

Navigators and Adventurers  
**LEADER GUIDE**

PREMIER DIGITAL EDITION



**TRAIL LIFE USA<sup>®</sup>**

Belton, South Carolina

NAVIGATORS AND ADVENTURERS LEADER GUIDE

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## FORWARD

Managing this project has been both an honor and a challenge.

An honor because I was privileged to work with a team of people who provided the knowledge that flows from these pages. People like John Burkitt, Laura Burton, Dr. Kip Haggerty, Richard Mathews, and count- less others who influenced them directly or indirectly. There are **fingerprints of many on this endeavor**. It's pedigree is long and untraceable; back to tried- and-true methods that will continue to evolve into better and better practices.

**I'm humbled to sit in my seat and** observe folks much more knowledgeable than I deal with the subtleties of leading leaders, the art of balancing inspiration with the square-setting of responsibility, the delicate and legal workings of adventure in light of safety, and the critical work of our mission that must be preserved in a preponderance of necessary words about policy.

The challenge is in how much is missing from this guide. Not just the bulleted how-to's that are more easily referenced by a Google search, but the "why" part of our vision and mission.

If I were to add a chapter, I would tell you stories of lives being changed. Of young men who found their strength in community; of single moms who cried out to God to send help for their sons; of brave, selfless, godly men who expended energy and time and money pouring their lives into boys who craved their time and attention; of the brotherhood developing between men who longed for and found their "band" in the work of mentoring boys together; of dads who, with weak or non-existent examples of fatherhood found guidance in the examples of the men around them.

**That's the true work of Trail Life USA. And you won't find it on Google. You'll find it in the hearts of the men and women—like you—who rise to the cause to aid a generation in desperate need of godly leadership.**

Thank you for leading these boys. What you do matters. Your resolve, your heart, and your commitment continually remind me that Trailmen are the best men I know.

Walk Worthy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark", is enclosed within a faint, light-colored outline of a map of the United States.

Mark Hancock, CEO Trail Life USA

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

To You, Trail Leader...

People worry about many things, such as the environment, national security, and the economy. More and more they worry about the prospects of today's young people. Many say, "Somebody should do something about these kids!" But few do what you have done, showing the world that we are all somebody. You've stopped complaining and started campaigning. That's a great beginning, and it will only get better from here.

This book was written to help you help others. You hold a very important job and no doubt you want to do it well. Training takes you from mere good intentions to the place you want to be—confident, capable, and committed. Experience is an important avenue of growth, but training helps you to interpret your experiences in the context of a larger community and to get the most out of them.

As you live the Trail Life, you will notice we are about more than "youth development." It is impossible for you to associate yourself with this program without the enthusiasm and idealism of the Trail affecting you, too. That's why we call it "Trail Life," because it is a lifestyle that you can live to the hilt whether it rains or shines, whether the path is smooth or rough. And when all is said and done you'll be glad you passed this way; and so will the boys you helped shape in the image of Christ.

Yours along the Trail,



John H. Burkitt Editor-in-Chief

# MY CONTACTS FOR LEVELS OF TROOP SUPPORT

## Knowledgeable Leaders in my Troop or nearby:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## **My Troop's Direct Service Advisor (DSA):**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## Other Area Team Specialists:

Specialty \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Specialty \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## **My Point Man:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## **My Regional Team Leader:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Proper credit for the structure and flow of the Navigators and Adventurers programs goes to the many volunteers from the Program Teams that worked with dedication to develop the Trail Life USA program.

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Special thanks to David A. Servin, who volunteered tirelessly with dozens of volunteers to coordinate many of the early foundational principles behind certain and early elements of the Trail Life program.

WALK WORTHY!

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## A FIRM FOUNDATION

**Trail Life USA** is an exciting outdoor youth development organization steeped in the values and priorities of the Christian faith. It is dedicated to a mission “... to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others, and experience outdoor adventure.”

The influencing concepts behind Trail Life USA are not new ideas. In the opening decade of the 20th Century, British General Robert Baden-Powell pondered how to use his fame as the Hero of Mafeking to inspire English boys to be prepared to face life with a can-do attitude of self-reliance, courage, and honor. Lord Baden-Powell consulted with two great leaders in youth development: Ernest Thompson Seton of the Woodcraft Indians, and Daniel Carter Beard of the Sons of Daniel Boone.

The most important result of this collaboration was the idea of utilizing certain classical aims and methods to help boys forge through adventures, fun, and inspiration into manhood.

The problem was, **Baden-Powell’s approach relied heavily on society** to help supply the single most important attribute of maturity—spiritual development.

**In failing to found the movement on the solid rock of God’s revealed word, it was left resting solely on the shifting sands of popular culture.**

In the opening decade of the 21st Century **Baden- Powell’s movement was influenced by** growing opposition to its conservative course and, without the Solid Rock of Christ, the movement succumbed to cultural winds and tides and drifted off course.

The need to specifically include Christ rather **than relying on a “Define Your Own Faith”** model had been talked about for years. It was an idea waiting for a defining moment, a catalyst, a spark. In the Spring of 2013 a spark ignited tinder that had been accumulating for some time. Trail Life USA is now beginning its first century. Like the movements that inspired it, there will be changes through the years in its out- ward appearance, new editions of its materials, new customs, and new opportunities.

One thing will not change, and that is the revealed Word of God to Whose glory we humbly dedicate this program.

**It will always be the standard of those who would “Walk Worthy.”**

*... that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;*

*Colossians 1:10, NKJV*

# GETTING STARTED

# Chapter 1 - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## Objectives

- Review the Key Elements of Trail Life USA
- Be Familiar with the Trail Life USA Core Values
- Understand the Six Program Emphases

## We Are a Movement

**A hiking and camping club** is solely an organization: a group of people dedicated to an activity. In addition to being an organization Trail Life USA is also a movement, sprouted at the grassroots level by people dedicated to traditional and timeless biblical values.

No movement has ever enjoyed universal support and you will certainly meet people who **oppose Trail Life USA. They enjoy the outdoors, but they don't understand our need to feature faith, values, and standards.** Any question worth answering will divide people, and people must side with the answer that makes sense to them.

For us, Jesus is the answer—not as a teacher, example, or even a healer, but rather as the only begotten Son of God, vested with the authority to reveal the eternal truth about life and our place in it.

There are a number of key elements that are foundational in Trail Life USA. Some are unique in raising a standard to carry the movement forward, ensuring our purpose for being, and establishing the tenets that preserve our rights to exist and carry out ministry in this particular way.

## Our Mission

To guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others, and experience outdoor adventure.

## Our Vision

To be the premier national character development organization for young men which produces godly and responsible husbands, fathers, and citizens.

## Our Statement of Faith and Values

Trail Life USA is a Christ-centered outdoor adventure, leadership, and character development ministry. Within the operations of the local Troop, the primary statement/profession of Christian beliefs, faith, and/or doctrine is that belonging to the Charter Organization. As with any of its ministries, the Charter Organization should take steps to ensure the Troop

appropriately reflects these beliefs. Furthermore, all Trail Life USA Charter Organizations and Registered Adult Members must concurrently adhere to the Christian principles stated in Trail Life USA's Statements of Faith and Values:

### Statement of Faith

We believe there is One Triune God – God the Father; Jesus Christ, His one and only Son; and the Holy Spirit – Creator of the universe and eternally existent. We believe the Holy Scriptures (Old and New Testaments) to be the inspired and authoritative Word of God. We believe each person is created in His image for the purpose of communing with and worshiping God. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who enables us to live godly lives. We believe each of us is called to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We believe God calls us to lives of purity, service, stewardship and integrity.

*The Statement of Faith and Values is designed to affirm the need for those in leadership to follow biblical standards. Leaders are held to a higher standard than those who are not in leadership and must agree to the tenets contained in the Statement. All adults in leadership roles—whether staff or volunteer at any level—must agree to sign and adhere to the Statement of Faith. Youth members are not required to sign this statement.*

### Statement of Values

We clearly define the following words in the Statement of Faith which are integral to the Trail Life:

*Purity* – God calls us to lives of holiness, being pure of heart, mind, word and deed. We are to reserve sexual activity for the sanctity of marriage, a lifelong commitment before God between a man and a woman.

*Service* – God calls us to become responsible members of our community and the world through selfless acts that contribute to the welfare of others.

*Stewardship* – God calls us to use our God-given time, talents, and money wisely.

*Integrity* – God calls us to live moral lives that demonstrate an inward motivation to do what is biblically right regardless of the cost.

### Our Membership Standards

Membership in the program has both youth and adult elements. Youth membership in the program is open to all who meet the membership requirements, and is currently designed for biologically male children under the age of 18. The adult applicant must be at least 18 years of age and subscribe to and abide by the Trail Life USA Statement of Christian Faith and Values as well as the Oath and Motto of the program. While the program is undergirded by Biblical values and unapologetically reflects a Christian worldview, there is also a clearly defined

inclusion policy for youth. Accordingly, all boys are welcome irrespective of religion, race, national origin or socio-economic status. Our goal is for parents and families of every faith to be able to place their boys in a youth program that endeavors to provide moral consistency and ethical integrity in its adult leaders. Charter partners own and operate local groups, selecting leaders and admitting members as they deem beneficial to their group and within **the parameters of the national policy. The basis for the program's ethical and moral standards is found in the Bible.** In terms of sexual identification and behavior, we affirm that any sexual activity outside the context of the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman is sinful before God and therefore inconsistent with the values and principles of the program. Within these limits, we grant membership to adults and youth who do not engage in or promote sexual immorality of any kind, or engage in behavior that would become a distraction to the mission of the program. We welcome boys whose parents are seeking a faith-based outdoor adventure program that places an emphasis on character development, leadership, and moral purity, and who aspire to live in accordance with the values expressed **in the program's Oath and Creed.**

## **Core Values**

### **Christ-centered**

Trail Life USA (TLUSA) is a Christian Outdoor adventure program that emphasizes and teaches biblical moral values and requires all adult members to agree with, sign, and abide by the Trail Life USA Trinitarian Statement of Faith and the Statement of Values. The program is unapologetically Christian. However, the program is designed and intended to be **presented without being "churchy" or "religious," focusing on outdoor adventure, character, and leadership development.** The analogy for this principle has been referred to as **"carrot cake."** The carrots in the cake are not in big and obvious chunks, but are still present throughout the entire cake, as are the assumptions of a Christian worldview throughout the entire program. At the same time, the TLUSA program is not intended to replace or compete with other youth groups, Bible studies, or church programs, but rather to complement them and give youth an opportunity to exemplify and demonstrate Christian values in their relationships with others.

### **Church-owned and Operated**

The Charter Organizations (most commonly churches) in the TLUSA program do not merely allow the organization to use space to meet in their building. The Charter Organization is expected to own and operate the Troop through selecting its adult leaders, integrating the Troop into the life of the church, and by involving the boys in mission trips, service projects and/or other ministry or ceremonial purposes. Each Charter Organization influences its Troop differently, but is encouraged to take ownership of the Troop as an active part of its

ministry offerings to the members of the church and/or the community at large.

### Outdoor-focused

We believe there is something special about being in the outdoors. This enables our program to instill **“Adventure, Character, and Leadership”** traits in boys and young men. Camping, hiking, and other outdoor activities help build deep relationships and provide a special context for leadership, problem solving, conflict resolution, and character building. We also value the outdoor focus of our program as a unique means of helping a boy see and appreciate the wonder, majesty, and grandness of God as reflected in His creation.

### Safety

Trail Life USA is committed to the health, welfare, and safety of our youth, volunteers, staff, and employees. Physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health are integrated into everything we do to ensure as safe a program as possible. The goal should always be to provide challenging, adventurous, and fun activities in a manner that no injuries occur beyond those that are readily treatable by simple first aid.

### Courage

The morals and values of our country are deteriorating at an exponential rate and are becoming increasingly opposed to true Christian values. As our organization grows and matures, future challenges will require increased character and courage by both adult and youth members as they stand for the timeless values articulated in the TLUSA Statement of Faith and Statement of Values which originate from the Holy Scripture and the teachings of the Church. With this cultural pressure in mind, we will continually commit ourselves to the truths found in the scriptures, that we are to fear God and not man, and that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and understanding.

