



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Adventure Guides Participant's Manual

Parent & K-3rd Grade girls (Y-Princesses)

Parent & K-3rd Grade boys (Y-Guides)

Parent & Preschool boys & girls (Y-Tykes)

Parent & 4th Grade and up boys & girls (Y-Westerners)

YMCA Parent-Child Program Staff:

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YMCA Adventure Guides

Parent/Child Program Description

Welcome to the 2011-2012 YMCA Parent-Child program, now called **Y-Adventure Guides**. This 85 year-old national YMCA program was formerly structured around a Native American theme, and originally called Y-Indian Guides. Today the program has evolved and is structured around the adventures a parent and child may take together. Y-Adventure Guides is a way for kids and parents to spend quality one-on-one time together while retaining the original program's structure, spirit, objectives, and character-development focus.

Parent-Child Program Philosophy

At the YMCA we believe that if we build strong communities that nurture and strengthen families, then children will learn early-on the assets and values they need to become responsible, caring adults that will care for and love another child. This has been our legacy and it will continue to be embedded in the Y-Adventure Guide program and its theme.

Program Components

We recognize that life's journey anticipates challenges and choices. Therefore, along the way, significant direction is needed for children and parents to build strong, lasting relationships.

The four main directional points, represented on the symbolic compass (on the cover of this manual), are the essential components of the program. These compass points (*Family, Nature, Community, Fun*) provide participants with a sense of direction and inspiration around their various monthly activities. *Family* is true north, the focal point of the program. *Nature* and the camping experience are integral parts of the program, the spirit of the program is experienced through belonging to a small *Community* called a Circle. *Fun* is the magic of the program.

The YMCA core character development values make up the other directional points (*Responsibility, Respect, Honesty, Caring, Faith, Fun*). As children grow in the program, these values will become their own internal compass.

Program Structure/ Terminology

<u>Description</u>	<u>Title</u>
Parent Child pair:	Guide (Parent)/Explorer (Child)
Neighborhood Group:	Circle
Community Group of Circles:	Expedition
Area Group of Expeditions:	Federation
Circle Leader:	Navigator

YMCA Volunteer & Staff Roles in Parent Child Program

The YMCA is a volunteer-staff partnership intent on giving guidance and support to the program experiences of its members. Much of the work of the YMCA is carried out by volunteers, such as parents, who serve as Circle Navigators and Officers. The YMCA Director provides leadership to implement the formation of new circles and helps in the continuation of established circles. Materials and facilities are provided by the YMCA. The YMCA acts as a facilitator in providing leadership, communication, and administration for Circles, Expeditions, and the Federation.

Eastside Service Areas

Lake Heights YMCA: Bellevue, Newcastle, Renton, Mercer Island and all Eastside areas for preschoolers.

Sammamish YMCA: Snoqualmie, Issaquah, Sammamish, North Bend, Fall City and all Eastside children in the 4th grade & up.

Bellevue YMCA: Kirkland, Redmond and Carnation.

Organizational Chart Level Descriptions

Federation

The Tye Federation is composed of all Expeditions related to the Lake Heights, Bellevue, and Sammamish YMCAs. The Expeditions are represented by an Expedition Navigator, elected by the Circle Navigators the previous year. Once a month, the Expedition Navigators meet to plan Federation activities and to administer programs.

Expedition

An Expedition is made up of 10-20 Circles in close geographic proximity. Expeditions, through a monthly meeting of Circle Navigators, organize events, activities, and campouts, and provide support to circles and share concerns and ideas with other Circle Navigators.

Circle/Ranch

This is the real heart of the program, grouping 8-10 parent-child pairs; larger groups are formed in the Westerner program. It is the Circle or Ranch and its strength that makes the program meaningful. Groups meet once or twice a month in the homes of their members and participate in a variety of activities such as arts & crafts, games, storytelling, songs, dances, field trips, community service projects, and Expedition events such as campouts and pineblock derbies.

Program Aims & Purposes

Purpose: The purpose of the YMCA Adventure Guides Program is to foster the understanding and companionship between a parent and a child.

Pledge: "We, Father and Child, through friendly service to each other, to our family, to this circle, to this community, seek a world pleasing to the eye of all."

Slogan: "Friends Forever"

Aims:

- To be clean in body and pure in heart
- To be "Friends Forever" with my father/mother/son/daughter/family
- To love the sacred circle of my family
- To listen while other speak
- To love my neighbor as myself
- To respect the traditions and beliefs of all people
- To seek and preserve the beauty of the forest, field, and stream

Sample Circle Meeting Outline

6:30pm

Navigator calls meeting to order. Song or Invocation. Opening Ceremony (from "Friends Forever" materials and "Navigator Handbook").

6:40pm

Navigator's talk. Navigator welcomes group and may tell a story about the season, some special event, or day coming up.

6:45pm

Secretary takes roll and reads minutes of previous meeting (or the group reviews if no minutes were taken). Each Circle member shares what he/she did that was special since the last meeting.

Navigator asks for reports from each child on a parent-child project, outing, trip, or other activity they have done since the last Circle meeting. Use of talking stick is recommended as each child shares his/her report.

6:55pm

Business meeting. Cover only essential items that are of interest to kids in Circle. This may include announcements by the Navigator of any upcoming Circle or Expedition Event, YMCA News, etc. Other items should be covered separately with parents or on the side with parents while children are playing game, having snack, or having story time with one designated parent.

Review plan for next Circle meeting and assign projects:

When? Where? Who will plan program? Who will tell story?

7:05pm

Program activities (storytelling, games, special circle projects, crafts, etc. that emphasize the parent and the child participating *together*).

7:20pm

Light refreshments/snacks.

7:30pm

Story and/or songs.

7:40pm

Closing Ceremony (from "Friends Forever" materials and "Navigator Handbook").

2012 ADVENTURE GUIDES PROGRAM FEES AND YMCA MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Program Fees

\$45 per person for Program Members

\$25 per person for Family or Single Parent Family Facility Members

Includes:

- **Program supplies.** This includes joining patches and a youth polar fleece vest for new participants and youth t-shirt, adult t-shirt, pineblock car for all participants. A program manual for all new circles is also included. It also covers promotion & marketing supplies for the program (brochures, newspaper ads, newsletters).
- **Staff services.** Fees cover staff salaries which include the direction, coordination, and promotion of the Adventure Guides program. Office staff services include processing program registrations as well as registrations for all events (ie: campouts, monthly federation events, and expedition events)

Membership

Each participant must be a YMCA member. If you are not a member an annual program membership can be purchased for \$50 per family or you can join the YMCA as a facility member. Please contact your YMCA for more information about membership.

Financial Assistance

The YMCA welcomes everyone. Confidential financial assistance, to the extent possible, is available to those in need, based on family size and income, through the annual YMCA Partners with Youth Campaign and support from the United Way.

See contact info on the cover of this manual to apply to your local YMCA branch staff person.

If you have a disability and need further assistance or information, please contact your particular service area YMCA branch. You may also call our TTY line at 206-382-5346 and identify which YMCA and program you are calling about.

Insurance

It is the responsibility of all individuals, their parents or legal guardian, to provide accident and health coverage while participating in any YMCA activity. The YMCA of Greater Seattle does not provide any accident or health coverage for its participants. The YMCA does provide a \$1,000,000 certificate of liability insurance for camp and facility use.