEETING WITH A CLUB	9
◆ DISTRIBUTION OF THE HEALTHY CLUB TOOLBOX	10
◆ CONTENTS OF THE HEALTHY CLUB TOOLBOX	11

# Healthy Club Toolbox User Guide

## Development

The size and number of Lions clubs in the United States and Canada has been steadily dwindling for the past 20 years. In 2003, International President Dr. T.S. Lee called upon the North American Directors to take steps to review the unsettling trend. In September 2003, President Lee and the Directors met in Portland, Oregon prior to the USA/Canada Leadership Forum, and then again during the October 2003 Board Meeting in Chicago, Illinois. As a result of the meetings, the North American Directors decided to focus their energy toward helping strengthen Lions clubs in North America. This was accomplished by meeting with as many of the initiative-identified clubs as possible, assisting them with their membership problems, and leading them towards becoming stronger-healthier clubs in their respective communities.

International Director Bud Wahl, along with the 2003-04 North American International Directors, has been instrumental in the development of the Healthy Club Toolbox. Together they found that the best results from the Healthy Club Toolbox occurred when a key Lion personally introduced the materials to the club.

**International President Clement F. Kusiak has broaden this initiative world-wide during the 2004-2005 Lions year so that clubs around the globe may benefit from it.**

## Characteristics of a Weak/Struggling Club

There are several characteristics that can distinguish the condition of a club. Below is a list of some symptoms and/or characteristics that would signify that a club is weak or struggling. This list **is not** intended to be full and complete. There are certainly many other characteristics a club may have. The more characteristics a club has, the more chance of it being the type of club to assist. It is important to note that just because a club may have one of the symptoms listed, that does not automatically constitute that club to be a weak or struggling club.

This list is to be used by the District Governor and Immediate Past District Governor to help determine which clubs in their respective sub-district have two or more characteristics and whether or not they wish to assign a key Lion to work with the club.

- continual decrease in membership
- repeat presidents
- lack of new members
- PU101 forms and monthly membership activity reports not turned in on time, or not at all
- no regular meeting schedule
- late payment or non-payment of dues or other financial obligations
- lack of community involvement or activity
- lack of fund-raising projects
- lack of service projects
- membership under 20 members
- no membership committee
- lack of an active membership growth program
- lack of proper orientation or induction of new members

# **Responsibilities**

## **International Director's and District Governor's Role**

1. International Directors will work with each District Governor in his/her respective area to select Key Lions in each sub-district who will contact the clubs identified. In many instances, these Lions will be the sub-district MERL Team members. In other instances, other Lions may be selected. (PDGs, PIDs, Zone/Region Chairs, any respected Lion.)
2. One Lion in each state/province/multiple district will be responsible for the program in his/her respective area.
3. Each District Governor in his/her respective area will identify clubs that fall into the Healthy Club Initiative Category. (IPDGs should definitely be utilized.)
4. An International Director will remain in contact with the District Governor and sub-district Key Lions on a regular basis to monitor progress.
5. Report any success stories received from sub-district Key Lions to the Extension & Membership Division at Lions Clubs International.
6. Distribute a copy of this guide to each sub-district Key Lion

## Responsibilities of Sub-District Key Lions

1. As requested by the District Governor, the Key Lion will call upon the individual Lions clubs in his/her area. Their mission will be to meet with each club individually to offer assistance in improving the health of the club in whatever capacity the club feels they would welcome: membership, leadership training, community involvement, fund-raising, club meetings, orientation, etc.
2. Sub-District Key Lions can meet as a team with a club, or they can split up and meet individually with a club. However they proceed, all sub-district Key Lions must follow the same basic format as outlined in this guide in order for this program to be successful.
3. Report regularly to the District Governor on the progress of each club. Advise of successes and of lingering problems. Be specific...*increased membership by 5 members...club has 2 new service projects...club members have begun attending zone meetings and other district functions...club has provided orientation for all members...etc.*
4. Advise the District Governor if additional work is no longer needed with a particular club, and if new clubs have been identified for the list.

