



Establishing a ThinkFirst Chapter (US)

The ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation (ThinkFirst Foundation) has chapters throughout the United States and internationally, providing ThinkFirst educational programs to schools and community groups. ThinkFirst chapters are based in medical centers, medical schools, physician practices, and other health organizations, such as Brain or Spinal Cord Injury Associations. Current programs include ThinkFirst For Kids, ThinkFirst For Youth, ThinkFirst For Teens, ThinkFirst About Concussion, ThinkFirst to Prevent Falls and ThinkFirst For Your Baby.

Each chapter is required to have a licensed physician to serve as the chapter Medical Director. The Medical Director is responsible for advocating for the chapter and the importance of the educational programs to garner funding and support for the chapter from your medical center and other sources. It is also the Medical Director's role to promote ThinkFirst and injury prevention in general to the community.

The actual day-to-day operations of the chapter and administration of the programs are generally conducted by a nurse, physical therapist, occupational therapist, health educator, or other qualified employee designated as the chapter director. Depending on the program's goals, this can be a part-time coordinator position with a limited number of school and community events each year, or a full-time position, conducting a larger number of programs to better cover a community, county or region.

The cost of operating a chapter varies, depending on chapter activity. Major expenses include the salary of the injury prevention coordinator (referred to by ThinkFirst as the chapter director), VIP speaker fees, initial equipment investment (e.g., spine and skull models) and annual membership dues (\$400). Ideally the sponsoring medical center provides for salary, office needs, program materials and fees. Otherwise, funding will need to be secured through other means, such as grants, physician support, donations or fundraising events.

The following steps are suggested in establishing a chapter:

1. Learn about chapters that may already be underway locally by going to Chapters/Chapters-US on our website, www.thinkfirst.org. Large cities may have multiple chapters to reach all schools.
2. If no local chapter is available, or if you are in a populated area that can support multiple chapters, enlist local support for establishing a chapter.
3. Identify a person to serve as chapter director. Many hospitals employ an injury prevention coordinator in their trauma or community education departments. ThinkFirst programs are an excellent compliment to other programs they may be implementing, and fill program gaps and community needs.
4. Submit the ThinkFirst Chapter Application, resumes/CV's, and the \$1,500.00 application fee to the ThinkFirst Foundation. Fee includes training, program materials and use of the ThinkFirst name and programs. ThinkFirst For Your Baby requires each educator to attend an additional 3-hour training for programs.
5. Schedule training with the ThinkFirst Foundation with a regional ThinkFirst trainer, online with the ThinkFirst Foundation, or at a ThinkFirst Conference. Training may be available at your site, pending trainer availability; travel expenses are the responsibility of the chapter. Chapter training is a one-day course that includes instruction on chapter development, program implementation, evaluation and more, presented by a qualified trainer.

Chapter resources and program materials will be provided after training. A user name and password will be provided for most materials, including presentation videos, PowerPoints, scripts, handouts and evaluation tools.

For further information, or to start a chapter, please contact chapter development manager Amanda Rist at 630-961-1400 or amandarist@thinkfirst.org