### Male-centered Adult Leadership

TLUSA is a program focused on turning boys into godly men. Our firm conviction is that this can only be done by allowing a boy the opportunity to inter-act, work with, and be mentored by and with other Christian men. All direct contact positions, other than in the Woodlands Trail program for younger boys 5-10 years old, must be filled by men.

Women can serve in a number of roles in the organization including the National Board of Directors, National Advisory Council, Regional Leadership, Area Leadership, Troop Committee members, as the Charter Organization Representative (COR), and also in the Woodlands Trail Program.

### Volunteer-driven

Trail Life USA will be operated and supported by volunteers at every level. Troops connect with **one another locally, and leaders are strongly encouraged to solve each other’s** problems at roundtable discussions, online forums, and the like. Area Teams of experienced



volunteers, possessing expertise in Advancement, Camping, Activities, Community Service, Marketing, and much more, stand ready to help. Direct Service Advisors are appointed by the Area Team to coach and mentor Troop leaders.

Areas report to Regional volunteer committees, and Regions to the professional staff. As a result — and by design — Home Office staff will be kept to a minimum. This is not only good stewardship but allows the members of the organization to take full ownership and investment in the program.

### Shared Leadership

Since the founding of the organization by a wide coalition of leaders in Louisville, Kentucky in June of 2013, TLUSA has operated under the principle of shared leadership. Shared leadership seeks to involve others in the process and not “hog” or “lord over” the authority and public nature of leadership. While we recognize the need for strong leadership at every level, we also encourage the sharing of leadership by all those holding positions. Examples of this principle might look like occasionally allowing other adult leaders to share in doing the Troopmaster’s minute, delegating responsibilities, instituting term limits for Committee Chairmen, or having adult and youth Chaplains recruiting others to pray every now and then.

### Youth-centered Leadership

The youth should be leading other youth. Our firm conviction is that the only way a young man is going to learn the art of true Christian leadership is to allow him to initiate, to lead, and even to make mistakes. There is a constant temptation by adult leaders to step in and instruct the boys in weekly meetings, at campouts, and at other events to show the boys how things should be done “right,” “better,” or “smarter.”

While adults can and should advise, counsel, make suggestions to youth leaders, and provide oversight to those young men designated as leaders, youth should be allowed to plan, organize, make decisions, and be the primary leaders.

### Character-focused, Not Awards-focused

Some boys’ programs are very focused on helping the boy achieve as many awards as he can in the shortest period of time to achieve the highest rankings and awards the program has to offer. In contrast, TLUSA is more concerned with building character than with earning badges and ranks. While TLUSA has a robust and prominent ranking and awards structure, this will not be the focus of the program. The focus should always be on building character over merely earning awards. This value is reflected

by the fact that a young man cannot simply earn the Freedom Award quickly in a couple of years; he must stay in the program over an extended period of time — demonstrating maturity and leadership — to earn the highest award in the program.

## Servant Leadership

Leadership with a servant's attitude by both adults and youth is a core value of TLUSA.

Servant leadership is characterized by humility and the willingness to work alongside others and not just "boss" people around. Leading by example and sacrifice are also qualities of servant leadership.

## Family-oriented

While this will not be the case in every location, ideally the goal would be to create a "family-centered" youth-enrichment experience where on one night, in one location, boys and their dads can participate in Trail Life USA, and girls and their moms can be involved with American Heritage Girls. There are many obvious strengths to this model, and those who are able to experience it will discover lasting impact and accelerated spiritual growth for every member of the family.

## Program Flexibility

The flexibility principle behind our program elements allows local Troops to adapt the program to fit the needs of their unit. A good example would be running only a Woodlands Trail and Adventurers program but not a Navigators program because of a lack of boys in a Troop or a lack of adult leaders.

There will be some elements of the program which are unyielding and mandatory, but many parts of the way the program is delivered can be customized to fit the immediate needs of the local Troop and Charter Organization.

## Decentralized Decision-making

Pursuant to the TLUSA By-Laws, after January 1, 2015, decisions regarding changes to the most important elements of the organization will be made by each Charter Organization casting a vote, and not by professionals or delegates chosen by professionals. This principle will be used for any changes to the governing Board Members of Trail Life USA. To ensure fidelity to the principles and values of Trail Life USA, any changes to the Statement of Faith, Statement of Values, or membership standards would require an 80% vote by all Charter Organizations.

## Debt Averse

The National Board of Directors is committed to being debt averse. The organization will continue to be self-funded with the annual budget for operating expenses growing in direct proportion to fees generated by the growth of the membership. The organization will not accept gifts of property unless it can clearly benefit from the gift without incurring debt from operational or other costs associated with the property.

## Six Program Emphases

Program emphases are "big ideas" that run through our program because our movement con-

siders them indispensable to helping boys become great Christian men.

### *Wisdom*

Knowledge must be put to proper use.

### *Teamwork*

People working together can do far more than when working alone.

### *Heritage*

Americans have a rich heritage built with courage and curiosity, sacrifice and spirituality.

### *Leadership*

True leaders give the gift of guidance to others and exercise servanthood.

### *Character*

The four selves: self-respect, self-control, self-reliance, and self-worth are critical emphases in the development of a boy into a man.

### *Faith*

Belief in God that provides the inner strength and confidence that leads to righteous actions based on biblical truth, regardless of temptations or circumstances.

## **Trailman Oath**

*On my honor, I will do my best to serve  
God and my country; to respect authority;  
to be a good steward of Creation;  
and to treat others as I want to be treated.*

## **Trailman Motto**

**Walk Worthy!**

*From Colossians 1:10 "... that you may walk worthy of the  
Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work  
and increasing in the knowledge of God..."*

## **Trailman Law (Creed)**

There is no Trailman Law or Creed outside of the Bible, the inspired and holy Word of God. Youth members are not required to accept Christianity, but they are expected to adhere to Christian standards of behavior.

## The Trailman Sign

The Trailman Sign is raised when reciting the Trailman Oath, and also used as a sign to bring Trailman to silence to focus on business at hand.

## The Trailman Salute

The Trailman Salute is used by members in uniform<sup>1</sup>, when:

- o They recite the Pledge of Allegiance (stand at attention and face the flag)
- o The flag passes in a parade, or ceremony (at the moment the flag passes, stand at attention facing the flag)
- o While in a parade or procession, you pass a flag posted on a stage/podium erected for the event (continue moving forward, turning head so eyes are on the flag until you have passed)
- o The flag is hoisted and lowered (the salute is held until the flag is unsnapped from the halyard or through the last note of the national anthem, whichever is longer)
- o The national anthem is played or sung (stand at attention and hold the salute through the last note. The salute is directed to the flag, if displayed, otherwise to the music)
- o The flag is retired at flag retirement ceremonies. (Men will remove hats when saluting, except for a uniform hat. Women do not have to remove head covering)



## How to do a Proper Hand Salute

(from [www.usarmystudyguide.com](http://www.usarmystudyguide.com))

A proud, smart salute shows pride in yourself and your unit and that you are confident in your abilities as a soldier. A sloppy salute might mean that you're ashamed of your unit, lack confidence, or at the very least, that you haven't learned how to salute correctly.

In saluting, turn your head and eyes toward the person or flag you are saluting. Bring your hand up to the correct position in one, smart motion without any preparatory movement. When dropping the salute, bring your hand directly down to its natural position at your side, without slapping your leg or moving your hand out to the side. Any flourish in the salute is improper.

The proper way to salute when wearing the beret or without headgear is to raise your right hand until the tip of your forefinger touches the outer edge of your right eyebrow (just above

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<sup>1</sup> \* uniform – whatever official Trail Life USA uniform piece(s) is deemed appropriate for that activity by Troop Leadership.

and to the right of your right eye). When wearing headgear, the forefinger touches the headgear slightly above and to the right of your right eye. Your fingers are together, straight, and your thumb snug along the hand in line with the fingers. Your hand, wrist, and forearm are straight, forming a straight line from your elbow to your fingertips. Your upper arm (elbow to shoulder) is horizontal to the ground.



### **The Trailman Handshake**

The Trailman's handshake is like a regular right-handed handshake, except that you reach further forward and grasp the other's wrist or forearm.

## Chapter 2 - ORGANIZATION

### Objectives

- Get the Big Picture of how Trail Life USA is Organized
- See How Your Leadership Position Fits into the Big Picture
- See the Relationship Between Area, Regional, and National Leadership
- Understand How to Utilize Levels of Troop Support
- Understand Our Relationships with Family, Non-member Attendees, and the American Heritage Girls
- Understand Fundraising and Asset Ownership
- Understand Branding, Licensing, and Commercialism

### Troop Level Leadership

**Make no mistake about it**, the Troop is where the Trail Life is lived, and local leaders are its back- bone. The positions required for initial chartering of a Troop are the Charter Organization Representative, Committee Chair, Treasurer, Chaplain, and Troopmaster, their relationship is shown [here](#).

### Age Level Programs

**Woodlands Trail (Kindergarten through 5th Grade):** This program is designed around the needs and abilities of younger boys. The program emphasis is *Knowledge*.

**Navigators (6th to 8th Grade):** This three-year out- door program teaches boys the basics of the patrol method, hiking, and camping. The program emphasis is *Understanding*.

**Adventurers (9th to 12th Grade):** This four-year high-adventure program builds on the self-reliance and outdoor skills learned in Navigators, giving boys more independence and more opportunities to customize the outdoor program. The program emphasis is *Wisdom*.

**Guidon (Ages 18-25):** This eight-year co-ed program is for young Christian adults who want to engage in travel, high-adventure activities, and events, while holding each other to a higher level of spiritual accountability. A separate document is available for Guidon participants. The program emphasis is *Life*.

A Troop is a small community. As a member of this community, you will contribute to its success and it will contribute to yours. As you work with these people, they will become very important to you and you will come to know them as individuals. The more deeply this sense of community brings you together, the more you will experience all the benefits of the Trail Life.

## Trail Life USA Terms and Phrases

Here are helpful terms and descriptions for understanding Troop structure:

### *Charter Organization (CO):*

A Christian Church or Christian Organization established as a legal entity with a Statement of Faith and Values which agrees with that of Trail Life USA, and recognizes the Troop as a youth service or outreach ministry. It is our desire that the Charter Organization be actively engaged in the Troop by keeping the charter current and remaining engaged and aware of Troop activities and functions. Our hope is that the Charter Organization would not just allow the Troop to meet in one of the rooms at the facility, but would view it as an active outreach ministry of the Charter Organization.

***As a ministry of the CO, a Troop's legal and non-profit status flows from the CO not TLUSA. Therefore, all legal and business functions including contracts, banking, donations, etc. are overseen and administered by the CO as they see fit. Troops have no legal status to execute these transactions on their own apart from the CO. Troops cannot use TLUSA's Taxpayer Identification Number for donations or banking but can use their CO's or apply for a number at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).***

### *The Institutional Head (IH):*

The highest authority in the CO (for example, the Senior Pastor of a church). He approves the existence of a Trail Life Troop and ensures it is an active ministry of the organization (usually a church). He understands the mission and policies of Trail Life USA. He appoints or serves as the Charter Organization Representative (COR), and delegates the responsibility of selecting volunteer leaders to the COR.

### *Charter Organization Representative (COR):*

The COR is appointed by the Pastor or Institutional Head of the CO to represent the CO to the Troop and the Troop to the CO. The COR helps manage the relationship between the Troop and the CO and reviews and approves all members on behalf of the CO. He or she is also the voting member of the Troop, representing the Troop in matters of national interest. The COR is an active member of the Troop involved in week-to-week operations.

### *Registered Adults (RA):*

These are all adult members of Trail Life USA, meaning they are currently registered, sign, agree with, and will abide by the Trail Life USA Statement of Faith and Values, have passed a criminal background check and subsequent checks as mandated, and have successfully completed and are current in Child Safety and Youth Protection Training offered by Trail Life USA.

We encourage all parents to become Registered Adults so they can assist with the program



and fully enjoy their son's participation.

All members over 18 years of age are Registered Adults. Many will fill other roles, too.

