



the



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



# ADVENTURE GUIDES Participant's Manual

Be Adventurous,  
Making Moments Count



**YMCA OF  
METROPOLITAN  
DALLAS**

214-880-YMCA-(9622)  
[www.ymcdallas.org](http://www.ymcdallas.org)

**YMCA Mission:** To put Christian values into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

# PURPOSE

Y Adventure Guides leads a parent and a child on a journey of discovery and uninterrupted time together as members of a larger group, building lifelong memories and bonds. Through activities such as monthly group meetings, weekend camping trips, games, ceremonies and family adventures, parent and child will create memories that neither will ever forget.

# ADVENTURE GUIDES HISTORY

The father and son Y-Indian Guide program was developed in 1926 to support the father's vital family role as teacher, counselor, and friend to his son. After World War II, the success of the father/son program nurtured the development of other parent-child programs.

For 89 years, the program was the cornerstone for family programs in YMCAs across the country. However, it is a different world today. The YMCA's commitment to being a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible organization, and an evolving cultural sensitivity of Native American history prompted YMCAs across the country to re-evaluate their parent/child programs.

One of the strengths of YMCAs is that they have adapted and responded to societal

changes in order to remain relevant to their communities. From late 2000 to mid-2003 YMCA staff and volunteers from across the country met on several occasions to craft a parent/child program that had a broader appeal. In the summer and fall of 2003, YMCA Adventure Guides was launched in YMCA communities everywhere.

# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Preschool Program (3 & 4 year olds):

This program also builds relationships between parent and child (son or daughter.) Parent/child pairs are invited to all the program events including camp-outs. This is a great way to get started in the Adventure Guides program.

Adventure Guides - Explorers and Princesses (K-3rd grades):

Parent and child participate together in this relationship-building program. Small groups meet one to two times per month and have one big program event each month.

Trail Blazers (4th grade and older):

For those parent/child pairs that desire to continue on the journey, Trail Blazers explore the great outdoors with camping, hiking, canoeing trips, etc.

**\*Please Note that age ranges served varies by Branch. Please contact your local YMCA for more details.**

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Adventure Guides is a program built entirely to foster the relationship between a parent and child. Every activity or event is designed to make memories that will last a lifetime and ensure a lasting bond between parent and child. This requirement of 1v1 interaction at all times is what sets the Adventure Guides program apart from other similar youth programs.

Once enrolled in the program everyone is assigned in to a small group of parents and kids. These small groups are made up of parent/child pairs within the same community and are of similar age. Each group is led by a parent or guardian of a child who is in the group. Within these small groups the YMCA encourages monthly participation in meetings that are planned and implemented by the group themselves. These events can include crafts in the home, outings to local parks, swim parties, attending local sporting events etc. While the YMCA does not plan or host any of the small group monthly meetings it is a great resource for ideas if a group is in need.

Each of these small groups are part of the larger program and when gathered together make up the Adventure Guides Nation. The YMCA aims to sponsor one Nation

Event per month that the small groups are encouraged to participate in. These events include Campouts, Derby Day, Father Daughter Dances, Rocket Launches, etc. A group of current participants acting in a volunteer leadership role will work with the YMCA staff to plan and execute all Nation Events. Events can vary depending on which Nation you are a member of and the only requirement is that parent and child are always participating together.

## AIMS

- To be clean in body and pure in heart.
- To be friends forever with my parent/son/daughter.
- To love the sacred circle of my family.
- To listen while others speak.
- To love my neighbor as myself.
- To respect the traditions and beliefs of all people.
- To seek and preserve the beauty of Our Creator's work in forest, field, and stream.



## **Program leadership**

The program is run by YMCA staff members and program volunteers. Volunteers are recruited or elected by group members and assume a variety of offices and responsibilities for different roles.

Small groups are led by a parent/participant who is active in the small group.

# **CAMPOUTS**

## **General Overview**

Your group may participate in campouts throughout the year at various times. Campouts are the highlight of the Adventure Guides program. Most campouts are held at campsites within a couple of hours of the metroplex. Each campsite provides sleeping quarters and dining facilities if you choose not to cook your own meals. Most campouts start on Friday evening and end on Sunday morning.

## **Registration**

Once camp reaches its occupancy limit, registration will close for that campout. Campouts are conducted regardless of weather conditions unless determined by YMCA staff and local authorities there is a health or safety concern.

## **Payment/Refund Policy**

All campouts and special events must be paid in full by the deadline. Late registration may incur a late fee per pair. No refunds will be issued once camp event numbers are provided to the host camp venue.

## **Campout Duties**

Campouts can only function like a well-oiled machine if everyone pitches into taking on a campout duty. Duties might include cleaning the mess hall after a meal or leading chapel on Sunday morning. Each duty is important to the overall flow of our campout. Your group will sign up for a duty at the Base Camp (leader meeting) meeting preceding the campout. If your group is not represented at the Base Camp meeting, you will be assigned a duty.

# **PROGRAM SAFETY**

Many of the adventures found within the Adventure Guides program have inherent risks and parents have accepted these risks with the understanding and appreciation that children and adults alike benefit from age-appropriate events and activities that challenge their limits by heightening awareness and building confidence and discipline.

There is a place in Adventure Guides for age-appropriate events that push youth

beyond their normal comfort level and stretch their abilities. This is appropriate when risks are identified and mitigated but is not prudent if the risks have not been considered or are ignored. The Adventure Guides program is designed with parent leadership and supervision in mind. Parents are the navigator to their child and should exercise good judgment at all times when leading their child through program activities.

To ensure the safety and success of the Adventure Guides program, we must work together to:

- Know, understand, and comply with all rules, policies, and procedures.
- Model safe behaviors when participating in Adventure Guides events and activities.
- Encourage staff, volunteer leaders, and youth members to share in the management of safety.
- Promote, provide, and, when appropriate, require health and safety training.
- Follow all guidelines related to archery and riflery and fire.
- You are responsible for the supervision of your child at all times.

## **Alcohol, Tobacco and Illegal Drug Policy-ZERO TOLERANCE**

In keeping with mission and spirit of the YMCA and for the safety and security of all Adventure Guides participants, the possession or consumption of alcohol, tobacco or any illegal or illicit drug is prohibited when participating in any YMCA Adventure Guides meeting, event or activity. Let YMCA events be the time you leave alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs at home. If we confirm the presence of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs you will be asked to leave the event. This may also include suspension or removal from the program.



## Child Supervision

The goal of the Adventure Guides program is for parents and children to be together in an engaged manner; the importance of parental supervision cannot be stressed enough both for the safety of your child as well as the quality of your program experience.

During all Adventure Guides activities parents are expected to directly supervise their own child. Do not allow children to wander away from you and the group or self-explore. Parental supervision is imperative to protect children from unsafe activities, other people or simply getting lost. Parent should participate with child in activities. Do not send one or two dads with the rest of the children to an activity.

## Aquatic Safety

- Swim only in designated areas during designated times. If lifeguards are not available – NO Swimming.
- Swimming is only allowed when a certified lifeguard is present in a designated swim area only.
- Lifejackets must be worn by children and adults for all boating activities.

Every parent signs a Code of Conduct for themselves and their child(ren) when they register for the Adventure Guide program. The Circle Leader helps ensure that all participants have the best experience possible by making sure the Code of Conduct is followed.

