



- [MEMBERS](#)
- [ABOUT US](#)
- [CAMPAIGNS](#)
- [CONTACT US](#)
- [DONATE](#)
- [FIND A GROUP](#)
- [NEWS / EVENTS](#)
- [RESOURCES](#)
- [Resource Center](#)
- [Project Database](#)
- [Discussion Boards](#)
- [Activity Guides](#)
- [Photo Gallery](#)
- [STORE](#)

Resource Center

[print](#) [close](#)

Back-to-School Time with Roots & Shoots

01/24/2008



For many, it's back-to-school time and back-to-Roots & Shoots time too. Back to doing projects, back to submitting [Project Reports](#), back to making the world a better place!

Are you ready to take action? Take a look at the tips below from Roots & Shoots staff members and group leaders to get your Roots & Shoots school year off to a good start.

If you're not a member, become one.

You've been meaning to start a Roots & Shoots group—now's the perfect time! [Sign up a group](#) today to bring Roots & Shoots to your school community. Visit the "[Educators](#)" section of our website to get a handle on what Roots & Shoots can do for your school. Or, if you're a young person looking to start Roots & Shoots at your school, check out the "[Youth & Teens](#)" section.

Some teachers and other staff members don't understand Roots & Shoots right away. Take the time at the beginning of the year to put some information about Roots & Shoots in their school mailboxes.

Leah Crocker, Group Leader
Central Intermediate School
Wadsworth, Ohio

Get kids excited.

Roots & Shoots is about [empowering young people](#) to take action for issues they care about. It's not about forcing kids to do boring projects that they have no interest in. Get your kids excited about what they're doing by engaging them in the planning, helping them understand their own impact and sharing your own excitement. Enthusiasm is contagious!

At the beginning of the year, I read a book chapter or article about Dr. Jane Goodall to the kids to get them excited about Roots & Shoots and getting things done for the planet.

Janet Sturtevant
Glenshire Elementary School
Truckee, California

Create your login.

Maybe you deleted the email with your Roots & Shoots website login information. Maybe you forgot your password. Whatever the case, if you're a registered member and you're not logging in, you're not taking full advantage of all the benefits of your Roots & Shoots membership—including the interactive [Project Database](#), helpful [Resource Center](#) and lively [Discussion Boards](#). [Create a login](#) now!

Get all of your group members' email addresses right from the get-go. Send around a sign-in sheet at the first meeting and encourage them to use all the [website benefits](#). Then, go to the website and invite them as group members.

Leah Crocker, Group Leader
Central Intermediate School
Wadsworth, Ohio

Gather group members.

Having an informal first meeting can help your group members get to know one another and re-focus after a summer off. If your group works better with structure, you can create an agenda and take [meeting minutes](#). Turn to the "Group Meetings" chapter of the [Roots & Shoots Handbook](#) for information about first meetings.

Be organized at meetings. Have structure but allow for innovation with group members. Engage members to make them feel like part of the team. Try to find a balance between creativity and productivity. Have pizza!

David Chase, [Youth Leadership Fellow](#) and Former Group Leader

Find project ideas.

Is your brain fried from too much beach time? Ease back into Roots & Shoots action by browsing through "[Roots & Shoots Project Ideas and Internet Resources](#)." Energize your group members (and yourself) by doing a search in the [Project Database](#) to see what other Roots & Shoots groups have done. Take a look at our [campaigns section](#) for specific issues for which to take action.

Look at the global opportunities but don't forget your own backyard. There are a lot of organizations that already do community service projects that you might be able to partner with.

Julene Reed, Group Leader
St. George's Independent School
Collierville, Tennessee

Talk to administrators.

You're probably well aware that things happen more quickly when administrators are on board with your plan. Schedule a meeting, give a presentation or have a casual chat. Make sure the people in charge know how much you care and [what good can come](#) of starting a Roots & Shoots group. If you're a student, find an advisor (usually a teacher or other adult staff member) to help you figure out the system.

Invite administrators—as well as teachers, community members and the press—to your projects and events. Be connected and make yourself visible.

Mike Weddle, Group Leader
Jane Goodall Environmental Magnet School
Salem, Oregon

Plan some lessons.

If you're working with Roots & Shoots in a classroom, there are a variety of age-appropriate [Activity Guides](#) available for purchase. Working with upper elementary students? Download "[EcoTeam](#)" from the Roots & Shoots [Resource Center](#).

Try to communicate to administrators—who may be concerned about test scores—that global teaching leads to deeper thinking, which ultimately leads to better test scores.

Charlie Graham, Group Leader
Forest Grove Community School and Tom McCall Upper Elementary School
Forest Grove, Oregon

Create a calendar.

You've got a ton of ideas, and so do your group members. How are you going to accomplish it all in just one year? A calendar might help. Mark down your group meetings, project deadlines and goal targets. Be sure to pencil in Roots & Shoots [Day of Peace](#) on September 23! Refer to the Roots & Shoots [Events Calendar](#) to make sure you're not missing out on any upcoming events.

Try to assess how much you can realistically do in a year. You don't have to save the world all in one day.

David Chase, [Youth Leadership Fellow](#) and Former Group Leader
Sturgis Charter Public School
Hyannis, Massachusetts

Still have questions? Post them on the ["Schools" Discussion Board](#).