### *Registered Adult Program Leaders:*

These are Registered Adults who have direct contact roles with the boys through the Trail Life USA program. These adults not only lead and instruct, they are role models of mature Christianity.

*The Troopmaster* oversees the leadership of the entire K-12 program

*The Ranger* oversees the K-5th grade Woodlands Trail program

*The Trailmaster* oversees the 6th-8th grade Navigators program

*The Advisor* oversees the 9th-12th grade Adventurers program

*The Guidon Coach* serves the 18-25 years-old Guidon Program

*Trail Guides* serve under Rangers, Trailmasters, Advisors, and Coaches to assist with program delivery to youth patrols.

### *Troop Committee:*

The Troop's governing board is composed of Registered Adults.

Required positions include the Charter Organization Representative, the Committee Chair, the Treasurer, the Chaplain, and the Troopmaster.

Additional members may serve as coordinators for Camping, Advancement, Training, Community Service, Membership, etc. but are not required.

A fully functional Troop Committee handles the tasks of Troop business and support functions so the direct contact Registered Adult Program Leaders can focus on the program delivery to the boys.

### *Trailmen:*

Although this term initially referred only to duly registered boys who agree to live by the Trailman Oath and Trailman Motto, it is neither incorrect or unusual to hear or use the term to refer to all male members, no matter their age.

Trailmen who earn the Freedom Award are referred to as Rangemen.

### *Others:*

Troops do not exist in a vacuum. In an ideal Troop, members of the Charter Organization will take an active interest in the boys and vice versa. Perhaps Trailmen will help with events at the church such as the Fall Fellowship, the Rummage Sale, or Vacation Bible School. Parents or guardians of Trailmen may participate at a level that falls short of Registered Adult participation but is still very important.



## Age Restrictions in Leadership

All Registered Adult Leadership positions at the Troop, Area, Regional, and National levels must be filled with adults at least 21 years of age, with the following exceptions:

- o Trail Guides are Registered Adult Program Leaders and can be a minimum of 18 years old. Trail Guides 18-20 years-old qualify for two-deep leadership when the other leader is 21 or older (25 on outings).
- o Guidon members in the 18 to 25-year-old **young adults' program must be Registered Adults in Trail Life USA**, and therefore must be professing Christians that sign and agree to abide by our Christian Statement of Faith and Values, complete Child Safety and Youth Protection Training, and COR and Home Office approval.
- o Registered Adult membership is available to 18-20 year-olds. This position is for those who, while not serving in defined leadership position, may want to have a more active role in the program. They pay the regular member fee, agree with the Statement of Faith, submit to a back- ground check, complete the Child Safety Youth Protection Training and are approved by the Charter Organization Representative.

## Leader Identification

All Registered Adults are required to wear a Member ID, received on initial registration and annually when renewing their membership. It is critical to the safety of our boys that Registered Adults wear this lanyard and member ID which identifies them as a qualified, trained, and background- checked adult. The other leaders, boys, and visiting parents must know who qualifies for two-deep leadership.



Haven't received a lanyard? Contact your Troop leadership to obtain one.

**Important:** Please note, the ID is not valid without the COR's signature. Members should not delay in obtaining their signature after receiving their ID.

## Area Level Leadership

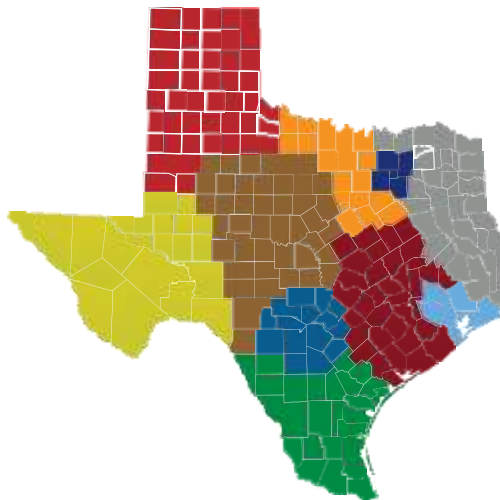
The Trail Life USA workforce structure is dependent upon volunteers. Derived from our core value of being Volunteer-Driven, our [Levels of Support](#) document explains our unique framework upon which our organization is built.

The volunteers who serve together in TLUSA share the goal of impacting our world for Christ. They are men and women of character and boldness who choose to commit themselves to our mission. They live to grow, they exist to serve, and they strive to duplicate themselves. Our Biblical mandate to do so is found in Scripture (*see Exodus 18:13-26 and 2 Timothy 2:2*).

Beyond the local Troop level of volunteers are Area and Regional leaders. The purpose of Area

leadership is to provide support, direction, and encouragement for local Charter Organizations and their Troops. Area volunteers are the local go-to resources for all things TLUSA. They provide answers and updates from the Home Office via their Regional Team Leaders.

All Troops are part of a local administrative zone called an "Area." As can be seen in Texas example, Areas vary in size—maybe only one county in densely-populated places, but larger in rural places, where there is less population density or TLUSA participation. Areas coordinate events like multi-Troop campouts, monthly Trail Gatherings (also called Leader "Roundtables"), Summer Adventures, and in-person Leader Training courses (such as EQUIP or EquipYouth). Areas provide direction to help Troops plan calendars, develop budgets, and much more. Area leaders are full of ideas to help Troops thrive! See *Resources Your Area Team Provides* below.



### Power Team 3 (PT3)

The PT3 is the combined services of three essential Area Team members: the Point Man, the Direct Service Advisor, and the New Troop Organizer. PT3's, when properly formed and recognized by the Home Office, are a powerful representation of the potential impact of Trail Life USA on boys, families, and communities.

- o **Area Point Man (PM):** The Point Man serves as the volunteer administrator, mentoring a team of volunteers who make up the Area Committee (also known as the Area Team). As Chairman, he recruits and mentors these volunteers and facilitates and oversees the operations of the Area. Point Men are guided and mentored by their Regional Team Leader.



- o **Direct Service Advisor(s) (DSA):** Area DSA's are members of the Area Service Committee. They are experienced former Troop Leaders who coach and mentor current Troop leaders, visit Troop meetings, and provide resources and direction to help Troops thrive.
- o **New Troop Organizer (NTO):** The NTO's purpose is to approach and advise potential Charter Organizations to form new, healthy Troops in the Area after which they pass off regular support to a DSA.

### Area Committee Members

Area Committee Members are subject matter experts who volunteer in specific roles to

provide support for Troops. These leaders register as Registered Adults Non-Troop (RA-NTs). Subcommittees include Direct Service, PR/Marketing, Membership, Finance, Program, and Community Service. "Program" has many subcommittees: Advancement, Training, Camping, and Activities. "Membership" includes both retention of current Troops and their members, and increasing our impact through the New Troop Organizer (NTO). Each subcommittee has a Chairman who reports to the Point Man. The Area Service Chairman (ASC) oversees a team of Direct Service Advisors (DSAs).

### Resources Your Area Team Provides

**Chartering Assistance:** Are you a part of a Troop that is in the chartering process? Do you know of a potential new Charter Organization? Your Area Team can help!

**Coaching and Mentoring:** Do you and/or your Troop leaders have questions and wonder how best to serve as a TLUSA volunteer leader or have challenges you need help with? Your Area Team can support!

**Connecting to Local Area Contacts and Resources:** Are you new to TLUSA or to your Area? Are you seeking additional volunteers in your Troop? Your Area Team can get you connected!

**Growing successful Troops:** Is your Troop just surviving? Are you looking for ways to improve your Troop's program and ministry outreach? Your Area Team can help your Troop thrive!

**Organizing Camping and Activities:** Would your Troop like to join with other local Area Troops to camp and enjoy the outdoors? Your Area Team organizes events and wants your Troop to join in!

**Participating in Advancement:** Do you know that an Area Team member serves as Chairman of every Freedom Award Board of Review? Your Area Team is available!

**Praying for your Troop ministry:** Are your Troop leaders and members aware that others are praying for their well-being, safety, and spiritual growth? Your Area Team is praying!

**Recommending Community Service Opportunities:** Are your members pursuing ways to serve others in your Area? Your Area Team can identify needs and join together to serve!

**Sharing TLUSA updates and news:** Do your leaders and members know the latest news and current opportunities? Your Area Team can keep you up to date!

**Training Troop leaders:** Are your Troop leaders interested in learning how to be more effective? Do your Troop leaders know about EQUIP events? Your Area Team is available to share direction and knowledge!

### Regional Level Leadership

Six geographical Regions of the country provide support for the Areas. Regional Teams are composed of six volunteer leaders that make up a Regional Committee.

Regional leadership may coordinate regional events for Trailmen to attend, but their purpose is to link together the organizational and programmatic portions of Trail Life USA across large parts of America, and to understand and act upon issues of regional significance. They

accomplish this by supporting and seeking assistance from both the Home Office and Area leadership teams to promote and deliver a quality program.

**Regional Team Leader:** Guides, mentors and administrates a Regional Committee of volunteers.

**Regional Committee:** Composed of six Regional Vice Chairmen: Leadership\*, Program, Membership, Development, PR/Marketing, and Community Service; plus the Regional Direct Service Chairman.

\*The RTL currently serves as Leadership Vice-Chair and coordinates all Area Point Men.

**Regional Field Service Coordinator:** In the future, this full-time staff member will support the Regional Team Leaders and all regional operations; (including developing Areas); reports to the National Director of Field Operations.

### National Level Leadership

Trail Life's Home Office provides the organizational support needed to carry out the Vision and Mission of Trail Life USA. Business and departmental functions are coordinated by full-time staff and volunteers (including the Board of Directors and National Advisory Council).

National leadership provides strategies, policies, governance, uniforms, merchandise, publications, information, training, and communications.

The organizational structure was designed with an emphasis on servant leadership, delivered by volunteers, with a lean staff at the national (Home Office) level providing administration, as well as leadership through mentorship.



### Levels Of Troop Support

One of our 15 Core Values is “Volunteer-Driven”. Volunteers are the lifeblood of Trail Life USA. Our support system, therefore, is delivered by trained, knowledgeable, qualified volunteers. Here are the levels of Troop Leader Support for Trail Life USA. Challenge yourself to find the resource you need before moving on to the next level!

**Yourself.** Become educated on everything...then lead others who need help to the same information!

**Online resources.** Read through the immense information available online through resources like JoinTheTrail.com and WalkWorthy.com. You can also access information at the Trail Life USA website including the FAQ and a member-only Facebook Forum.

**Other Leaders in your Troop.** Ask other Leaders in your Troop who may know the answer.

**Other Leaders in nearby Troops.** Find them on the Troop Locator located at the Trail Life USA web- site or attend your local Area monthly Trail Leaders’ gathering for ongoing leader training and information updates. If your Area has not started these monthly meetings yet, find your Point Man on the Point Man Locator—same graph as the Troop Locator—and work together to initiate a monthly Trail Leader gathering.

**Your Troop’s Direct Service Advisor.** One has been assigned to be your Troop’s helper—a

Coach or Guide for your Leaders.

**Area Team specialist.** Experienced volunteers who deal with questions on Advancement, Camping, Activities, Finances, Public Relations, and Community Service. These area Leaders are close enough to spend the needed time to work with you.

**Point Man.** If you do not know who the Direct Service Advisor or specific Area Team member you need is, your Point Man can connect you with them. Find your Point Man on the Point Man Locator at TrailLifeUSA.com.

**Regional Team Leader.** Providing oversight, encouragement, and direction to Point Men, our six Team Leaders at this level are also volunteers. They are successful Point Men who are committed to helping further our mission and grow Trail Life USA.

If none of the resources listed in the steps above can provide the needed help (which is quite unlikely!), your Regional Team Leader will connect with the Home Office and get the information back to you right away.

### **Role of the Family**

Trail Life USA recognizes the responsibilities and benefits of caring and engaged parents in the development of boys, particularly those of fathers and other male family members. It is **important that fathers and male Troop leaders support and show interest in a boy's** participation in the Trail Life USA program. For families where fathers or other male role models are not present, male Troop leaders will serve as program role models and mentors for boys as they grow into young men.

It is important to note that Trail Life USA is specifically a Christian organization with Christian leaders believing in a Triune God and operating within a Biblical worldview.

