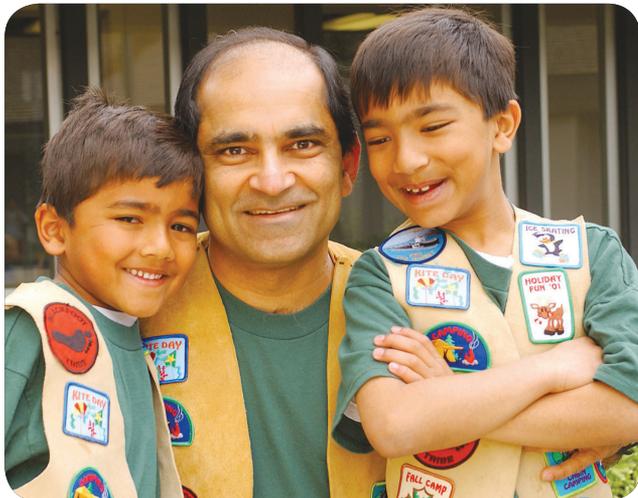




ADVENTURE GUIDES
New Leader's
Manual
Guiding Memories



**YMCA OF
METROPOLITAN
DALLAS**

214-880-YMCA-(9622)
www.ymcadallas.org

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

PURPOSE The purpose of the Adventure Guide Program is to foster understanding and companionship between parent and child.

HISTORY OF THE YMCA GUIDES & PRINCESS PROGRAM

The first Y-Indian Guide Program was developed to support parents' vital role as teachers, counselors, and friends to their children. Harold S. Keltner, St. Louis YMCA Director, initiated the program as an integral part of Association work. In 1926, he organized the first tribe in Richmond Heights, Missouri, with the help of his good friend, Joe Friday, an Ojibway Indian, and William H. Hefelfinger, chief of the first Y-Indian Guide tribe. Inspired by his experiences with Joe Friday, who was his guide on fishing and hunting trips into Canada, Harold Keltner established a program of parent-child experiences that now involves over 200,000 children and adults annually in the YMCA.

For more history of the Y and the Adventure Guides Program, see "Adventure Guides-How we got started".

CHARACTER VALUES

The YMCA has adopted four core values to teach its participants in its programs. The following character values will be taught to the Adventure Guide participants this year:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Caring
- Honesty

MOTTO "Friends Forever"

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.



IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

SETTING UP YOUR CIRCLE

Roster

Your Circle (small group/community you will belong to and lead) needs to have an up to date and accurate roster with emails, phone numbers and addresses available for all your Circle Members. Encouraging communication between the Circle is the most important role of the Navigator (Leader). Your Outfitter (YMCA Staff program director) should provide you with this at the beginning of the year but it is then your responsibility to keep it current.

Circle Name and Member Names

Naming your Circle is a big decision and should be done with the help of all Circle Members. Circles can be named after your school, neighborhood, favorite flower or the coolest TV show on that morning. Just remember that this name is what your Circle will be known as for at least the next four years and in most cases the rest of your life. Examples include: Sparkling Princesses, Mighty Ponies, Starcats, Panther Nation. Each participant will also take on a new name; a name they use in the programs that reflects, honors, or represents an outstanding character trait or strength they have. It creates a sense of program

identity and fun. The name could also reflect a vision of the future; a goal they hope to achieve. For example: Swift Runner, Silent One, Tall Hunter or Graceful Dancer. Remember program names should not mock or copy anyone. Names should be Y appropriate.

Assign Duties and Roles

By assigning all the parents a specific duty it helps keep all Circle members involved and accountable to the group. You are certainly welcome to make up your own position in the Circle or you can use the Program Officer List Below as a Guide. Either way, use the roles as a tool to keep everyone engaged. This also keeps you as the Navigator (small group leader) from doing EVERYTHING!

Program Officers are parents who have been in the program for at least one year. These officers are the leaders of our Basecamp meetings. Parents are encouraged to serve on the Basecamp as a program officer for a minimum of two years.

Program Officers may include but are not limited to:

Federation Navigator: Lead Volunteer Leads the Basecamp meetings and the activities of the entire federation. This

“seasoned” Adventure Guides parent provides organization and program philosophy to the Adventure Guides program.

