

10 Steps To...

Member Retention

In order to retain members, you must know who they are, understand their expectations, and make them feel a sense of pride and ownership. We compiled these steps to help ensure that all members are engaged in club and Federation activities.

1. HOLD AN ORIENTATION.

The **GFWC Woman's Club of Bridgeport** (West Virginia) knows retention begins as soon as a new member joins the club. An induction ceremony is held to make new members feel like an active part of the club. New members receive a GFWC Member Pin, and new member packet that includes information about GFWC, the WHRC, and the club's most recent newsletter.

2. BUDDY UP.

Mentoring is an effective way to promote new members' involvement in your club. These *Federation Buddies* or *Big Sisters* serve as ongoing support for new members during their first year or two of club membership.

3. COMMUNICATE.

Use all communication mediums available—phone calls, newsletters, email, website, Facebook, Twitter, and more—to reach your members. Poll your members to determine which methods are preferable. It is most likely that you will need to use multiple communication channels to keep all members abreast of your latest happenings.

4. HAVE FUN.

Incorporate social activities into club business. Consider luncheons or dinners before, after, or during a club meeting. Hold game nights, potluck meals, hiking, shopping, tours of historic venues, movie nights, beach days, pool parties, and boat parties. Consider ice cream socials, teas, family picnics, brunches, coffees, wine and cheese parties, and Halloween costume parties. The possibilities are endless to the fun you and your fellow members can have together.

5. RECOGNIZE MEMBERS.

Everyone likes to feel valued and wanted. There are countless ways to recognize members for their commitment and dedication. Clubs give out awards for years of service, clubwoman and chairman of the year, unsung hero, attendance, member of the month, rookie of the year, and more.

6. OFFER INCENTIVES.

We are all busy. Provide motivation for perfect attendance by giving members an extra reason to attend monthly meetings. The **GFWC New Brighton Junior Woman's Club** (Pennsylvania) encourages its members to attend monthly meetings by distributing one section of the club's cookbook each month. Members have to be present to receive it.

7. SEEK MEMBER INPUT.

Initiate brainstorming sessions to give all members a voice in club activities and foster a sense of ownership in the club. Set up a suggestion box, create a formal survey, or allow a few minutes at each meeting for informal conversations.

8. MIX IT UP.

A change to your normal club routine allows members to interact in different ways. At the end of their November meeting, **GFWC Rochester Junior Women's Club** (Michigan) members divide up and go to the homes of different members for desserts. New members are divided equally between the homes to allow members to socialize, offering the opportunity to ask questions in an environment outside the general business meeting.

9. STAY CONNECTED TO GFWC.

Remind your members that they belong to a large sisterhood of more than 100,000 members. Encourage them to subscribe to *GFWC Clubwoman Magazine*, and *News & Notes*, a free, weekly electronic newsletter that offers tips and program ideas to enhance your club's community improvement efforts. Learn more at www.GFWC.org/GFWCMembers.

10. KEEP PROJECTS FRESH.

Are your members tired of doing the same programs and projects year after year? Make it a goal to introduce a new project each year. Ask your members to provide ideas and conduct a club-wide vote.