

HOW TO GET STARTED

Most of the Point Persons have a specific school that you have chosen to adopt. Others may not have a particular school in mind. You may be wondering about how to decide upon a school. Consider the following questions:

Step 1 *Select a school*

- What is a neighborhood school in your community?
- Where do you have connections and a personal interest?
- Contact CAMS to find out which schools are not covered.

Step 2 *Find out the data and information about the school district and specific school.*

Where can you find this information?

- Goggle the name of the school district to locate the high schools within that district (i.e. Pasadena Unified School District, or Torrance Unified).
- You can also check the telephone book; school districts are listed with the high school contact information.
- If you are in the greater Los Angeles area contact CAMS www.militaryfreeschools.org 626-799-9118, ashley@militaryfreeschools and we will connect you with others at your school or in the geographical region.

For those of you in other states and cities, contact UFPJ or NNOMY to find out about the counter recruitment groups that may be able to assist you.

HINT: We recommend that you work together with at least one other person.

Anyone can help in the schools, and everyone in the school community brings their own talents and unique perspective which adds to this work. Working with others minimizes the likelihood of being personally attacked, and also helps to have another voice and perspective for feedback.

Step 3 *Fill out the database sheet*

- We will identify supporters to work with you. Contact these persons and find out what they are can contribute to this project.
- Find out from your contacts other school staff, parents, student groups who are sympathetic to this cause. Bring up the subject in a non controversial manner and listen to how others respond.
- The School Bulletin or high school newspaper usually lists school clubs. And teachers and school staff put out announcements which may indicate a particular view or concern.

If you are new to the school it might take several weeks before you are able to track down the information. **HINT use good people skills (see section on People Skills), and do not push questions which may be controversial or touchy (such as JROTC, or ASVAB). It may be more valuable to move slowly now in order to establish working relationships, especially if you do not know the staff prior to this activity.**

Item 4- Organizations/ Community Agencies and Churches in the school community

- Tap into these resources surrounding the school. Parents, students, teachers and community members often have information regarding organizations or churches sympathetic to this cause.
- Post Opt Out/ASVAB information or meeting notices around laundromats, local stores and small businesses.
- High schools have healthy start programs and collaboration with community agencies and businesses. Talk to the coordinator about resources available in the community.

Item 5- Military literature is usually displayed in the career center. But check the following for other signs of military propaganda:

- school library (sometimes there are bookmarks with military images)
- Hall way displays (sometimes the first thing you will see when you enter a school is “BE ALL YOU CAN BE, JOIN THE ARMY).
- Office (look on the counters and the walls). I once saw a dedication of a PRIMARY CENTER with the military logo and pictures of the color guard, next to the district logo.

There was a special education classroom at a middle school in Central L.A. that was modeled after boot camp or a recruitment station with camouflage, netting and guns.

Item 6- Career Office or Awareness. Each school is different regarding career information and resources provided.

- Find out who is responsible for coordinating career fair visits.
- Which careers, businesses or branches of the military are represented?
- How is this determined?

Item 7- Opt Out Info: Section 9528 No Child Left Behind Compliance

- Besides the district responsibilities of giving the information and providing a mechanism to Opt Out, how did the school support or hinder this process.
- Did they clarify by school bulletin, PA announcement, school flyers, where to turn in the Opt Out forms.
- Was there anyone in charge of collecting the forms or informing students?

Item 8- ASVAB Test

- When you determine who oversees the ASVAB (Career Guidance/Work Study/Counselors), find out whether this test is given at the school, when it was given, and where.
- Also informally ask students and faculty about it (for consistency of information).
- Look for any posters or announcements of the test and stick on “It’s Voluntary, You Decide” CAMS sticker. (We’ve seen a poster which does not indicate it’s a military test)
- Find out for history of the test at this school (i.e. how many years has it be given?)
- What was communicated or given to parents prior to the exam.

Item 9- Direct Military Recruiting

- There is often someone who coordinates and communicates with military recruiters such as the Career Advisor or Work Study Staff with the Principal being the decision maker (unless a school policy has been adopted by a Leadership Council such as Roosevelt HS). Find out the people involved with the military recruiting.
- Ask students, teachers, and school staff specific questions about when they have seen military recruiters, how they have been approached and what they have said. Pass out the surveys to get documentation of recruiter contact.
- Look for military recruiters at lunch, nutrition, during school hours or after school.
- The teacher's bulletin will often state when they are on campus (see Garfield Bulletin sample).
- Find out if military hardware such as humvees, boats or Army vans are brought on campus. Inquire if they have received district approval to be brought there.

Item 10- School Clubs and School Learning Communities

Involving students and school clubs is vital in demilitarizing schools and presenting alternatives. School Club meetings are announced in the school bulletin with the staff sponsor listed.

- Find out from students and teachers about the clubs responsive to this issue.
- Find out if there are Small Learning Communities with a focus on social justice and meet the staff.

Item 11- School Newspapers

Student newspapers are a great source of information, with opportunities for students to submit editorials or information about the issues.

- Find out who is the newspaper staff advisor and look at the content of the newspapers frequently.
- Find out where the newspapers are distributed (office, counseling office).
- Are there students who might be interested in writing about military recruitment?

Item 12 JROTC

JROTC might be one of the most difficult to collect data. JROTC instructors or school staff may be threatened by any questions asked, so you may need to be discrete.

- Find out from sympathetic teachers or counselors about the JROTC program, and what they have heard
- Look in the school bulletin for how the JROTC "penetrates the k-12 market." For example, note their presence at Back to School nights, sports activities, faculty meetings.
- How would you describe their involvement in the school community?