Some fathers may not be ready to take the step to become a Registered Adult and sign the Statement of Faith and Values but they can still attend meetings or events with their sons. If they intend to regularly attend meetings or take active part in the camping program they will **need to, at a minimum, read and sign Trail Life USA's Child Safety and Youth Protection Policy** to ensure their compliance with appropriate youth interactions. The Charter Organization may also decide to have them submit to a background check. However, only duly Registered Adult Leaders may hold leadership positions, serve in a leadership position, provide two-deep leadership, and deliver the program as a recognized Christian mentor to the youth.

The Charter Organization Representative should ensure that there are open avenues of communication with Troop families, not only about Troop activities, but also about activities of the church or organization that would be of value to families as they develop their relationship with the Troop.

### **Relationship with the American Heritage Girls**

The American Heritage Girls (AHG) was formed over two decades ago for a purpose similar to



our own—to offer a Christ-centered leadership development program to build character and moral values in young women.

AHG has recognized the shared values and goals of Trail Life USA and has provided tremendous assistance to help in its formation. The American Heritage Girls and Trail Life USA signed a Memorandum of Ministry Alliance, the highest form of relationship for each organization, in June 2015.

While Trail Life USA (TLUSA) and American Heritage Girls are separate organizations, local churches are encouraged to operate Trail Life USA Troops side-by-side with American Heritage Girls Troops.

As more families have members in both programs at the same location, it will naturally lead to cooperative scheduling of

meetings and activities. Many churches will have their TLUSA and AHG Troop meetings on the same night so families can use that night to meet at the church with all of their children to provide a church-based, family-oriented,

Christ-centered scouting program. Some churches that charter both TLUSA and AHG Troops may decide to share a common opening ceremony at these meetings before they go to their separate areas of the building.

Currently, there are different standards between TLUSA and AHG that apply to various situations.

While collaborating on activities, it is required that both the TLUSA Leaders and Members and the AHG Leaders and Members fully adhere to the rules and regulations of their respective organizations. For example, each group must supply their own registered leadership, and the different camping rules and regulations of each group must be observed and respected.

Troops can find out more about the American Heritage Girls at [www.AmericanHeritageGirls.org](http://www.AmericanHeritageGirls.org).

### **Fundraising**

Charter Organizations, leaders, or youth members shall not be restricted from earning money to obtain their own equipment or to assist in fulfilling the charitable, non-profit mission or purpose of the Charter Organization, provided that all money-making/fundraising activities are consistent with the Statement of Faith and Values of Trail Life USA, and consistent with



the branding and licensing requirements of Trail Life USA. Other than raffles legally permissible in your area and approved by the Charter Organization, games of chance are not allowed. Consistent with Trail Life USA's mission, focus, and purpose, the Charter Organization – not Trail Life USA – owns and operates the Troop and is the legal owner of all property, funds, and/or assets of the Troop. Further guidelines for fundraising and banking are available in the *Role of the Troop Treasurer* document.

## **Branding and Licensing**

*The use of Trail Life USA's brand, marks or other intellectual property on – or in relation to– any commercial products, merchandise or services (“commercial purposes”) require licensing by Trail Life USA. Any manufacturer or supplier of products, merchandise or services who wishes to be a Trail Life USA Licensee, or any party who wishes to manufacture, produce and/or provide promotional materials or items should complete and submit the Application for Trail Life USA Trademark License Agreement. Upon receipt of that completed form, Trail Life USA will make a determination whether to grant said license and the terms and conditions of said license, including any appropriate licensing fees, license duration and scope of license.*

### **Summary**

This means if you want to use any Trail Life USA logo (standard Trailman round logo and its variations, Freedom Award logo, Woodlands Trail logo or other level logos, the Trailman, Trinity Peaks, Worthy Life logo, etc.) on any item not specifically allowed on the Brand Permissions document for Troops, you must have a license to do so. This includes T-shirts, trailer decals, patches, pins, signs, fundraising items, or any other item with any logo on it. Allow several weeks for the approval process.

***T-shirts, patches, pins, coins, other logo items:*** Troops are encouraged to contact providers who are approved licensed manufacturers for Trail Life USA patches, pins, t-shirts and other logo items. A current list is available online. Using other manufacturers (including local t-shirt vendors, online providers or doing them yourself) requires a license agreement including payment of a licensing fee as well as design approval before producing. Fees are determined by a variety of factors and are not standard.

Follow the directions below to begin the process.

***Troop Trailers:*** Licenses are free but a signed license agreement must be in place with the manufacturer producing the trailer wrap/decal and designs approved before production.

***Signs:*** Licenses are generally free but a signed license agreement must be in place with the manufacturer producing the signs and designs approved before production.

### **What can you use without a license on the above products?**

The verbiage “Trail Life Troop XX-####” and accepted variations of the Troop number. (USA

should be left off after Trail Life to distinguish Troop level usage vs. Home Office). The name of the Charter Organization should be included whenever possible to indicate appropriate Troop ownership, ie. "of the .... Church."

1. The Motto, Walk Worthy!, the Slogan Adventure Character Leadership in that unaltered order.
2. The Oath, Mission and Vision if used verbatim as shown on the website or in this handbook.
3. The official text font of Trail Life USA is Ministry, alternately Myriad can be used. PT Serif is used in the case of italics.

#### To apply for a license:

4. Complete the application available online. This requires information for the chosen vendor of your items.
5. If the planned use is acceptable, the licensee will receive a license agreement to sign outlining requirements, fees, and the Brand Standards Guide. If use or design is not accepted, we will work with the vendor to create an acceptable design if possible.
6. Upon receipt of the signed license agreement, accepted designs of products desired, and payment of any license fee, Trail Life USA will deliver a signed final license agreement to the vendor with a copy to the Troop leader and production may begin.

#### **Commercialism**

The use of membership or participation in Trail Life USA for the purpose of personal or business financial benefit is not permitted. No member may use the logo, insignia, terms of usage or descriptive marks related to Trail Life USA unless the relationship or contract is **authorized by the Trail Life USA Home Office**. Trail Life USA's logo, insignia, terms, descriptive marks, or other intellectual property are not to be used as an endorsement of any commercial product or venture except as specifically authorized by Trail Life USA. As a non-profit organization, any funds or assets raised by or through Trail Life USA, its members, or Troops or Charter Organizations are to be used for the benefit of Trail Life USA and/or the Charter Organization.



# Chapter 3 - THE TROOP MEETING

- Objectives**
- Learn How a Typical Troop Meeting Works Best
  - Be Familiar with Important Behavior Policies
  - Understand the Uniform and Insignia of Trail Life USA

## The Order Behind the Chaos

**Troop meetings** may sometimes appear to be barely controlled anarchy to an outsider. In fact, there is order and pattern underlying the enthusiasm and spontaneity of youth.

Socially, Troops represent a balance between the need for age-specific programs and the need to keep different age boys together as a larger community where the older ones inspire the younger. Trail Life USA's unique charter program allows for a Troop to operate age-specific Unit Programs from the elementary to the college level.

### Troop Meeting Plan

A typical Troop meeting can be broken down into a number of distinct steps which can be easily learned. Things will run smoothly if you follow this recipe for success:

This is a *recommended* weekly Troop Meeting Plan. This proven formula contains best practices from some of the most successful Trail Life Troops. The order and steps outlined on the Agenda are simply *recommended*, not *required*.

### **Planning for the Next Week's Meeting (3-4 days Beforehand):**

- o Physical arrangements of meeting location
- o Reminder sent to all members (outline any expectations—what to bring, how to dress, etc.)
- o First Officer mentoring (Troopmaster coaches him to lead the meeting well—go through each step)

### **Meeting Night:**

- o Set up (Adult and Youth Leaders arrive 20-30 minutes early)
- o Gathering (15 minutes) have a pre-meeting activity planned for boys/families who arrive early

### **Sample Troop Meeting Agenda**

*(total time is approx. 75 minutes)*

1. **Opening ceremony** *(start on-time, every time— 7 minutes)*
  - Presentation of the colors/pledge, led by a different patrol each time (with

AHG sister Troop)

- Recite the Trailman Oath
- Prayer (select a different Trailman each time)

2. **Announcements** (4 minutes)

- Made by First Officer (only RARELY by the Troopmaster)
- Describe what we are doing tonight (and why); highlight next 2-3 big activities coming up

3. **Chaplain mentoring moment** (2 minutes)

- Inspirational and faith-building; sets the tone for the rest of the meeting

4. **Patrol breakouts** (40 minutes)

- Outdoors (weather permitting)
- Hands-on and action-oriented—focused on your purpose
- Advancement work for Woodlands Trailmen
- Skills training for Navigators and Adventurers (youth led)

5. **Regather in main room for Troop-wide game** (15 minutes)

- Fun, physical release; make sure younger boys have a chance to succeed

6. **Wisdom for the Wild** (keep it to ONE minute); **AHG Leader minute** (same for her)

- Recognize special achievers

7. **Closing ceremony** (3 minutes)

*What Else?*

- Have fun!
- Always emphasize an informed, empowered youth-leader culture. Involve parents and your AHG sister Troop (while recognizing that there are limitations for those who are not registered members of TLUSA)
- Chaplain: remain available to speak with uninvolved parents who stay for the meeting

### The Navigators / Adventurers Breakouts

What happens here depends on whether you are a Navigators or Adventurers leader. The two age groups should meet jointly once a month with the Adventurers in charge, while the three other weekly meetings will be held separately with the Trailmaster in charge of the Navigators, and the Advisor and First Officer in charge of the Adventurers.

There is a notable difference between the abilities and social outlooks of Navigators and

Adventurers, and the Navigators/Adventurers split allows both age groups to thrive within their age-specific comfort zones. The nature of these differences is dealt with more in the following two units, “The Navigators Program” and “The Adventurers Program.”

### **Maintaining Mission Focus**

Trail Life USA offers chartering organizations an outdoor youth program that, through adventure, character, and leadership, presents the opportunity to conduct highly effective youth ministry. We believe strongly in—and teach—the Biblical mandate to both love and to serve our neighbors and to speak the truth of the Good News and bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone in all areas of life.

Christianity teaches that all men are sinners and even Christians, while forgiven and free from the curse and penalty of sin, still struggle with various forms of temptation and sin from the presence of the world, our own flesh, and the enemy of our souls. For those Christians who are experiencing temptation and or struggling with sin we should be longsuffering, patient, merciful, and have the goal of helping and restoring them. “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.” (*Galatians 6:1*)

While Trail Life USA desires to extend much grace and care for its adult members and non-member participants who are struggling with sin, sadly, many in the world today seek to justify, promote, and even celebrate certain sinful conduct as normal or, even worse, “the way God made me.” This kind of arrogance which openly promotes conduct that Christianity considers morally wrong is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances in Trail Life USA.

Our document entitled “Addressing Sin in Member Boys,” outlines a gracious Christian response for a youth member with any sinful activity that needs to be addressed. See the TLUSA Health & Safety Guide for additional guidance in reporting.

Further comment on this can be found in the online document, “Maintaining Mission Focus: Further Commentary for Application.”

### **Addressing Inappropriate Member Behavior**

There are a number of official policies that address behavior in the program. Uniform adherence to these policies assures that we are acting consistent with our bylaws and standards. This is a critical defense should our standards as a Christian Organization be challenged.

#### [Addressing Sin in Member Boys](#)

It is the expectation of Trail Life USA that members live according to the Trail Life USA Oath and Motto, as they have agreed to when becoming a member. With this expectation, it is also

understood that, just like adults, boys face temptation and are not without sin. Because no human being is perfect, it is important that the Trail Life USA Troop remain a place of grace and truth.

Boys, especially during their adolescent years, are trying to determine who they are and how their faith and the culture play into that identity. Trail Life USA can serve a critical role in guiding boys toward an identity in Christ. Trail Life USA is meant to be a ministry of transformation—a ministry which surrounds boys with godly adults that will offer them sound biblical advice, encouragement, grace, and truth.

Trail Life USA should be a safe place for boys to navigate the often confusing cultural trends. However, nothing herein should be interpreted as modifying or amending in any way Trail Life USA Child Safety and Youth Protection Policies, or the requirement to report any instances or allegations of child abuse or illegal activity to the appropriate state or federal authorities.

