



## Parent Club Suggested Best Practices

<p><b>Parent Group infrastructure</b></p>	<p>Determine if the group will be incorporated as a non-profit (submit required paperwork for compliance with applicable government entities).</p> <p>Have a set of bylaws published, which describes the rules/requirements of the board/members. Provide job descriptions for the board members.</p> <p>As needed, formalize the parent group infrastructure into policies/procedures.</p> <p>Consider having a virtual space where documents for the parent group are retained, and accessible (determine if documents should be accessed only by board or if some will be accessed by all members).</p>
<p><b>Regular Board Meetings</b></p>	<p>At the inception of each new board, ensure the first meeting includes planning for the upcoming year. Set projected dates of events, etc. This way, if there are any events that require long term planning, the board and volunteer members can have an idea when to start working on the event.</p> <p>Have the board meet at least once per quarter to discuss business and upcoming events and issues.</p> <p>Start/end the meeting on time (to be respectful of everyone's busy schedule). Meetings can be held in person or virtually. Have an agenda and follow it.</p>
<p><b>Encourage new Board and Officer Rotation</b></p>	<p>Having Board members and staggered Boards brings in fresh ideas and energy. It also allows for some senior family guidance over the underclass families on what has happened in the past, and an easier learning curve.</p> <p>Have Board elections early in the year (e.g. February), to allow for an easy transition from the old/new board. Encourage outgoing board members to seek their replacement from the current pool of members. Consider having potential new board members shadow the current board before the elections, so as to encourage transparency, as well as ensure the members understand what will be expected of them. Once the new board is elected, ensure that the old board members transfer "tribal knowledge" of their job duties to the new member. Ensure new board members receive any training needed to do their job (e.g., accessing digital information, etc.)</p>



	<p>Consider the impact the terms based on senior families. For example, the OCPA term starts May 1, and ends April 30th of each year. This way the new Board is in full control, and the senior families don't have to consider being involved in the upstart of the next academic year.</p>
<b>Regular member meetings</b>	<p>Host regular member meetings. If possible, hold them at a member 's house or a local venue. Consider outdoor venues when appropriate, as there is more space to mingle.</p> <p>Consider themed meetings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center a meeting on/near a holiday, to encourage fun themes for food, décor, dress.</li> <li>Even if there is not a holiday, consider a fun theme (such as welcome back – Aloha, chili cook off contest, etc.)</li> <li>Try to add a upperclassmen oriented meeting ( in late March), where senior parents and even alumni, can educate newer parents on the do's/don'ts of USAFA life and learning experiences for USAFA event planning. This could even evolve into a mentoring type program.</li> </ol>
<b>Packing Party (Cadet Care Packages)</b>	<p>The parent groups exist to support the Cadets as well, and where/when possible consider sending care packages to Cadets. This can be accomplished by having each family who wishes to participate, they should bring a little something to pack in each Cadet's box. In addition, most families will typically want to mail some things to their Cadets, and it helps keep a regular encouragement up to their Cadet. Beside treats, families can put items the Cadet's need, want, or items that parents may want them to have.</p> <p>Consider special events – such as recognition, graduation – where the parent group may be able to provide support to the Cadets. (e.g., small gifts, squadron care packages, etc.)</p>
<b>Social parties (Football events)</b>	<p>Tie in a meeting/packing party with a social event, such as the football games. These events are usually held at a local restaurant. Consider inviting parents of the other rival military academies to watch the game.</p>
<b>New member</b>	<p>Recruitment/retention</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the list from Marie frequently, and keep one list where you have a status of contact, and add new Appointee families as Marie's list is updated and sent to the President.</li> <li>Make more than one attempt to contact the family (email/text, then call). Sometimes the list has erroneous information – contact Marie for assistance as needed.</li> <li>Hold a new Appointee brunch or meeting. For example, this could be a formal brunch with inviting the Appointees/their</li> </ol>

	<p>families, with guest speakers from the Alumni, and current upper-class cadets. Provide for break-out sessions for the parents to understand the OCPA, and for the Cadets to ask questions freely to the upper class, before they go to I-Day.</p> <p>d. New Parent Welcome meeting in July after the 4th before the call home day. Off the meeting to new member families, as well as Appointee families who have not yet signed up to become a member). Suggested discussion topics: Life since I-day, what to expect during BCT2, membership opportunities. Have a roundtable for all of the questions the family members have.</p>
<b>Social media</b>	<p>Etiquette</p> <p>a. Facebook/Instagram-Have an admin who is good at social media, who can post frequently on shared articles from USAFA, and on events of the parent group or activities that the Cadets from parent group may be doing and that are of interest to the families NOTE: The parent group will need to decide whether or not to allow New Appointee families to access the Parent Group social media profiles (which may be private groups).</p> <p>b. Website-Have a functional website for the parent group that is publicly available. An AOG website is available. The AOG support is free, and consistent, and will help new members find the parent website. Ensure that someone is able to manage the website.</p>
<b>Education/Support</b>	<p>Be of service to the parent group members. Try to be the members 1st thought of where to turn when they have a question, are looking for info or have concerns. If a family has a life-event (e.g., marriage, baby, etc), find ways if the parent group can offer any support, encouragement.</p> <p>Educate on what the parent group dues are for, as members may question where the dues are used. The board needs to determine if the dues are to be paid up front for all 4 years, or collected annually. Dues support parent group events (e.g., new Appointee brunch scholarships for Appointees, and submission of any financial support to USAFA/military events (e.g. All Academy Military Ball), Senior party, name tages, etc.). In addition, families will need to pay separately for any Cadet Care packages they will send.</p> <p>If finances for membership are an issue, consider financial aid options (e.g., scholarship of a family, payment plan).</p>
<b>Communication</b>	<p>When a member has an issue or is looking for information, promptly respond. If you are not able to answer the question, be prepared to direct the question</p>

	<p>to the appropriate person. For example, the issue may require involvement of the Parent Liaison.</p> <p>Promptly pass along relevant email from USAFA Parent liaisons or any updates to the members so they can rely on UPALAC for current information (filtering out any information that is meant only for the Parent Group President/Board).</p> <p>Consider sending out a periodic newsletter to current/past members.</p>
<b>Parent involvement</b>	<p>Encourage new families to join the committees for the Parent Group, such as by creating non-board positions which will offload some of the responsibilities from the current board. This is a great way to recruit Doolie parents to help out the parent group!</p> <p>USAFA events (such as state nights, spirit committees) or the all-Academy ball, for example.</p> <p>Solicit feedback periodically from members to determine if the group is meeting their needs, if they have any ideas for events, to inquire if they can host events at their homes or venues they have access to, etc.</p> <p>If there is a member family who has not attended events in awhile, reach out to the family and offer any support as needed.</p>
<b>USAFA PR</b>	<p>Be a staple in the community. Liaise with the local congressmen/women and senators to let them know of your presence in the area. Offer to be a resource for Academy night events (guest speaker, assisting with ALOs at the table, assist with logistics).</p> <p>As a USAFA parent you represent the USAFA. Be mindful of your actions/activities. We don't want to disparage the USAFA.</p>
<b>Fundraising</b>	<p>While this is not the main goal of the group, many groups choose to conduct fundraising activities which allows for more support of the Cadets and their families. Additional funds may be used to send extra gifts to Cadets (e.g. morale packages, squadron treats).</p>

Please forward any ideas on Best Practices to:

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