Indiana SADD
Recruiting Tips

For chapter advisors and student leaders

- **Start small.**
- **Be visible.**
- **Let students lead.**



Creative, proven strategies to help you attract enthusiastic members and start or grow your chapter.

Let's get this chapter started

Whether you're starting from scratch or reigniting school spirit, these proven strategies will help you attract enthusiastic members and build momentum from day one. The best recruiting happens when students invite students.

1. Start with core connections

- **Personal invitations:** encourage student leaders to personally invite peers who care about making a difference, leadership, or prevention.
- **Recommendations:** ask teachers, counselors, and coaches to suggest students who might be a good fit, including leaders, role models, and students looking for community.
- **Peer-to-peer ask:** have each interested student bring one or two friends.

2. Visibility and promotion

- **Posters and flyers:** place eye-catching posters in high-traffic areas such as the cafeteria, hallways, and office. Add a QR code that links to a sign-up form.
- **Morning announcements:** share short, upbeat messages that explain what SADD is and how to join (sample scripts below).
- **School social media:** partner with your school's accounts to share recruitment graphics, photos, or videos made by students.
- **School newsletter or website:** ask to include an announcement or a feature about your chapter.

Sample announcements

Starting a new chapter

"Good morning! Want to make a difference and have fun doing it? We're launching a brand-new SADD chapter, Students Against Destructive Decisions, and we want YOU to be part of it! We're looking for students who want to speak up, take action, and support their peers. No experience needed, just a passion for making good choices and helping others do the same. Come check it out on [date, time, location]!"

Growing a returning chapter

"Good morning! Last year, SADD members [one thing your chapter accomplished, such as helping more students buckle up in the student lot]. This year we're choosing our next project, and we want your ideas. Join us for our first meeting on [date, time, location], and bring a friend!"

3. Recruitment events

- **Interest meeting or kickoff:** host an informal meeting with snacks, games, and information about SADD's mission. Ask, "What is the biggest risk for students at our school?" and use the answers to start your planning.
- **Club or activity fair:** set up a table with a sign-up sheet or QR code, giveaways such as bracelets, stickers, and candy, and posters showing what your chapter has done.
- **Themed lunch table:** reserve a cafeteria table on a set day, decorate it with SADD colors and logos, and have members talk with peers.
- **Classroom visits:** ask to speak briefly in health, PE, drivers' ed, or social studies classes.

4. Student buy-in

- **Leadership opportunities:** students can take on officer, project, and Torchbearer roles; many join clubs to build leadership experience.
- **A real cause:** members help prevent impaired driving and substance misuse and build safer schools, and they choose the issue using real data from their own school.
- **Fun and community:** balance serious purpose with fun. Students are more likely to join a positive, welcoming group.

5. Incentives

- **Giveaways:** stickers, buttons, or bracelets with the SADD logo attract attention.
- **Food at meetings:** pizza, donuts, or snacks encourage attendance, especially at first meetings.
- **Recognition:** highlight members on social media, in announcements, or with certificates at year's end.
- **Statewide events:** members can connect with teens across Indiana at Indiana SADD conferences, programs, and events.

6. Partnerships

- **Athletics:** partner with sports teams and cheer squads; student-athletes often care about health, safety, and leadership.
- **Theater, music, art, and student media:** invite creative students to design posters, perform skits, or make videos for your campaigns.
- **Community connections:** work with local law enforcement, hospitals, prevention coalitions, and your county's Local Coordinating Council on hands-on experiences, such as peer-led training, that show students how SADD empowers them to lead and protect others.

7. Ongoing engagement

- **Low-commitment entry:** let students attend a meeting or event before deciding whether to join.
- **Project-based recruitment:** invite students to help with one specific part of your chapter's plan, such as a seat belt check, a safe-driving campaign, or prom safety. Many stay once they see the difference their work makes.
- **Regular communication:** use GroupMe, Remind, or email lists, following school policy, to keep members informed and engaged.

8. The advisor's role in recruitment

- **Be visible and approachable:** show enthusiasm, wear SADD gear, and talk about the chapter with students often.
- **Empower student leaders:** students recruiting students is the most effective approach, so let them drive the messaging and outreach.
- **Highlight résumé value:** SADD leadership and documented service hours strengthen scholarship, college, and job applications.

Keep new members coming back

Recruiting is part of building your chapter's capacity, Step 2 of the SPF roadmap in the **Indiana SADD Advisor Guidebook**. Recruit students connected to your chapter's priority issue, and have seniors recruit freshmen and sophomores each fall as part of the Pass the Torch Toolkit.

9. Avoiding the "preachy" label

Some students worry that joining SADD will make them look "uncool" or judgmental of peers. Others think SADD is only about saying "no" to parties or fun, rather than leadership and safety. Here's how to change that perception:

- **Focus on peer-led voice:** SADD is student-driven, not adult-run. Let students lead projects, pick themes, and shape messages.
- **Highlight fun and creativity:** pair serious prevention work with games, contests, spirit days, art projects, or social media challenges.
- **Show, don't lecture:** hands-on activities such as pledge walls and trivia feel like discovery, not being told what not to do.
- **Celebrate positive choices:** frame SADD as a group that supports healthy decisions, not one that shames people for mistakes.
- **Keep messaging real:** skip scare tactics. Share relatable stories and accurate, local facts; the Using Data Right guide can help.
- **Build an inclusive culture:** SADD is a welcoming space for anyone who wants to make a difference, not just "perfect students."
- **Elevate student voices:** members can share in their own words why they joined, through posters, short videos, or social media clips. Authentic peer stories outshine polished adult messages.

Beyond prevention: benefits to promote

- Leadership experience as officers, project leads, and Torchbearers
- Documented volunteer service hours for college, scholarship, and job applications
- Friendships and a welcoming group culture
- Indiana SADD conferences, statewide events, and the State Leadership Team

SADD is a certifying organization for the President's Volunteer Service Award, but AmeriCorps paused the award in May 2025. Chapters can keep logging members' verified hours in case it returns.

Advisor takeaway

Start small, be visible, and let students take the lead. A strong, authentic, and fun SADD culture will naturally attract and keep members.



Stand up. Speak out. Lead change.

indianasadd.org

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