

Building a new AMBUCS™ Chapter...



Welcome to AMBUCS™! We're really glad you're interested in starting a new chapter that focuses on helping people with disabilities. This guide should help you get started, and up and running quickly.

It's exciting and fun to start a new venture, and it's important that you maintain that excitement and enthusiasm as your new chapter gets started.

These are special incentives for new chapters!

- ***New chapters qualify for ten (10) matching AmTrykes for their first ten (10) purchased!***
- ***New charter presidents receive basic registration complimentary for the annual conference.***
- ***New charter chairpersons (sparkplugs) receive free basic registration and one night lodging at the annual conference.***

Research has shown that people want three things from their affiliations with organizations. To be successful your members need to:

- ✓ Have fun
- ✓ Have a sense of community within your chapter
- ✓ Do something to help others

Here's a quick guide to the steps you'll want to take to start your chapter effectively.

1. Build a core group.

To get started, you need to build a core group of five or more interested people. Talk to them individually about your new chapter, and get their commitment to help you.

Build your core group individually. It's easier to talk one-on-one. Don't hold a "meeting." A meeting is more time efficient for you, but you'll probably be disappointed by attendance, and it's difficult to ask people to join at a meeting. People also tend to be hesitant to go to a meeting they don't know anything about. It takes personal contact.

You'll have your first meeting after you've built your core group.

2. Hold your ground rules meeting.

After you've got your core group, call a meeting convenient for those folks. This is called your ground rules meeting because your core group is going to make the basic decisions about how your chapter will operate and when it will meet. You may want to schedule it for a couple of hours at someone's home.

It's important to hold your ground rules meeting with your core group, before you get too many folks involved. Six or eight people can easily decide what the mission is and how they will accomplish the mission. It's much more difficult to

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co-ordinate twenty or thirty people. The people you attract after your core group will then know the ground rules and can decide if your chapter is a good “fit” for them.

Here are the basic things you’ll need to decide at your core group meeting.

A) Mission

Decide upon your chapter’s mission, and get consensus from everyone. Here is where everyone is sold on the purpose and initial focus of your chapter. Initially, we recommend focus on the AmTryke project, and then later you can branch out into other ideas.

B) When will you meet?

How often will you need to get together to get the job done? Most chapters establish some kind of regular meeting. It’s up to you. Ambucs chapters meet monthly, weekly, twice a month, etc. Make it convenient and not a burden on your schedule. Be time sensitive, and meet just enough to get the job done. You may want a mixture of meetings that are business as well as social in nature.

C) Where will you meet?

You may need to investigate possible meeting places. Here are some suggestions.... Churches, Chamber of Commerce, libraries, restaurants, member’s homes, senior centers, United Ways, community rooms at malls, etc.

Will you have food at your meetings? Or just gather to have fun and conduct business? Will you meet for lunch or

breakfast, or in the evening? Will you want interesting and entertaining speakers to learn about community events?

These decisions will affect the cost of operating your chapter, so think carefully and build consensus with your core group.

Let’s talk about costs here.

Your core group will need to think about local membership contributions to cover your chapter costs. Here are some of the things you should consider that you would need money to operate:

- ❑ Chapter newsletter
- ❑ Postage
- ❑ Office supplies
- ❑ AMBUCS™ program materials
- ❑ AMBUCS™ chapter liability insurance
- ❑ AMBUCS™ national and regional membership contributions
- ❑ Officer training costs

You can figure that the above items will require six-to-ten (\$6-10) dollars per member per month in membership dues contributions. About four (\$4.00) dollars per member per month goes to regional and national costs and covers the following:

- ❑ AMBUCS™ Group Tax Exemption as a 501(c)3 organization
- ❑ AMBUCS™ Chapter liability insurance for volunteers
- ❑ AMBUC magazine subscription
- ❑ District and region area officer

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expenses

- ❑ Use of AMBUCS™ name
- ❑ Use of AMBUCS™ resources
- ❑ Member pins, cards
- ❑ Officer training programs
- ❑ 800 number for chapter service

Other supplies, training materials, and merchandise are available through AMBUCS™ supply department. You order and pay for what you want to use.

It takes five (5) members to charter a chapter. This is very important; you cannot begin chapter operations until you have recruited five (5) members.

