



HOW TO ESTABLISH A “COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD” FOR “BOOKS FOR KIDS”

What Is An Advisory Board?

Books for Kids Advisory Boards are committees of volunteers, representing their community or school, that come together to raise awareness and funds in order to provide new books to local literacy programs serving children from low-income families.

What would I do as an Advisory Board member?

These are some of the main functions that an Advisory Board member might perform:

- Plan events in your local community to raise money and inform people about Books for Kids
- Seek donations from foundations, local service clubs e.g. Lions Club or Rotary, your local businesses and individuals.
- Select programs in your community to receive books
- Increase awareness of Books for Kids by publicizing your Advisory Board to the community and to the local media
- Attend regular Advisory Board meetings

How Do I Start a New Advisory Board?

If there is not an Advisory Board in your community and you would like to bring one to your area, we provide resources to help get you started.

How Else Can I Get Involved with Books for Kids in My Community

- Tell organizations in your community that serve low-income children to register with their local Books for Kids Advisory Board and receive books.
- Donate to your community's Advisory Board, either by contributing money or making an in-kind donation.

What else is an Advisory Board?

An Advisory Board is an active committee of volunteers who carry out the mission of Books for Kids and help deliver the magic of books to children at the local level. Advisory Boards raise awareness and funds to provide book grants to existing literacy programs in their community that serve children from low-income families. Advisory Board members represent a broad spectrum of the local or school community.

The Advisory Board Model



Advisory Board members at a meeting

Who can serve on an Advisory Board?

Anyone who is committed to bringing the magic of books to children in need can join or start an Advisory Board. Books for Kids Advisory Boards consist of dedicated people from a diverse cross section of the community including: local business owners, librarians, media representatives, elected officials, literacy advocates, social service coordinators, professionals, teachers, senior citizens, and members of the faith community. In addition to community members, Advisory Boards can include school students, faculty and staff.

How do Advisory Boards raise funds?

Advisory Boards utilize their strengths to fundraise in fun, innovative ways to provide books to children in their area. Advisory Boards raise funds through Book Drives, fundraising events and donations from individuals, businesses, service organizations and foundations in their communities.

How does the book grant process work?

Using eligibility criteria established by Books for Kids, Advisory Board members select existing literacy programs serving children from low-income families and award them with books. The grant provides 6 - 12 books for each child in the program over the course of the grant (typically one year). The books are given to the children to take home and keep.

How are Advisory Boards supported by the Book for Kids National Office?

- Dedicated staff to answer your questions and provide guidance
- A regular accounting update that details the money raised and spent by your Advisory Board
- Technical assistance for grant writing (i.e., to local councils, literacy coalitions)
- Fundraising and event planning resources (i.e. fundraising letters, book drives, event invitations, brochures, press releases, etc.).
- Opportunities to participate in Books for Kids national initiatives.

What are the benefits of volunteering on an Advisory Board?

Through Books for Kids, you can:

- Use your skills and talents to make a difference in children's lives
- Gain leadership experience
- Develop skills in community outreach, partnership building, fundraising, event-planning, and grant writing
- Join a national network of literacy advocates

Starting an Advisory Board

Bring the magic of books and reading to your community by establishing a Books for Kids Advisory Board. Here's how you get started.

1. Express Your Interest

Contact Books for Kids to register. They will provide you with all the information you need to get started, and answer any questions you might have.

2. Review Materials

Access the Books for Kids web site www.booksforkids.org.au to review about us. You will need to establish a list for building your board — such as sample agendas, checklists, etc.

This will be your starter pack.

2. Recruit Volunteers

Reach out to your personal and community networks. The more people the better! We suggest you have at least 3-5 committed volunteers when first getting established.

3. Hold Two Meetings

Meet with your initial volunteers. You should discuss recruitment strategies for additional members, and what the goals of your Board will be. Work together to complete a Starter Package.

4. Submit Your Starter Package

The Starter Package encourages you to learn about your board and the community you will be serving. The Starter Package includes:

- **Community Research** – a list of possible schools, primary schools, tutoring programs, and other preschool programs, libraries, migrant centers, homeless shelters, and teen parenting programs in your area serving at risk or disadvantaged children
- **Commitment Form** – a list of active members of your Advisory Board, listing their skills.
- **Roster of Members** – A list of members “Who does What” e.g. Chair, Secretary etc
- **Minutes from your first two meetings**

5. Approval!

Once your paperwork is submitted and reviewed, we will let you know when your Board has been approved. You can then start raising money and getting books to children who need them!

Please ensure you log onto the www.booksforkids.org.au and subscribe to our free newsletter “Pages”

This newsletter highlights what our Advisory Boards members are doing and we encourage you to send in photos and stories of your successes.