Except in situations that potentially jeopardize the health or safety of others, a boy falling short of living up to the Trail Life USA Oath and Motto is not necessarily subject to immediate dismissal from the Troop. These are the times when boys need the Christ-centered program and the guidance of faith-filled adults of their Troop the most. When a boy engages in behavior which contradicts the Oath and/or Motto, it is important for him to understand his error and to be given the guidance and opportunity to change.

Boys sometimes make poor choices and engage in behavior that is not in harmony with Christian values and what is expected of them as Trailmen (e.g., gossip, failure to obey appropriate authority, bad language, disrespect, etc.). Most of these situations are most appropriately addressed by the Troopmaster, Trail Guide, or other adult leaders viewing this as a **“teachable moment” to mentor or guide the boy (while always adhering to the two-deep leadership policy and all other Child Safety and Youth Protection policies)** to recognize his wrongful action, repent, and apologize to any offended parties.

Character growth can result from this lesson. Where the adult leader directly observes the inappropriate behavior, it should be addressed immediately. If the adult leader learns of the behavior after the fact, conversation regarding the behavior may also involve the parents.

Wrongful behaviors<sup>2</sup> might include, but are not limited to hazing, bullying, stealing, sexual activity, and illegal use of drugs or alcohol. When Troop leadership becomes aware that a boy is engaging in such behavior that surpasses being a **“teachable moment,”** there are a number

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<sup>2</sup> *Scripture addresses the issues of sin: homosexuality, adultery, fornication, lust, pornography, lying, stealing, etc. Sin is contrary to God’s design and purposes (Romans 1:1, 1 Corinthians 6:1, 1 Timothy 1, and Leviticus 18). While Trail Life USA is well aware that the culture may promote various sins as natural, Trail Life USA defers to the truth of Scripture that states that these behaviors are sin. Trail Life USA leaders should communicate that God’s grace extends to every form of sin when there is confession, repentance, and dependence on Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).*

of recommended steps that should be considered before deciding to dismiss the boy from the program.

1. **In any situations involving physical alter- cations** (which may include bullying or hazing or threats involving the brandishing of weapons), sexual activity, illegal use of drugs or alcohol, or other bullying, **the parents of the boy(s) who are involved should always be notified and included in the process.** Also, if the Charter Organization has additional policies or guidelines regarding the behaviors being addressed, refer to the Charter Organization for input. If approved by the parent, the trusted Troopmaster and/or Troop Chaplain plus one other adult (maintaining two-deep leadership) should discuss their concerns with the offending boy in a **compassionate manner. “Here is why we are concerned. Here is why this behavior contradicts the Oath or Motto.” Share the Scriptural references regarding these behaviors.** Boys should be given the opportunity to understand their error, show remorse, repent, and participate in determining a plan for changed behavior. Accountability should be established in a manner which preserves confidentiality and upholds youth protection policies.
2. **If the boy member does not show remorse**, does not agree to a plan of action, or repeats the behavior of concern, **Troop leadership should meet with the boy’s parents/guardians** as soon as possible. Troop leadership should explain in a compassionate manner why the behavior is of concern, why it contradicts the Trail Life USA Oath and/or Motto and what steps have been taken to assist the boy in addressing the issue. Following this meeting, the boy should be given another opportunity to show genuine remorse, repentance, and a commitment to a plan for changed behavior. Accountability should be established in a manner which preserves confidentiality and upholds child safety and youth protection policies.
3. **If the boy member denies the behavior** while—in the opinion of Troop leadership—the evidence is compelling, Troop leadership must stand for truth and challenge the boy member to be truthful. Troop leadership should explain that grace is available to all, but where truth cannot be found, grace will not be applied. If, in the opinion of the Troop leadership, the boy member refuses to be truthful, then Troop leadership should meet with his parents/guardians to explain the evidence, to describe the **consequences that are available dependent on the boy member’s** willingness/unwillingness to be truthful, and to request that the parents/guardians counsel their boy member. Troop leadership should offer the parents/guardian and the boy member an agreed upon and reasonable time to respond to the evidence and the possible consequences.

4. **If the boy member fails to respond**, continues to not accept responsibility for the behavior, does not show remorse, does not agree to a plan of action, or repeats the behavior of concern (or other inappropriate behavior), Troop leadership should again meet with the boy and his parents/ guardians. At this meeting, discussions should center on engaging a pastor, **priest or other church leader within the boy's** preferred denomination. Outside ministries that specialize in the issue at hand may also be engaged at this time. The object of this meeting is to work on a plan of action in order to assist the boy in understanding his behavior, its consequences and work to over- come it. If the parents and boy understand the concern around the behavior and are willing to implement a plan for change, then the boy should be allowed to remain in the Troop. The Troop volunteers are not expected to provide counsel (this is the job of the parents), but rather show support and acknowledgement of the worth of the boy.
5. **If the above avenues have been exhausted** and the boy continues his behavior, refuses to recognize the behavior as contradictory to the Oath and/or Motto, and/or poses a threat to other boys in the Troop, he should be asked to leave the Troop, which will also terminate his membership in Trail Life USA. The goal for every Troop should be to try to keep the boy in the Troop, provided that it does not jeopardize the health or safety of others. The decision to ask a boy to leave a Troop should be one covered in prayer and discernment and in which counsel of the Pastor and/or Charter Organization Representative is sought. To ensure the protection of the Charter Organization and volunteer leadership, any behavior which involves allegations or suspicions of child sexual abuse should also be reported to law enforcement and/or child protection agencies, and immediately thereafter to [Legal@TrailLifeUSA.com](mailto:Legal@TrailLifeUSA.com) and should include in the details the contact information for any state or federal agency to whom it was reported (including the date of the report, who reported it, and the report number assigned).

## **Uniforms**

It is preferred that youth and adult Trainmen wear the official Trail Life USA formal uniform (called the "Troop uniform") to all meetings, activities, and ceremonies. However, the Troop may prefer that youth and adults wear the Trail or Travel Uniforms. Handmade or locally produced uniforms are not permitted.

**Trail Uniform** – An inexpensive t-shirt bearing the Trail Life USA logo and Troop Level insignia.

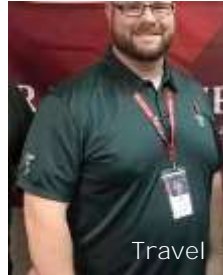
**Travel Uniform** – A nice polo for use in traveling or for wearing to Troop meetings.

Embroidered with the Trail Life USA logo and bearing the Troop level insignia on the sleeve.

**Troop Uniform** – A formal uniform for Troop meetings or formal dress occasions. This same uniform is used by all levels of Trailmen including male adults.



Trail



Travel



Troop

All uniform options including options for women are available in the online Trail Life USA store at [www. trailifeusastore.com](http://www.trailifeusastore.com).



## Uniform Insignia Placement Guide

There are standard uniform insignia guidelines that apply to any uniform insignia placement.







# THE NAVIGATORS PROGRAM

# Chapter 4 - THE NAVIGATORS PROGRAM

- Objectives**
- Understand the Characteristics of Navigator-Age Boys
  - Understand the Basics of Advancement, and the Patrol Method in the Navigators Program

## Characteristics of Navigator-Age Boys



**Navigator-age boys** are anxious to move up from Woodlands Trail and take the outdoor program to the next level. They enjoy hiking and camping just like the older Adventurers but they benefit from more structure and supervision. It is good for these boys to get as involved in the planning process as they are able. They learn much from the decisions you make, but they learn even more from the reasoning behind the decisions.

Early adolescents are in a challenging state of development. They move through puberty at varying times and rates, yet they share several important characteristics in common.

These boys are experiencing major changes in height, weight, and body chemistry, along with rapid sexual development. This accelerated growth pattern, together with their tendency to be very active, causes frequent fatigue in early adolescence. Many find it hard to cope with this change and they tend to compare themselves unfavorably to their peers. At the same time, they are often concerned about their ability to learn and whether or not they can meet the expectations of parents and other adults.

Navigator-age boys are sensitive to the reactions of other people. While they are starting to exert a level of independence, they still have a strong need for approval from others and may react strongly to disparaging remarks or criticism. Even so, they may often be somewhat thoughtless to their own peers. They seek associations and relationships with people, things, and new ideas. They crave peer group approval and acceptance, and they need close friends their own age who can relate to their ups and downs.

Most Navigator-age boys enjoy team sports where they thrive on competition, work hard at perfecting their skills, and respect good sportsmanship. They seek values in simplified, concrete forms, are often extremely idealistic, and demand fair treatment. They are usually excitable, easily motivated, creative, inquisitive, and eager to explore, but their attention may wander if they are not active participants in learning situations.

One of the goals of Trail Life USA is to develop fitness: mental, moral, physical and emotional.

Navigators-age boys have at least four areas adult leaders and Trail Guides should be aware of as they guide these boys. Following are areas of development in Navigator-age boys.

### Mental Development

Navigator-age boys:

- o Display a wide range of individual intellectual development
- o Are in a transition period from concrete thinking to abstract thinking
- o Are very curious and have a range of intellectual pursuits, few of which are sustained
- o Prefer active (over passive) learning experiences
- o Prefer interaction with peers during learning activities
- o Respond positively to opportunities to participate in real life situations
- o Are often preoccupied with self
- o Are mostly interested in what is happening now. They have a hard time thinking ahead to the future, or considering the long-term consequences of their actions
- o Have a strong need for approval and may be easily discouraged
- o Develop an increasingly better understanding of personal abilities
- o Are inquisitive about adults, often challenging their authority, and always observing them
- o May show disinterest in conventional academic subjects but are intellectually curious about the world and themselves
- o Are developing a capacity to understand higher levels of humor

### Moral Development

Navigator-age boys:

- o Are generally idealistic, desiring to make the world a better place and to become useful
- o **Are in transition from moral reasoning which focuses on “what’s in it for me” to that which considers the feelings and rights of others**
- o Often show compassion for those who are downtrodden or suffering and have special concern for animals and the environmental problems that our world faces
- o Are moving from acceptance of adult moral judgments to development of their own personal values, yet they tend to embrace values consistent with those of their parents
- o Rely on parents and significant adults for advice when facing major decisions
- o Begin to look for role models to pattern themselves after and are developing stronger ideas of right and wrong
- o Increasingly assess moral matters in shades of grey as opposed to viewing them in

black and white terms characteristic of younger children

- o At times are quick to see flaws in others but slow to acknowledge their own faults
- o Owing to their lack of experience are often impatient with the pace of change, underestimating the difficulties in making desired social changes
- o Are capable of and value direct experience in participatory democracy
- o Greatly need and are influenced by adult role models who will listen to them and affirm their moral consciousness and actions as being trustworthy role models
- o Are increasingly aware of and concerned about inconsistencies between values exhibited by adults and the conditions they see in society

### Physical Development

Navigator-age boys:

- o Experience rapid, irregular physical growth
- o Undergo bodily changes that may cause awkward, uncoordinated movements
- o Have varying maturity rates
- o May be at a disadvantage because of varied rates of maturity
- o Experience restlessness and fatigue due to hormonal changes
- o Need daily physical activity because of increased energy
- o Develop increased sexual awareness
- o Are concerned with bodily changes that accompany maturation, such as an increase in nose size, protruding ears, long arms, and awkward posture
- o Have preference for junk foods but need good nutrition
- o Often lack physical fitness, with poor levels of endurance, strength, and flexibility
- o Are physically vulnerable because they may adopt poor health habits or engage in risky experimentation with drugs and sex

### Emotional Development

Navigator-age boys:

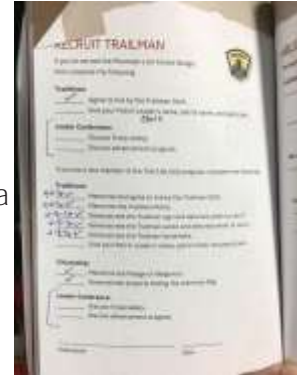
- o Experience mood swings often with peaks of intensity and unpredictability
- o Can be moody and dramatic and may revert to childish patterns under stress
- o Need to release energy, often resulting in sudden, puzzling outbursts of activity
- o Seek to become increasingly independent, searching for adult identity and acceptance
- o Are increasingly concerned about peer acceptance
- o Tend to be self-conscious, lacking in self-worth, and sensitive to personal criticism
- o Exhibit concern about physical growth and maturity as profound physical changes occur