Assistant Federation Navigator:

Second in command. Provides key leadership and guidance to the Basecamp and becomes the main contender for the top job the following year.

Scout: Helps in planning and leading recruiting of new members and marketing the program

Compass Bearer: Considered the wise man of the program.

Leads the expedition in prayers at base-camp, meetings, and other events.

Elder: Ensures the program is meeting goals and complying with policies and procedures set forth by governing bodies.

Log Keeper: Official scribe

Keeps track of all honor points during the year and is the regulator of the honor points.

Questions about how many points an activity is worth would be directed to the Log Keeper.

Recorder: Web Manager

Maintains information for YMCA Web Page collect and/or take pictures of events. Assists in other duties delegated by the Navigator.

Naturalist: Fire Starter

Works magic to build and start our great bon fire and entertains young and old with words of Wisdom with magical powers.

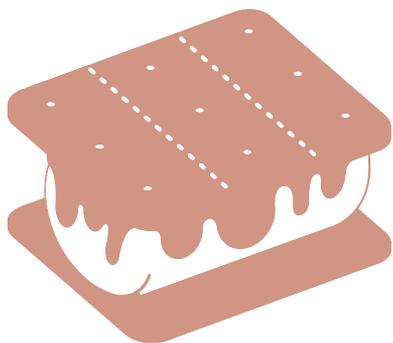
YMCA Outfitter: YMCA Staff Person

Responsible for the administration, planning, and implementation of the program for the YMCA.



FAST & FURIOUS 4 WEEKS!

Now that you have a Circle and participant email addresses the next month is critical to connect to the participants to create a successful Circle. If you don't capture the attention of the parents and the imagination of the kids in 4 weeks, you will lose them for the year. Schedule your first meeting and host it yourself or invite someone in the Circle to host. Deliver invitations with your kid and then double check to make sure everyone will be attending. Make sure at that first meeting everyone leaves knowing where and when the next meeting will be and that everyone has an updated and accurate roster. Kids need to leave with something as well, even if it's just a picture of their new Adventure Guide Circle with their New Adventure Guide name. Make sure the host of the next meeting has something planned.



SUCCESSFUL CIRCLE MEETINGS

One of the basic purposes of the Y parent-child program is to increase the things that a parent and child can enjoy doing together during a time when a child thinks his/her parent is the greatest on earth. Circle meetings are a means to this end. While parents and children participate in meetings together, this rule still applies: "The mind can absorb only what the seat can endure." Circle meetings should be "child centered" and follow these simple rules:

1. Start and end meetings on time. (Follow the outline for Circle meetings)
2. Stay within the time allowed for the opening ritual – don't drag over into activity time.
3. Stay focused on our children. They should do most of the talking. It should be fun for them.
4. PLAN. Plan for the story. Plan for the activity. Plan for the invitations.
5. Use Circle resources. Don't play the same game or do the same craft twice.
6. Keep Circle business at the parent meeting.

SAMPLE CIRCLE MEETING OUTLINE

7:00pm Opening ritual – Three beats on the drum by the host child; Opening song, thought and/or prayer; recite program aims.

7:10pm Member reports – Roll call; Field reports (each child is encouraged to share a report on a parent/child project or trip or activity or nature report or an act of kindness report) Using the Circle “talking stick” or other item that is passed around the Circle to the child report, ensures only the child holding the stick is speaking.

7:30pm Business Update – Cover only essential items of interest to the CHILDREN: upcoming events times and dates. (Other information is covered at parent meetings or parent communications).

7:40pm Leader Lines – Navigator (Circle Leader) guides a discussion, poses questions of character, celebrates rites of passage or tells a story.

7:50pm Activity – craft or game

8:10pm Refreshments – The host pair will share the snack they got for the meeting.

8:25pm Closing Ritual – Circle song, chat, passing of the Circle treasures to the next host family, etc.; recite the closing prayer (see Traditional Closing Prayer).

TRADITIONAL CLOSING PRAYER

And now (finger pointing to the ground), may the Great Spirit (one hand with pointed finger rising in circular motion) of all Great Spirits (now both arms with fingers pointed rise in while drawing circle in the air) be with you (point at other members of circle) now (point straight down) and forever more (action of shooting bow and arrow, kids really like making the noise of the arrow leaving the bow too, so encourage it!).

CODE OF CONDUCT

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.

