

Event In A Box Template: “Family BBQ”

Dear Young Alumni Coordinator:

This packet contains all of the information that you need to host a “Family BBQ” event. This is a starting point for you to plan and implement this program. Please feel free to improve upon these ideas and customize the program for your Club.

The items contained in the packet include:

1. Event Overview
2. Advanced Planning
3. Aggie BBQ Example
 - a. Suggested Agenda
 - b. Suggested text for communication to be distributed to your constituents

Please note that the Aggie Family BBQ is an event meant to *bring together* the Aggie Community. When the Aggie Family BBQ was hosted by the San Antonio A&M Club for the first time, success of the event was attributed to an effort made to make it feel as community friendly and authentic as possible; similar to a backyard BBQ you would host in your own home with your close friends and family in attendance. Establishing a sense of *community* at your Aggie Family BBQ by starting modestly with the intent to host an interactive and welcoming event will be crucial in establishing a tradition that many Former Students will look forward to annually.

This template was authored to be an all-encompassing document that may discuss considerations that are not necessary for your event. Please mold this template to your event and refer to the Event Effort Matrix should you need any guidance or tips regarding necessities for your Aggie Family BBQ.

Should you have any questions about the contents of this packet, please do not hesitate to contact your Regional Representative from the Young Alumni Advisory Council or Katy Lee '08 at The Association of Former Students.

Good luck with your event and Gig 'em!

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Event Overview

Summary:

- The Aggie Family BBQ is a social event geared towards bringing together Former Students and their families (*non-Aggie friends and family members will also be welcomed to attend!).

Objective/Goals/Purpose of Event:

- Host a well-attended, entertaining, fun, social event involving a meal that will bring the largest amount of Former Students in the area and their families out to attend.
- Strengthen ties between the Former Student base, local A&M Club, and The Association of Former Students.
- Create a sense of community through the event by connecting people to each other.
- If successful, this event can become a yearly tradition in which all Former Students in the area are aware of and can attend. This will increase participation from a formerly “unreached” portion of the Former Student community to a broader audience of Former Students.
- Set expectations low for the first event and over time build upon the success of the BBQ as it grows in size and popularity in the community.

Planning For the Event:

- As this is most likely an outdoor event, we suggest that you hold the Family BBQ during the Spring or Fall, when temperatures are most ideal. Note that if the weather or venue do not permit, the event can also be held indoors as well.
- Planning for the event should begin several months prior to the BBQ by establishing the location of the event and beginning to solicit food and drink donations from local area restaurants, grocery stores, breweries, and beer distributors.
- If acquiring food donations is not possible, you can solicit sponsors from your club to cover the cost for the food.
- If you cannot obtain donations for the food or sponsors, then the club will need to cover the cost of the food or have it built into the price of the tickets for the event.
- Tickets should go on sale approximately 6 weeks prior to the event. You need to have the food donations/ sponsors nailed down by then to be able to price your tickets properly.
- If you plan to serve alcohol, be sure to abide by all local, regional and national laws, as well as The Association of Former Students Constituent Network Bylaws.

Planning Committee:

- There should be at least one event chair that is selected by the local A&M club to organize the details leading up to the event and be there to execute the event on the day it occurs.
- Volunteers are crucial to the success of the event. They will be your manpower for cooking the food, serving the food, taking tickets, checking people in and telling them where to go, and providing general information and assistance during the event.
- Do NOT turn away anyone who wants to help volunteer as they are going to be the support staff that you need and will be essential in helping spread the word to the community about the event.
- The volunteers are your largest resource to reaching people in the community and spreading the word of the event. If they are excited about it, then they’ll get other people excited about it!

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- To encourage the “family” aspect of the event, promote individual involvement with things like having side items and desserts donated by the attendees. For example, the Aggie Moms can each bring a side dish (i.e. potato salad, fruit salad, baked beans, creamed corn, etc.) and each of the Aggie wives brings a dessert. Any other Aggie affiliated group, or any individual for that matter, should feel welcomed to contribute something to the Aggie Family BBQ. Allowing this type of contribution will help people feel connected to the event and evoke a sense of community.