- o Increasingly behave in more masculine ways
- o Are concerned with many major societal issues as personal value systems develop
- o Believe that personal problems, feelings, and experiences are unique to themselves
- o Are psychologically vulnerable, because at no other stage in development are they more likely to encounter so many differences between themselves and others
- o Have a strong need to belong to a group, with peer approval becoming more important as adult approval decreases in importance
- o In their search for self, model behavior after older, esteemed students or non-parent adults
- o May exhibit immature behavior because their social skills frequently lag behind their mental and physical maturity
- o Are beginning to see their parents as imperfect beings and may begin to chafe at some restrictions imposed upon them by adults
- o Experiment with new slang and behaviors as they search for a social position within their group, often discarding these new identities at a later date
- o Must adjust to the social acceptance of early maturing girls and the athletic successes of early maturing boys, especially if they themselves are maturing at a slower rate
- o Are dependent on parental beliefs and values but seek to make their own decisions
- o Are often intimidated and frightened by their first exposure to middle school experience because of the large numbers of students and teachers and the size of the building
- o Desire recognition for their efforts and achievements
- o Like fads, especially those shunned by adults
- o Often overreact to ridicule, embarrassment, and rejection
- o Are socially vulnerable because, as they develop their beliefs, attitudes, and values, the influence of media and negative experiences with adults and peers may compromise their ideals and values

### **Navigators Rank Advancement**

During their three years in the Navigators program the boys work on rank advancement. Their ranks represent a growing ability to operate comfortably, safely, and confidently in the outdoors. These skills will form the foundation of later adventures and teach important life lessons in character development.



Navigators participate in a true outdoor program with hiking, camping, and other activities. They are in more of a learning mode, developing their core skills with adequate supervision and easing gracefully into camping by patrols. As they climb through the ranks of Journey Trailman, Able Trailman, and Ready Trailman, they will lay a safe and comfortable foundation for the challenges of the Adventurers Program.



Navigators have nine required Trail Badges they must complete. Ideally, the Trail Badges will be taught over an 18-month period with the goal of covering each Trail Badge twice in the three year Navigators experience.

With boys constantly entering the program, ample provision is made for every boy to have a chance to comfortably complete his nine required badges with an opportunity to make up anything skipped during an absence.

Navigator Program Year and Month	
<i>Crossover from Mountain Lion</i>	
	1 — June/July
	1 — August/September
	1 — October/November
	1 — December/January
	1 — February/March
	1 — April/May
<i>Crossover from Mountain Lion</i>	
	2 — June/July
	2 — August/September
	2 — October/November
	2 — December/January

	2 — February/March
	2 — April/May
<i>Crossover from Mountain Lion</i>	
	3 — June/July
	3 — August/September
	3 — October/November
	3 — December/January
	3 — February/March
	3 — April/May

*\* Nights requirement will require additional monthly campout participation to complete*

By always teaching the series of badges in the same order, a natural staggering effect is realized where the second 18-month class set occurs six months later in the year from the first. That makes it convenient when band, athletics, or other recurring obligations cause boys to miss meetings at the same time each year.

Two weeks of the month the Navigators Trailman works on required badges. The third week of the month he joins with the Adventurers. That leaves the last week of the month free for a special activity or as makeup time if the age group falls behind schedule.

If a Navigators Trailman misses out on badge work during the meetings, he can work on his requirements outside of meetings with his Mentor.

### **Navigators Patrol Structure**

There is certain wisdom involved in separating out the Navigators from the Adventurers most of the month, and allowing these boys to learn within their own leadership structure. Thirteen-year-old boys gain an opportunity to try on a real leadership role that is not readily afforded when older boys are present. Yet they still have monthly mentorship from the older boys, which provides them with a model to emulate the rest of the month. Navigators have a simple patrol structure. The youth leader is a Junior Patrol Leader, and members are called upon as needed to handle certain jobs during meetings or activities according to the duty roster. They should camp, cook, and eat by patrol during outings whenever practical. Junior Patrol Leaders should



maintain order unless they encounter undue resistance from the patrol members in question. Preferably the Trail Guide or Trailmaster only gets involved when youth leaders are not making satisfactory progress and then, if possible, only to the extent of backing up the Junior Patrol Leader's authority. Direct involvement in correction should be an avenue of last resort.

More on this in Chapter 15.

### Junior Patrol Leaders (JPLs)

The only formal youth leadership position in Navigators is the Junior Patrol Leader. This youth officer is tasked with helping his patrol (typically of six to eight boys) succeed by delegating responsibilities among patrol members as needed and working alongside them to reinforce the value of leadership by example. It is his job to arrange duty rosters on outings. **He is a member of the Officers' Conference.**



In smaller Troops, Navigators and Adventurers may be blended together into a single mixed-age Patrol, with an Adventurers Patrol Leader and a Navigators Junior Patrol Leader working together. However, when there are enough boys it would typically work best to have separate age-level patrols for the Navigators and Adventurers programs.

Later, you will see in the chapter regarding Youth Protection, that Trail Life USA Child Safety Guidelines dictate that boys should share tents with other boys of the same program group (e.g. Navigators tent with Navigators, Adventurers only tent with Adventurers, etc.). That is easiest to accomplish in separate Patrols.

On a joint activity with Adventurers, JPLs are subject to the direction of Adventurers Patrol Leaders but they themselves remain in charge of their own patrol members.

Voting for Junior Patrol Leader is the first experience with democracy that many of these boys have. They learn important lessons about voting for capable leaders rather than always voting for popular ones.

Remember that a boy is not necessarily serving as a Junior Patrol Leader because he is a good leader. Rather, he typically learns how to be a good leader by serving as a Junior Patrol Leader. That means that, by default, the boy leadership structure is a challenge. Often it is the failures that teach the best lessons.

**As an adult leader don't be afraid of failures, but welcome them as learning opportunities.**

Oftentimes the lessons learned will depend on how you as an adult leader cast the situation as a learning experience.



*Perhaps you can share these facts with boys or adult leaders who may question their readiness:*

*David Farragut, the U.S. Navy's first admiral, became a midshipman on the warship Essex at the age of 10. At the age of 12, a mere boy by modern standards, Farragut was given command of his first ship, sailing a capture vessel, crew, and prisoners, back to the U.S. after a successful battle. Young David was given responsibility at an early age, and he rose to the occasion.*



*The father of our country, **George Washington**, though never thought to be particularly bright by his peers, began to master geometry, trigonometry, and surveying when he would have been a 5th or 6th grader in our day and ceased his formal education at 14 years of age. At the age of 16 he was named official surveyor for Culpepper County, Virginia. For the next three years, Washington earned nearly \$100,000 a year (in modern purchasing power). By the age of 21, he had leveraged his knowledge of the surrounding land, along with his income, to acquire 2,300 acres of prime Virginian land.*

## The Meeting Schedule

	NAVIGATORS	ADVENTURERS
<i>Troop Meeting with Breakouts</i>		
MEETING 1	Required Badge work for the <b>Navigator's level</b>	Required Badge work, High Adventure/Travel planning, Special programs, Mentoring
<i>Troop Meeting with Breakouts</i>		
MEETING 2	Required Badge work for the <b>Navigator's level</b>	Required Badge work, High Adventure/Travel planning, Special programs, Mentoring
<i>Navigators/Adventurers Meeting</i>		
MEETING 3	Navigators and Adventurers levels meet in Patrols for youth-to-youth mentoring and Patrol camping planning	
<i>Optional Local Meeting</i>		
MEETING 4	One of the above meeting types, a week off, a service project, field trip, special event planning or Youth Leadership Planning meeting	

# Chapter 5 - THE NAVIGATORS TRAILMASTER

**Objectives** Learn How to Manage a Navigators Patrol and Your Relationship with other Leaders

## **You, the Trailmaster**

The smart Trailmaster recruits good Trail Guides and delegates responsibilities to involve a wide range of talent and experience, and to keep from becoming overwhelmed. How they are deployed depends a lot on circumstances:

- If you have more than one Navigators patrol, they will benefit from having Trail Guides assigned to each.
- Trail Guides may also be used as experts in various skill areas such as cooking, knot tying, first aid, or camping.
- The qualifications and duties of these positions are discussed in the next chapter.

The campout is going well. It's a clear October evening with a refreshing cool tang in the air. Some of your Navigators Trailmen are experienced Trailmen and they already have their tents pitched and their gear stowed. Others who just joined a couple of months ago seem quite lost. But Travis, one of your patient Trail Guides, is observing a Junior Patrol Leader showing them how to slide both of the shock cord poles through the tent sleeves before putting the pole ends into the corners.

Trailmen come into your patrol with minimal outdoor skills and with your help graduate into Adventurers as confident and comfortable outdoorsmen.

You were uncertain about taking the Trailmaster job when it was first offered, but now you can't imagine living any other way.

Another one of your Trail Guides, Clint, interrupts your contemplation, "Thinking deep thoughts? Coffee is ready. Get it while it's hot!" Fact is, you were thinking deep thoughts. One of the new Navigators Trailmen reminds you of yourself when you were his age. That is part of the experience. Now go get your coffee—it will feel good on a cool evening.



## **Your Position**

Your leader is the Troopmaster. He relies on you to manage the Navigators Program and to be the officer in charge after dismissal to programs. You are the team leader of Navigators Trail Guides.

## Your Major Focus

Indoors, your major focus is to cover the requirements of the nine Trail Badges central to Navigators advancement. Outdoors, you prepare your boys to have enjoyable and safe adventures that are integral to the way Trail Life USA changes lives.

Your program efforts are the bridge that turns the Woodlands Trailman of yesterday into the Adventurers Trailman of tomorrow. This combination of old (supervision) and new (**independence**) may prove challenging at times. That's ok—really—for life would be terribly dull without challenge. Your training will equip you to meet that challenge and be effective leading boys along the Trail Life.

### Scenario One:

During a campout, you overhear a noisy dispute between a patrol member and his Junior Patrol Leader over an item on the patrol duty roster. "This is the third straight campout where I had to get up early and cook breakfast on Saturday!" To this the Junior Patrol Leader says loudly, "And you're going to keep on doing it until you finally get it right! You never pay attention to what you're doing and we have to eat this junk!" You look around for the Trail Guide that was assigned to supervise that patrol and remember that he's off looking for more propane lantern mantles in the Troop trailer.

### ***What's Wrong?***

There are several things wrong here:

- o It is a failure of youth leadership to shout back at an irate patrol member. The moment he starts yelling, he has lost the argument.
- o The patrol member obviously did not have adequate training for the job he's doing.
- o Perhaps the patrol member has a legitimate grievance.
- o The repeating assignment was made in the form of a punishment or threat.
- o Did the youth really let his attention wander, and if so, was there a legitimate reason why? Does this situation call for a leader conference?
- o The Junior Patrol Leader said "never" rather than "for the last three times." Criticism with "always" and "never" is rarely justified.
- o If the Troop trailer had been properly loaded in the first place, the Trail Guide would be available to handle this.

### ***How You Might Handle It:***

There are no hard and fast answers, but try this:

- o Walk over and ask, "Trailmen, is there a problem here?" Even though you overheard



- them, listen to both sides of the story, one side at a time.
- o Suggest to the Junior Patrol Leader that he work with the patrol member to cook breakfast together.
  - o Speak with the Junior Patrol Leader at a different time about constructive feedback. **Advise against using “always” and “never” rather than a specific number of faults.** Duty rosters must be fairly drawn up and never used as a form of discipline.
  - o **If the youth who can’t keep his mind on breakfast** is preoccupied with something, does he need a leader conference? Ensure he understands this it is not a disciplinary hearing.
  - o Resolve to sort out the Troop trailer before the next campout.

### Scenario Two:

It is an autumn night, and a sudden cloudburst has gusts of rain whipping sideways into the tents. For most people, this is simply part of the adventure. For a couple of boys sharing tent number three, water has entered the tent and soaked the bedding. The boys are cold, wet, and miserable.

