

Membership: Recruitment & Retention

Grandmothers to Grandmothers Campaign Call Summary Notes - April 18, 2019



Grandmothers groups represented on call:

British Columbia: Nelson Grans to Grans, Golden Ears Gogos

Alberta: The GANG

Saskatchewan: G4G Prince Albert, G4G Regina

Manitoba: Grands 'n' More Winnipeg

Ontario: Grammas to Ambuyas, Fenelon Falls Grannies for Grannies, Quinte Grannies for Africa, Grandmothers Partnering with Africa, Oomama, Grandmothers by the Lake

Nova Scotia: The Bay Grandmothers

Australia: Ranges Aid

In this first thematic Campaign Call, there was a lively discussion among grandmothers group members about membership recruitment and retention. Many on the call identified recruiting new (and potentially younger) members as a major priority for their groups to support existing group members who need to step back due to age and physical limitations. Groups are also looking at ways to engage members (or peripheral members) beyond the core group of people who always come to meetings and always volunteer for leadership roles and other tasks, while also thinking about how to integrate new members into the group, and continuing to connect all members to the “why” of the Grandmothers Campaign.

Recruitment Strategies and Ideas

- Recruiting through **personal networks** has been one of the most successful strategies groups have used (inviting friends, family, colleagues to attend a meeting or event)
- **Creating outreach materials** – brochures, flyers etc. with group contact information and meeting times
- Have a **“sign-up” list** at all events to capture names and email addresses of people who are interested in learning more about your group and potentially becoming a member (or a volunteer); in addition to a tool for recruitment, one group uses email addresses that are collected to send supporters updates about group activities and invites to future events
- Some groups take on outreach/recruitment specific initiatives (outside of fundraising events) such as renting a table at seniors fairs, setting up a “PR” table at a local market or displays in store windows to **increase visibility**
- Try out new fundraising ideas geared toward a **different audience** – consider the “feel” of the event (one example shared on the call was participating in art shows, or other events where people may not expect grandmothers to have a presence)
- One group based in a small town chose to stop holding meetings in a member’s house, and to **instead go to a coffee shop or restaurant** to draw attention to themselves (a group of that many women gathered together inevitably draws questions and curiosity)
- **Local press coverage** has been helpful; listing upcoming events on online calendars and Facebook to reach a wider audience
- Connecting and forming **relationships with other organizations**/service organizations (Rotary Clubs, PROBUS, new comer societies, other charities with similar ideologies etc.) and schools has been helpful for visibility
- Implement a **buddy system** to welcome and integrate new members into the group, and give new members a project or job to help out with right away to build on momentum and excitement
- Create a **new member package** with background information about your group and the Grandmothers Campaign
- **Introduce new members** at meetings so that all group members can help to welcome them

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Retention Strategies and Ideas

- Groups have re-examined leadership and support structure to make sure members don't burn out. Examples include:
 - Creating a sub-group of *grandothers* who are "on call" to help out at events or with certain tasks, but who don't get all group emails or attend group meetings. For example: someone with a truck who can transport materials to events; a seamstress; highschool students
 - One group has found that after 12 years, only a small percentage of the group was regularly attending meetings and taking on leadership roles, and so decided to move from an "executive" or committee that makes decisions for the group to a model of collective decision making that involves all members in the process. This has completely re-energized the group and increased engagement.
- Continue to connect with the Grandmothers Campaign as a solidarity movement – for example, watch videos created by the SLF on the [SLF YouTube channel](#), talk about articles in [Grassroots newsletters](#), [Year in Reviews](#), [Granny Bulletins](#), etc.
- Take the temperature of your membership regularly to see what members want to do and what they like – what do they want the benefits of membership to be? Groups have found that a social component is important ("no-business" pot luck dinners, coffee outings, celebrating group accomplishments, ensuring that group meetings start and end on time). This can be done with a survey or in-person discussions.

Summary thoughts and ideas for moving forward from call participants

- Building a recruitment component into every fundraiser that your group holds seems like a great way to capture and capitalize on new member interest. For example, a couple members could be at a table to talk about what being a member of the group looks like, to answer questions, talk about the benefits of belonging to the group, etc.
- Each community, city, province is different and there is no "one size fits all" approach to recruitment, so it's nice to experiment to see what works for your community and what doesn't
- Celebrate your successes and stay objective – recruiting even one or two members is a big deal and a great accomplishment! Change doesn't happen overnight but by having discussions and thinking about outreach strategies, your group is already taking steps to bring new members on board.

Grandmothers Campaign Resources

- There are materials available (electronically and in printed form) to support your outreach endeavours. You can find a list of materials on the Grandmothers Campaign website or contact us. Some groups personalize the [Grandmothers Campaign bookmarks](#) by adding a sticker with their local group contact information.
- We'd like to compile all of your tips and best practices into a **Grandmothers Campaign Outreach Catalogue**. Help us build this new document – similar to the Fundraiser Catalogue, but focused on outreach strategies. The submission form can be downloaded from the [Grandmothers Campaign website](#) and submitted by emailing campaign@stephenlewisfoundation.org (or directly to your Grandmothers Campaign Officer).

Thank you for a great call everyone!

Join us for the **May Campaign Call on Thursday, May 16 at 12:30pm ET** to share strategies and ideas about rejuvenating your group members and keeping members engaged. Contact the Grandmothers Campaign team at campaign@stephenlewisfoundation.org for conference call dial-in details, or sign up for the call on the Grandmothers Campaign website: <http://grandmotherscampaign.org/get-involved/campaign-conference-calls/>