Marketing/ Promotions:

- Flyers posted at local churches, high schools, grocery stores, newspaper, etc.
- Social Media – Facebook, Twitter, and even LinkedIn
 - Blasts via the local A&M club, The Association, and YAAC
 - Have the event chair post about the event as an individual and encourage all volunteers, club members, and board members to post/ share about the event. This will encourage individual attendance and will entice someone that may not be associated with the local A&M club to feel included because they learned about the event from someone in their network.
- Email blast to all local A&M club members – get help from The Association if your club does not have its own email database is not up and running
- At all club events leading up to the day of the Family BBQ, announce and promote the event.
- Placement in the A&M Newsletter and any local publications
- Encourage ticket purchase ahead of time
 - “Early bird” special for purchasing before __/__/__ date
 - Discount ticket prices for local A&M club members, and/or discount ticket prices for purchasing NEW membership to local A&M club in conjunction with ticket

Things to Stay Away From or Be Aware of:

- If soliciting groups (e.g. the Aggie Moms Club or any other organization) to help participate in helping with tasks or provide certain items for the Family BBQ be careful that no one group assimilates your event and makes it their own. You want to ensure that event maintains its *community* and *family* appeal and does not take on a separate direction due to certain group’s participation.
- Be considerate when planning your event not to exclude any portion of your target demographic, which are the young alumni.
- When distributing alcohol, take precautions to ensure that everyone drinking is of age and that no one is being over-served. The best solution is to designate a volunteer or hire a peace officer to oversee this task.

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Advance Planning

Sponsors/Sponsorships (secure at least 9-12 months in advance):

- Sponsorship can come through various different avenues – food donations, beverage donations, alcohol/ beer donations, serving ware donations, etc.
- Sponsors can be recognized at the event – have a banner (given to you by the sponsor to use) at the event; sponsors can be recognized through email blasts; sponsors can have their name listed on flyers and other promotional material; and many other ways.

Location/Venue (secure at least 9-12 months in advance):

- To keep costs low try to look for spaces that are free to use otherwise the Club will have to cover the cost of the rental or the cost will have to be built into the price of the tickets.
- Ideal Venues
 - Parks
 - Pavillions
 - Event Halls
 - Estate

Food (secure at least 6-9 months in advance):

- Consider a menu usually conducive to large, atmospheres such as festivals:
 - BBQ
 - Crawfish Boil
 - Fish Fry
 - Pot Luck (smaller A&M Clubs)

Entertainment (secure at least 6-12 months in advance):

- Refer to the Event Effort Matrix to determine suggested type of entertainment

Volunteers (secure at least 3-6 months in advance):

- Is this event going to require the help of volunteers?
- If so, what will they be doing?
- Take charge of your volunteers, but make sure to treat them as colleagues to instill in them a sense of ownership of the event. The more involved they feel the better quality work they will contribute to the event.

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Aggie BBQ Example

Suggested Agenda

----- A&M Club Family BBQ	
4:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	
Olympic Park	
4:30 p.m.	Event is open for guests to start arriving
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Food Service Line Opens
5:30	Welcome by ----- A&M Club President & Announcements
6:30 p.m.	Best Side Dish & Dessert Winners Announced
6:30 p.m. – 8:00p.m.	Live Music Begins; Games are available to play
8:00 p.m.	Closing Event Remarks: President

Suggested text for communication to be distributed to your constituents

<FROM: _____@AggieNetwork.com>

<SUBJECT: Aggie Family BBQ>

Calling all Aggies!

On _____, the _____ A&M Club will be hosting the Annual Family BBQ from 5-8p.m. This is a social event aimed at bringing together the Aggie Community for a night of food and camaraderie. Side dishes will be provided by _____ (individuals, or group such as the Aggie Moms Club).

Food and drink sponsors (if applicable) for this event are _____.

Tickets go on sale _____. Please contact _____, Event Coordinator for the _____ A&M Club at _____@aggienetwork.com for further details.

In the Aggie Spirit!

Name Class Year

Young Alumni Coordinator
(A&M Club Name)
Contact Information