#### ***What’s Wrong?***

These boys just learned an unpleasant lesson about how to properly pitch a tent. They had the edge of the ground sheet sticking out from under the edge of the tent and one of the boys had his sleeping bag positioned with his feet pressing against the tent wall. Both of these mistakes cause water to come in.

#### ***How You Might Handle It:***

This is a time to put the boys’ welfare above your own. Not taking their misery seriously would cause a major problem with their relationship with the Trail Life and with your leadership. Find dry bedding and a dry place to put the boys until the tent can be made habitable. Explain to them why the water came in and how to prevent that from occurring in the future. You do not need to rub it in—nature has already made the point perfectly clear.

#### SELF CHECK:

#### The Navigators Trailmaster

The following questions check your understanding of the chapter. Some of the questions have more than one right answer and you should try to pick the best one.

1. You report to:
  - a. The Troopmaster
  - b. The Troop Committee Chairman
  - c. The Charter Organizational Representative
2. Your main emphasis during Troop meetings is:

- a. Commanding the boys to obey you
  - b. The nine required Trail Badges
  - c. Maintaining Constructive Discipline
3. A new Navigators Trailman is having trouble setting up a tent. Your best course of action is:
- a. Help him set up the tent
  - b. Show him how to set up the tent and work with him until he gets it right
  - c. Find a more experienced boy and ask him to help
4. You are the leader of:
- a. The Navigators Trail Guides
  - b. The Junior Patrol Leaders
  - c. All Navigators Trailmen
5. You are approached by a Navigators Trailman who complains his Junior Patrol Leader (JPL) is unfair in assigning duties on an outing. Your best course of action is:
- a. Take the JPL aside and remind him that fairness is an important leadership skill
  - b. Review the patrol duty roster and decide if it should be rewritten
  - c. Ask the Trailman to explain to you why he thinks his assignment is unfair

Answers: 1a, 2b, 3c, 4a, 5c

# Chapter 6 - THE NAVIGATORS TRAIL GUIDE

**Objectives** Learn How to Manage a Navigators Patrol and Your Relationship with other Leaders

## **You, the Trail Guide**

Jimmy is frustrated. It's the third time he's asked you if he had tied the taut-line hitch right, and the third time you've had to tell him, "No." Ron, one of the older boys, was helping him. Ron knows perfectly well how to tie a hitch but he's not very good at giving instructions. You know how to tie a hitch too, and you also have training and experience handling Navigator-age boys. You stand right next to Jimmy to hold the rope so when you tie the knot it won't look backwards to him. You go through the motions slowly, one at a time, knowing that looking at something and seeing it are two different things. "Now let's see you try it." With a little coaching, Jimmy gets it right. Encouraged by his success, he tries to tie the hitch without your help and gets it right again. When you ask him to go tell the Trailmaster that he's passed the requirement, he's visibly relieved and feeling very pleased with himself. Your attention turns to Ron. "I want to teach you a new skill. It's called the TEAM method—a teaching skill. I watched you trying to get Jimmy to tie a taut-line hitch. You were very patient with him. With a little work, you will make a good instructor and help us get these new boys up to speed." Helping Jimmy without embarrassing Ron is not something you always knew how to do. Your fellow Trail Guides have set a good example for you and you find yourself picking up some of their good habits.

### Your Position

You are assisting the Navigators Trailmaster. Depending on circumstances, you may be assigned to a particular Navigators patrol or to teach a particular skill to all patrols. You may have an ongoing job assignment or you may simply go where you are needed. You have the most direct contact with youth, and that makes your job very rewarding and very challenging.

### Your Major Focus

Navigators patrols are teams and you are an integral part of that team. The success of that team becomes your success and a source of joy and pride. Because you are part of a small group, you see the boys as individuals with unique strengths and weaknesses. You use that knowledge to help them plug into the program most effectively.

You wear many hats:

*Coach* – instilling confidence and the will to succeed

*Cheerleader* – celebrating accomplishments and setting the tone



*Counselor* – taking a genuine interest in the boys as individuals with motives and goals

*Doctor* – solving problems as they occur and keeping healthy patrols

healthy

*Teacher* – instructing the boys in new skills

*Mentor* – providing an example of a life well lived to impressionable young people

*Friend* – both in wanting a friend and being a friend to others

*Teammate* – in joining in the activities with enthusiasm

*Peace Officer* – in that the presence of adult supervision keeps the majority of discipline problems from happening in the first place and upholds the authority of youth leadership



### Scenario One:

On several occasions, a Trailman has come to you asking you to help with a cooking project. Each time you have had to locate another adult leader who could answer the question. It finally becomes a source of frustration.

#### ***What's Wrong?***

No Trail Guide is ever going to be equally good in all types of skills; however, your utter lack of cooking skills is affecting your morale.

#### ***How You Might Handle It***

Cooking over a campfire or propane stove is quite different from cooking at home in the kitchen. Recipes do not involve temperatures and times; they involve appearances, sounds, and smells. That can be intimidating, but chances are there are many people in your Troop with the necessary skill that would help you develop a knack for frying fish in a skillet or making the perfect flapjacks.



## Scenario Two:

Kevin is a gifted child. He seems to have trouble relating to other boys his age, and as soon as he discovers you have a shared interest in science fiction, he becomes your inseparable companion. He would rather talk endlessly with you over whether Star Wars or Star Trek was the better franchise and he wants to know if your smartphone will bring up a sci-fi anime he found on a Japanese website.

### *What's Wrong?*

- o The patrol method is not working on Kevin.
- o Kevin is developing bad social habits that will hamper his future relationships with co-workers or family. Gifted people often have difficulty relating to the people they deal with every day.
- o Your effectiveness as a leader is being severely hampered by Kevin's demands on your attention.

### *How You Might Handle It*

There is no simple answer to this all-too common problem. While not being unfriendly about it, you may begin by redirecting his attention to an activity **he's supposed** to be engaged in, or finding him busy work. It can be very flattering to be that important to a boy who is not even your own son, but you are doing him no favor by encouraging him to hang out with adults and miss the unique experiences of being a child.

## SELF CHECK:

### The Navigators Trail Guide

The following questions check your understanding of the chapter. Some of the questions have more than one right answer and you should try to pick the best one.

1. **Your immediate supervisor is:**
  - a. The Navigators Trailmaster
  - b. The Troop Committee Chairman
  - c. The Charter Organizational Representative
2. **Your main emphasis during Troop meetings is:**
  - a. Planning outings with other leaders
  - b. Whatever assignment you have been given by the Navigators Trailmaster
  - c. Maintaining Constructive Discipline
3. **One of the new boys wants to hang out with you during outdoor activities. Your best course of action is:**
  - a. Try assigning the Trailman to another patrol that can better meet his needs

- b. Be his companion and attempt to figure out why he is not comfortable with boys his age
  - c. Be friendly but firm in asking him to rejoin the boys in his patrol
4. **Best answer: you are the immediate supervisor of:**
- a. The Navigators Trailmen the Trailmaster asked you to serve
  - b. Your role is not supervisory in nature
  - c. All Navigators Trailmen
5. **You leave the campfire for a moment and when you return a Trailman is sitting in your camp chair. Your best course of action is:**
- a. Remember you are there for the boys and let it slide
  - b. Send the Trailman on an errand and be seated when he gets up
  - c. Ask the Trailman to move, and remind him to bring his own chair

Answers 1a, 2b, 3c, 4a, 5c



# THE ADVENTURERS PROGRAM

# Chapter 7 - THE ADVENTURERS PROGRAM

- Objectives**
- Understand the Characteristics of Adventurer-Age Boys
  - Understand the Basics of Advancement and Youth Leadership in the Adventurers Program
  - Understand the Provision for Customization, the Value of High Adventure, and the Role of Adult Leaders

## Characteristics of Adventurer-Age Boys

**Adventurers are older teens** who are ready and willing to make big decisions. Your goal as an Adventurers Advisor or Trail Guide is to step back and let them make those decisions. Your preferred way of giving advice may be to appear not to give advice at all. You may ask a question like, “Does that outfitter have a long waiting list?” or a statement such as, “I think you have to be at least 18 to go on that hike.” The boys will take it from there. It is always better to raise the question than to blurt out the answer. This is somewhat akin to your mother or teacher asking you to use the dictionary yourself rather than asking for the definition of a word. It is also a subtle vote of confidence in their ability to handle the issue themselves.



Where Navigators Trailmen focused on ranks as they became capable outdoorsmen, Adventurers Trailmen are focus on awards that represent increased independence and leadership skills.

### Morals and Values

Adventurer-age boys tend to return to the cultural and social traditions that they questioned just a few years ago. They show an ability to use insight and moral reasoning in their decisions and goals.

### Forethought

As youth mature, they become more able to use forethought, to develop mature work habits, and to find a meaningful place for themselves in society.

### Relationships

Older boys are more self-confident and capable of developing more serious social relationships.

### Growing Independence

Adventurer-age boys become increasingly independent and possess a stronger self-image. They will still have firm bonds of friendship, but may be more confident in their own interests.

They often start to have less conflict with their parents. They are better able to consider their ideas and actions, and to be more reasonable about their needs and wants. They will likely exhibit more maturity and emotional stability.

### **How The Adventurers Program Works**

Adventurers Trailmen have six required Trail Badges targeted at the needs and abilities of older boys. Focus moves more toward servant leadership, teamwork, faith-building activities, and experiences in the community.

The Adventurers Program offers more freedom for older boys who can handle it. You will still have plenty to do, but your work is more subtle, and it becomes easier as the boys take on more of the load.

While the younger age-level programs are much more structured and defined by specific program materials, the Adventurers Program is purposely less structured and more flexible for older boys to customize according to their interests and goals. A unique aspect of the Adventurers program is that different patrols can actually choose to engage in different program emphases. There is the potential to operate multiple Adventurers patrols as if they were separate units. Your charter from Trail Life USA allows you to operate as many different Adventuring programs as you wish. One patrol could be engaged as a backpacking crew. Another may enjoy a variety of high adventure activities. Yet another may choose to focus their program efforts around watercraft.

The point is that the boys at this age can work together socially in a group setting to determine their own interests as a group, and then to pursue those interests in a very rewarding way. It is our goal to make the Trail Life so exciting that a boy would never want to leave the program!

### **Adventurers as Leaders**

Adventurers are 14 to 17 years old. The First Officer and Second Officer, as high profile youth leaders, oversee the Adventurers program. Patrol Leaders will be selected to head each patrol. Typically, after the common opening with kindergarten through 12th grade boys, the Adventurers meet as a group to focus on their own activities. These activities can include working on Trail Badges, although it is more common at this age level for Trailmen to work on badges outside of meetings with mentors. During meetings, Adventurers Trailmen will often focus on more complicated planning for quarterly high- adventure trips.

While Adventurers Trailmen participate in monthly camping trips with their counterparts in the Navigators program, it is suggested that about once every three months they participate in age appropriate adventures that they have planned on their own. Meetings of Adventurers Trailmen can also focus on whatever skills, areas of interest, or activities that the youth leaders schedule.

### The Meeting Schedule

Once each month, Adventurers Trailmen share their weekly meeting with the Navigators patrols. During this shared meeting, they work together to plan the joint monthly camping trips, to serve as mentors to the Navigators Trailmen, to teach outdoor skills, and to complete any other joint activities for that month.

This unique arrangement allows Adventurers Trailmen to both retain excitement and interest in an age-appropriate program with their social peers while at the same time continuing to mentor those younger Trailmen that look up to them.

### Monthly Officers' Conference

Annual and monthly planning is completed at the Officers' Conference, which is composed of the First and Second Officer, Adventurers Patrol Leaders, and Navigators Junior Patrol Leaders. The Officers' Conference should meet monthly to review the previous month and plan the upcoming two months of activities. Extra planning time is also required each year to prepare the general annual calendar as well.