## Format To Follow When Contacting A Club

- In most cases the clubs will know the Lion(s) contacting them. However, make sure they know who you are and what club you are from.
- Let them know why you are contacting them. You must be very diplomatic. ***Do not say, “Your club has been identified as a weak and struggling club and we’re going to come in and fix your problems.”*** You will be dead in the water and probably end up with a club charter for an anchor.
- Tell them that the size and number of Lions clubs has been steadily dwindling over the past 20 years, and as a result, the International Board of Directors has taken on a project in attempt to help strengthen Lions clubs throughout the world. This will be accomplished by meeting with as many of our initiative-targeted clubs as possible to see if there is anywhere they feel they could use help to lead them into becoming a stronger-healthier club in their community.
- Not all clubs will agree to have you meet with them. Some will say they don’t need help. Don’t force the issue. You cannot help those who do not want help.

## Format To Follow When Meeting With A Club

- This is a very important visit.
- Dress accordingly.
- Meet with the club during one of their regular meetings. Ask that there not be a scheduled program. Your meeting with them should be the main focus. Ask for as many members in attendance as possible.
- If going as a Team, no more than three.
- Briefly re-state bullet number three (3) on page eight (8) in the “Contacting the Club” format, just to be certain everyone knows why you are there.
- Ask them to tell you what they see as **“their problems and issues.”** They should provide you with enough information to give you a direction in helping them. If not, have them take some time to fill out the “How Are Your Ratings?” questionnaire from the Healthy Club Toolbox. (Make certain you make several copies before meeting with them.)
- Using the information from the “How Are Your Ratings?” questionnaire and from dialogue with members of the club, you should be able to identify a few areas where assistance can be given.
- Do not drag-on your first visit. Obtain the key information needed, and if time is a factor, review the information obtained and offer follow-up by attending upcoming meetings to work on a plan of action. You must become involved with their action plan and help find solutions. If possible, plan to also attend other club functions. You, in effect, will be their very own unofficial Guiding Lion.

## **Distribution Of The Healthy Club Toolbox**

- Each District Governor received a Healthy Club Toolbox at the DGE Seminar in Dearborn, Michigan.
- **Toolboxes are not to be “just given” to the clubs.** *(The contents of the Healthy Club Toolbox can be overwhelming to a struggling club if just given to them. Nothing would get accomplished. The Toolbox would end up on someone’s shelf.)* **The sub-district Key Lion will be in control of the club’s Toolbox.**
- The Toolboxes are to be distributed through the authority of the District Governor. The District Governor, with assistance of the Key Lions, will determine how many Healthy Club Toolboxes will be given to each sub-district Key Lion for use with the targeted clubs in his/her area.
- Since not all clubs experience the same problems, a wide variety of healthy club information is provided. Clubs will not use all the materials in the Toolbox.
- Sub-District Key Lions will use only the material from a club’s Toolbox that will pertain to that club’s problems/issues.
- A toolbox may be left in possession of a club once the type of support to be offered to the club has been identified and the Key Lion is comfortable leaving the Toolbox with the club. The club can use the remaining items in the Toolbox for future reference.

## Contents Of The Healthy Club Toolbox

The Healthy Club Toolbox is the largest membership package ever assembled by Lions Clubs International. It covers more than just membership. It covers the entire topic of building and running a healthy club. All the information provided is divided into five sections containing numerous publications. Some examples are listed below:

1. **Club Management:** “How Are Your Ratings?” (ME15 & ME15B), Club Meetings, Retreats...
2. **Membership Recruiting:** Pocket Application (ME6B), Recruiting Ideas, Orientation...
3. **Membership Retention:** “Focus on Working Together” (PRC-2), “Focus on Meetings” (PRC-3), “Focus on Involvement” (PRC-5), Mentoring (MTR5)...
4. **Service Activities:** “Community Needs Assessment” (MK9), Project Development, Fundraising...
5. **Special Incentives and Order Forms:** Public Relations, Membership Materials Order Form ...



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