



Islands, members need to feel that they're contributing and making a difference, and that meetings and programs meet their interests.

Consider changing things up: perhaps meet at a member's house instead of your regular venue every now and again; offer a corporate membership to a local business; or relax your attendance rules. Check out [rotary.org/flexibility](http://rotary.org/flexibility) for ideas.

### Have a plan and stick to it

Ramsay helps plot out a course of action and, when he returns, he finds the restaurants that haven't stuck to the plan are the ones that continue to struggle.

After taking an objective look at where your club is, you need to create a vision for your club. What do you want it to be like in the immediate future and in three to five years' time? What achievable and measurable steps can you take to address the toughest challenges and capitalise on the biggest opportunities?

Develop your club's strategic plan and build a membership plan that aligns with it. Check in regularly on your goals. Use the *Strengthening Your Membership* booklet to help.

### Team effort

Just like a successful restaurant, a vibrant club is a team effort.

Appoint a membership chair and committee to help with devising a plan to attract and engage members, as well as keeping you on track.

During club meetings, talk to members about the steps you're taking to strengthen membership and encourage them to get involved.

Report your membership goals in Rotary Club Central so all members can view them and take ownership. •

# Playmeet for Purpose

Acknowledging that the demands of work, family and service commitments can be one of the greatest barriers to people in their 30s and 40s getting involved in Rotary, one mum-to-be devised a playful plan to help attract young families into the Rotary fold.



**ABOVE:** Kate McKenzie, with sons Michael and Matthew, at E-WA Rotary's swim fundraiser to support its Love of Reading project.

**KATE** McKenzie, of the Rotary e-Club of Western Australia, came up with the idea of "Playmeet for Purpose" while visiting the Rotaract Pre-Convention in Sydney.

"At the time, I didn't have children," Kate explained. "In fact, the day after the convention finished, I had an operation to check for endometriosis before starting our fourth round of IVF."

Kate did have hope, however, and knew that if she was lucky enough to have children, she wanted Rotary to be part of their lives.

"Looking around the room of Rotaractors, I felt that the biggest interruption to their transition to Rotary wouldn't be whether or not the clubs near them would adapt some of their traditions, it would be the demands of juggling careers and parenthood." >>



 ABOVE: Kate with son Michael at one of E-WA Rotary's family friendly get-togethers.

**“Kate’s goal is to create a positive perception of Rotary as a place where young children are welcomed with open arms.”**

Each time, free play is encouraged, as well as more serious conversation for the grown-ups. Participants are also invited to make a gold coin donation to The Rotary Foundation.

The group stepped its August event up a notch by hosting the session at the AH Bracks Library and using craft and stories as a springboard for discussion on The Rotary Foundation’s six *Areas of Focus*.

“Kids used Lego to build toilet blocks for children in India (Water and Sanitation); constructed colourful models of viruses and bacteria (Disease Prevention); enjoyed hearing great stories read aloud (Basic Education and Literacy); imagined their own Rotary park (Community Development); used toy dolls to discuss care for mothers and babies (Maternal and Child Health); and made paper cranes (Peace and Conflict Resolution).”

Kate’s goal is to create a positive perception of Rotary as a place where young children are welcomed with open arms.

“I’m really grateful that my club is so inclusive; even the members who don’t have young children have been really supportive of my crazy ideas. Together, we are showing busy parents that they can make volunteering part of their lives and bring their families on that journey with them.” •

<< This is true for both men and women. Gone are the days when young men were happy to leave the house at 7am and return at 8pm or later – they are now hands-on parents. And while baby boomers had children in their 20s, making their kids older when their parents were entering Rotary, young people today often have babies in their 30s and 40s. Then Rotary clubs wonder why they are missing from our ranks!

“I told the room that day I wanted to be part of a Rotary club that could meet in a playground,” Kate said.

Fast forward a few years and, thanks to the wonders of medical science, Kate is a mum to not one but two beautiful boys. When she returned home to Perth three years ago, she decided to join the Rotary e-Club of Western Australia to give her the maximum flexibility to stay involved and have time with her kids.

“I can join meetings on Zoom while I am putting my little one to sleep, and our weekend lunchtime social catch-ups are always kid friendly. I have planted river reeds with my older boy and volunteered at several events with baby strapped on.”

Kate also stayed true to her promise of holding a Rotary meeting in a playground.

“Perth has so many amazing parks and, so far, we have met at the Bibra Lake playground and the Heathcote playground.”

## **ROTARY PLAYMEET FOR PURPOSE**

*Check the E-WA Rotary Facebook page for past examples, or contact Kate to find out how to plan your own Rotary Playmeet for Purpose.*

 [facebook.com/events/2355380031454943](https://facebook.com/events/2355380031454943)

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