



Sistering FAQ's

1) How soon should you start thinking about Sistering?

Almost as soon as you start the chapter! You should always have it in the back of your mind as your chapter grows. Talk about sistering with your members long before the need arises so no one will be surprised when the time comes! If you've been thinking AND talking about sistering, when your chapter gets large enough, your members WILL be ready to do it! As soon as your chapter reaches 50-60 members, it's time to implement your plan.

2) How do you go about sistering the club?

There are several ways to sister the chapter! First, get a map and use stickpins or dots to show where each member lives. Sometimes this will make it very obvious where you can make an easy division.

Some ways that chapters have sistered successfully include:

- * Dividing using a main street
- * Dividing using ZIP codes
- * Dividing using subdivisions
- * Dividing by elementary or high school boundaries

3) How do you get your chapter to vote for a sistering?

You don't! This is not an issue that the membership votes on. This is a decision that is made as you work with International. Any board or individuals who are willing to start the new chapter can work with International to start new chapters in needed areas. You can get ideas from your membership on the ways to make the sistering work better, but the membership cannot stop a sistering from happening if there is a willing founder and a needy area.

4) How many people do we have to have to get a new chapter going?

Most MOMS Club chapters in new areas are started with just one mom! For most sisterings, several members of an existing chapter will help start the new one. If you have several moms who are ready to start in a new area, that's great, but you can start a new chapter with just one founding mother!

5) What about playgroups?

If an existing playgroup crosses the new group boundaries, each mother in the playgroup would choose her chapter based on her needs. Most mothers will choose to go with the chapter that will be covering

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the area where they live. Some mothers may choose to go with the chapter that covers an area outside of where they live. Either situation is alright for moms who are already in the original chapter when it sisters. Future members will automatically join the chapter in the area where they live. Just as most chapters form new playgroups each year as children grow older or when a playgroup becomes too large, when a chapter sisters, they'll form new playgroups in the different chapters' areas to accommodate all the mothers. This is good! It makes room for new members to join in the fun and each new sister chapter will have a core of members who already know each other from the original chapter.

If you anticipate that your chapter will be sistering in the next year, a good idea is to form this year's playgroups according to where the moms live. In other words, if you think you'll probably be sistering into two chapters next year, form two playgroups now for the members in each area. Then when your chapter actually sisters, there won't be any changes needed for the playgroups. Each one's members will naturally prefer to stay with the sister chapter for their area.

6) How do we make moms go to their local chapters?

You don't have to "make" the moms go to any particular chapter. Every current member has the right to choose her chapter. Members of the original chapter before it sisters can choose which chapter they wish to belong to. If a member chooses to stay with a chapter that is outside her "home" area, that's alright, but she needs to understand that all future members will be coming from that other area, farther away from her home. To meet moms in her home area, she'll want to join the chapter that covers where she actually lives. You'll be surprised how few moms ask to be in the other chapter. Most moms are very happy to be in a more localized group.

7) What if the members don't want to do this?

It's natural for change to be a little scary for some people, but your members will follow your lead -- if you show them by your attitude and behavior that this is a good thing for them and their chapter, they will be reassured and look forward to the excitement of starting a new chapter.

Work with your Coordinator for a smooth transition, answer all member questions calmly, factually and with confidence, and your chapter will have a smooth sistering. Remember, your goal is to help them see that sistering makes successful chapters even more successful. They aren't "losing" anything -- they're only gaining! Sistering takes the burden off overly-large chapters and encourages new moms to join. Sistering WORKS! Be positive and present it as a positive thing to your members, and they will see that.

Some chapters that sistered just last year are sistering again now, because they've seen how much it helped their chapter and members. Large chapters that don't sister often have a lot of problems in the long-run: they get lethargic, their members feel unimportant, members and the board are overwhelmed when they try to plan even the simplest activities and meetings, participation of old members drops and the chapter's growth slows (or even reverses). Sistering alleviates those problems and makes your chapter fun again for both the members and the officers.

*If you have any questions about sistering,
contact the MOMS Club volunteer coordinator
who is helping your chapter!*