3. Decide on a mission.

Just exactly what do you want your chapter to accomplish in your community? It's much easier to rally people around a cause. So decide what it is your chapter is going to focus on in the beginning. It may change over time, but begin with a clear statement about what you want to accomplish.

National AMBUCS programs you can begin with include:



The therapeutic tricycle for children with disabilities

AmTryke® therapeutic tricycle
AMBUCS™ provide the therapeutic tricycle for kids with disabilities to individuals, clinics, rehabilitation facilities, and day care centers. You won't believe the look on a kid's face

when they receive their first bike, just like other kids!

It is a great cause to rally new members around. As a bonus, it attracts a lot of media attention, too.

Local Community Service

You may already have a great new idea, or project your community needs. If so, AMBUCS™ gives you a great new support group to get the job done in your community, and have fun while you do it.

Decide what you want to accomplish, and be able to clearly explain it to your friends and acquaintances.

AMBUCS™ Scholars, scholarships for therapists

This program provides scholarships for students who want to become clinical therapists. These allied health team members are key folks in helping people with disabilities. It's a great leveraged way we help provide therapy services while helping students fulfill their educational goals. Your chapter can sponsor local students for scholarships in therapy careers, insuring that your local area has these needed health professionals.



If you want more information about the above Ambucs programs, call AMBUCS™ Resource Center at 800-838-1845.

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4. Select your fundraising project.

The funds have to come from somewhere. How will you raise the monies needed to run your community service project?

Order the fundraising special events ideas list from AMBUCS™ Resource Center. Ambucs chapters tend to be special event oriented in their fundraising. It's more fun to work "Shoulders Together" (our motto) on a project. You make new friends and learn about your fellow members that way.

5. Schedule your first community service project.

This is the reason your chapter exists. It's very important that you "do something". Remember your mission. Are you going to hold an **AmTrykes giveaway** for a local clinic, build a wheelchair ramp, or some other project?

Set a goal, a timetable, and get started. Your new members will rally around the cause!

6. Have a 'Let's Charter' campaign.

These are your organizational meetings; fun events where you recruit local volunteers and members. AMBUCS™ Resource Center has sample agendas, videos, literature, and speaker outlines for these events. When you are ready to get started on this stage, we'll send you the information.

AMBUCS™ Resource Center can help in other ways. For instance, they can help provide area leaders to appear at your pre-charter meetings to tell the Ambuc story. Press releases can be generated to support your efforts. They can ask the therapy trade associations for referrals from their members in your area.



Summary

See, it really is easy! AMBUCS™ is dedicated to creating mobility and independence for people with disabilities. We believe it should be a fun organization that gets the job done. Keep fun in mind when you're working on this project. You are asking people to give you their most precious commodity... time. You must make it a fun and worthwhile effort that they enjoy. Don't take yourselves too seriously, and take time to celebrate your chapter accomplishments.

As soon as you are ready to start organizing your chapter, mail or fax the enclosed new club building permit to the AMBUCS™ Resource Center.

To assist you in your efforts, you will receive the following support material

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from the AMBUCS™ Resource Center:

25 Get to Know AMBUCS brochures

25 Membership applications

10 Assorted AMBUCS™ magazines

Please call us at (800) 838-1845 when you have questions or need help.

Good Luck! We can't wait to hear about your new chapter!

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AMBUCS™ NEW CLUB BUILDING PERMIT

Date _____

Your Name _____

Address _____

Bus. Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Fax _____ Email _____

Location of new chapter: _____ (City) _____ (state)

Is new chapter being sponsored by an existing AMBUCS™ chapter? ___yes ___no

If yes, Sponsoring Chapter _____

Sponsoring Chapter President _____

NEW CLUB BUILDING TEAM

The following individuals have agreed to serve as members of the new club building team:

CHAIRMAN

Name _____

Bus. Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Bus. Phone _____

Home Phone _____

Fax _____

MEMBERS

Email _____

The undersigned do hereby agree to abide by and conform to the policies and procedures established by AMBUCS for the chartering of a new club as set forth in the New Club Building Manual. We understand that in the event said club is not chartered within one year, this permit will expire.

Signed by:

New Club Building Chairman

Sponsoring Chapter President (if applicable)

Please send or fax this permit to: AMBUCS™ Resource Center, PO Box 5127, High Point, NC 27262; Fax: 336-852-6830