While the youth leaders in the Officers' Conference are engaged in program planning, appropriate input and oversight is also provided by the Navigator Trailmaster, Adventurers Advisor, and Trail Guides who also can attend planning meetings. One other youth leader is

	NAVIGATORS	ADVENTURERS
<i>Troop Meeting with Breakouts</i>		
MEETING 1	Required Badge work for the Navigator's level	Required Badge work, High Adventure/Travel planning, Special programs, Mentoring
<i>Troop Meeting with Breakouts</i>		
MEETING 2	Required Badge work for the Navigator's level	Required Badge work, High Adventure/Travel planning, Special programs, Mentoring
<i>Navigators/Adventurers Meeting</i>		
MEETING 3	Navigators and Adventurers levels meet in Patrols for youth-to-youth mentoring and Patrol camping planning	
<i>Optional Local Meeting</i>		
MEETING 4	One of the above meeting types, a week off, a service project, field trip, special event planning or Youth Leadership Planning meeting	

also part of the **Officers' Conference**—the Quartermaster.

The Quartermaster may seem to supervise equipment rather than people, but that is not so. Equipment could rest safely in a storage facility for many years without the leadership of a Quartermaster. However, loan equipment out to people and a whole host of issues arise—everything from proper use to loss prevention, proper storage, and noting wear and tear.

Patrol Leaders do not merely give structure to the small democracies we call patrols; they also set the tone and exercise great influence over morale. How they can do this well is expounded upon in depth in *The Trailman's Handbook*.

## Youth Leaders

### First Officer

The First Officer is the highest ranking youth in the Troop. He is also a Patrol Leader by virtue of his position and if there are not enough Patrol Leaders available he may also lead a patrol of his own or **stand in for an absent Patrol Leader. He chairs the monthly Officers' Conference** and as a high profile member helps set the tone for the Troop. He works under the supervision of his Advisor and, during joint events with Navigators, the Trailmaster.



While any Adventurers Trailman can become First Officer, those with experience as Second Officer will ease more gracefully into the position.

### Second Officer

The Second Officer is the next-to-highest ranking youth in the Troop and an understudy of the First Officer, learning from him and filling in for him when he is absent. He has the same ability as a Patrol Leader, and if there are not enough Patrol Leaders available he may also lead a patrol of his own or stand in for an absent Patrol Leader. He is a member of the **Officers' Conference**.

Often, the Second Officer is assigned by the First Officer to oversee specific functions for him while he attends to other duties. For example, while the First Officer is working with the Patrol Leaders to set up camp for the weekend, he may have the Second Officer take charge of overseeing some older Adventurers in training younger Navigators in how to set up their tents.

### Quartermaster

The Quartermaster is in charge of Troop equipment and ensures that there is accountability in check-out and check-in of Troop resources, that damage to property is noted, and that

proper equipment is set aside for outings. While he is in charge of objects rather than people, he is very important **to the people who use the equipment and eat the food ... which is to say, everyone. He is a member of the Officers' Conference.**

### Patrol Leaders

These Trailmen help their patrols succeed by directing boys to different jobs on outings and ensuring that duty rosters are fairly drawn up and carried out. They are typically elected to their positions, and lead by example. They are like the leader of their own family. **Patrol Leaders are members of the Officers' Conference.**

By the time a Trailman becomes a Patrol Leader in the Adventurers program, he typically has previous leadership experiences to build on. With more self-control and social skill, he is able to use his leadership to engage his patrol in higher level planning, and participation in events that they look forward to.

### Adult Supervision

The role of Advisors and Trail Guides is primarily to ensure that youth leaders make the proper provisions for safety, budget, planning, and access before commitments are formed. In



the Adventurers Unit, adult leaders retire to the back of the room while boys assume center stage around the “boardroom table.”

Here is where the boys begin to engage in active citizenry in their community and planning activities and events that are of their own choosing and which often require higher level planning skills.

Because of the two-deep leadership principle, at least two registered leaders are required for supervision. If activities are done in cooperation with American Heritage Girls, leadership requirements from both organizations must be met. This becomes problematic if activities are chosen for which the necessary complement of adults is unwilling or unable to participate.

### Customizing the Program

The Adventurers Program as presented in the preceding sections was conceived by many talented people and tested under actual field conditions. Used as-is, it will work well. It can be modified with Navigators and Adventurers meeting together more than once a month, but they will not experience some benefits unique to the age-level divide, and the different age-level advancement programs would still have to be enforced.

### High Adventure

There is a reason why older boys are called “Adventurers!” One thing that separates their high-adventure outings from those of younger boys is the need for specialized preparation,



often including new equipment, new instruction, and new levels of forethought.

### Role of Adult Leaders

The smart Advisor recruits one or more good Trail Guides to assist with overseeing the leadership structure provided by the youth. How they are deployed depends a lot on circumstances.

If you have more than one Adventurers patrol, they will benefit from having Trail Guides assigned to each. Trail Guides may be used as resources to assist the boys in the planning and execution of the program.

The qualifications and duties of these adult leaders are discussed in the following chapters.



# Chapter 8 - THE ADVENTURERS ADVISOR

**Objectives** Learn How to Advise an Adventurers Patrol

Learn How to Work with Your Troop- master, Your Trail Guides, and Your Youth

## You, the Advisor



The smart Advisor recruits good Trail Guides and delegates responsibilities to involve a wide range of talent and experience, and to keep from becoming overwhelmed. How they are deployed depends a lot on circumstances:

- o If you have more than one Adventurers patrol, they will benefit from having Trail Guides assigned to each.
- o Trail Guides may also be used as experts in various skill areas such as cooking, knot tying, first aid, or camping.
- o The qualifications and duties of these positions are discussed in the next chapter.

You remember these boys when they were Navigators Trailmen and needed help pitching tents.

Now they are sitting around the table with a map of Grand Tetons National Park, exploring their options. It is surprising how many wonderful things escape the view of most visitors. Moving off the road is the only way to go into the park rather than merely go through it.

Someone recommended you for the job of Advisor to the Adventurers because they knew you liked to go backpacking and enjoyed orienteering. You hesitated to accept because one of the best parts of the wilderness experience **was the solitude ... being alone with nature. It just wouldn't be the same with a couple of adults and a half-dozen teenage boys.**

Truly enough, the wilderness experience was not the same. Yet what it lacked in solitude, it more than made up for in camaraderie and the satisfaction of seeing a new generation of young hikers make the same exciting discoveries you did, and find some of the things you might have missed.

You see so much of the planning going on without you that it surprises you to need to give advice. "When I was there, I had to use bear canisters for my grub. I wonder if that rule is still in effect." "They have bears there?" one of the boys asks. "Yes, but that won't be a problem if you know what you're doing. Why not get on the laptop and bring up the park site ... I'm sure they have guidelines for safe backpacking."

Moments later, a couple of pages of sage advice from the National Park Service is coming out of the inkjet printer and being passed around. It mentioned bears, but it also warned park visitors not to feed or closely approach wildlife of any kind. Bison may resent a close approach by brash hikers. That “picture to die for” may well cost you your life. You mention for good measure that all Trailmen respect the rules for safe and considerate outdoor adventure. “You are merely visitors, but it is the wildlife’s home.”

### Your Position

Your leader is the Troopmaster. He relies on you to oversee the Adventurers Program and to be the adult officer in charge after dismissal to programs. You are the leader of Adventurers Trail Guides and Youth Leaders.

### Your Major Focus

Indoors, your major focus is to ensure that youth leaders do their job properly, monitor work on the six required activities badges and other advancement activities, and provide responsible but transparent oversight during the planning of activities.



The degree of freedom given Adventurers Trailmen in planning and executing activities will be quite a different experience from managing younger boys. One of your major tasks is to be as unobtrusive as possible in providing the necessary adult oversight, while setting a good role-model of Christian manhood.

The position may be challenging at times, depending upon the

preferred activities of the group. Unless you are certain you have enough qualified Trail Guides to provide two-deep leadership without you, your ability to safely and comfortably engage in high adventure activities may impose de facto limits on what the program can offer.

### Scenario One:

Some of the boys want to go rappelling and are pressuring the others to schedule a hundred-foot drop and a zip-line adventure for October. Three members of the Adventurers Patrol are afraid of heights, one terribly so. The Trailmen in favor of rappelling are clearly pressuring the others not to be a “wet blanket” and urging them to “man up” and try it. There is a minimum group size imposed by the outfitter and without those three boys the trip would not be possible. You can clearly tell by the facial expressions and tone of voice that the exchange is

turning from a discussion into an argument. The boy who is terrified of heights is moving his hands nervously and glancing around. Finally, he speaks up and suggests a kayaking trip instead. “We always go kayaking,” the First Officer retorts. “**Maybe you’re just not cut out for high adventure.**”

### ***What’s Wrong?***

There are several things wrong here:

- o There is an important difference between democracy and mob rule. Democracy respects **everyone’s right to their opinion**—mob rule does not.
- o Everyone has fears and aversions. Many great heroes in American history would not go over a cliff on a rope while facing backwards.
- o Hazing or abusive language is never called for along the Trail Life.
- o There are several types of high adventure. Not enjoying all of them is not a strike against manliness.

### ***How You Might Handle It***

There is no simple answer to this problem, but the answer you choose should take several things into consideration:

- o Is there another outfitter that accepts smaller groups?
- o Is there an activity different from both rappelling and kayaking that everyone enjoys?
- o Ask if the tone and direction of the meeting holds up to Adventurers Program expectations.
- o Ask if the trip is worth potentially alienating and losing three valued patrol members.

### **Scenario Two:**

High-adventure planning faces major challenges. Usually it is expensive, distant, physically demanding, difficult to schedule, requires new and challenging skills, or is a tough sell for parents. The Adventurers are proposing a summer diving trip to a shallow shipwreck off Oahu, Hawaii. The more they speak about the “coolness factor” of visiting a bona fide World War II wreck located in only 80 feet of water, the closer they come to calling for a vote.

### ***What’s Wrong?***

It’s hard to know where to begin!

- o Scuba instruction is extremely demanding, expensive, and time consuming.
- o Airfare from Omaha, Nebraska to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii is shockingly high.
- o Everyone would have to go through an outfitter and rent equipment.
- o There is a certain risk inherent in diving on a shipwreck.
- o A permit is required from the Department of the Navy. Everyone going would need a

background check.

- o Some people who think diving is easy will discover that they are afraid...very afraid.
- o Most parents would go absolutely ballistic.
- o But, there is nothing inherently wrong with this scenario, provided the youth and supporting adult leaders are actually prepared to follow through with the proper planning, training, and consideration that is required to plan a trip like this! These are difficult challenges, but never feel you must say 'NO'; rather consider what it takes to say 'YES.'

### ***How You Might Handle It***

Rather than flat-out refusing to support the motion, allow the common sense of older teens to catch up with their enthusiasm. Ask thought-provoking questions, or make statements about the twelve-hour flight and hoping they could raise that kind of money. Perhaps alert them to a much less expensive and much more parent-friendly trip to Florida to snorkel on a coral reef. The important thing is to let the youths themselves discover the practicality of their original idea.

### **SELF CHECK:**

#### **The Adventurers Advisor**

The following questions check your understanding of the chapter. Some of the questions have more than one right answer and you should try to pick the best one.

1. **Your leader is:**
  - a. The Troopmaster
  - b. The Troop Committee Chairman
  - c. The Charter Organizational Representative
2. **Your main emphasis during Adventurers Pro- gram meetings is:**
  - a. Leading the meeting
  - b. Providing discrete supervision of youth leaders
  - c. Maintaining Constructive Discipline
3. **During an Officer's Conference, someone suggests what appears to be an impossible goal for an outing. Your best strategy is:**
  - a. As the adult advisor, remind them that setting realistic goals is a skill of successful men
  - b. Compromise by suggesting an alternative activity that is similar but doable
  - c. Ask open-ended questions about how they plan to overcome the obstacles, which will help them discover the truth for themselves

4. **Best answer: you are the leader of:**
- a. The Adventurers Trail Guides
  - b. Your role is not supervisory in nature
  - c. All Adventurers Trailmen
5. **An Adventurers Trailman is deathly afraid of heights on a rappelling activity. Your best course of action is:**
- a. Strongly encourage him to make at least one descent so he will see it is not as frightening as he thinks it is
  - b. Ask the Trailman why he is afraid of heights— perhaps talking about the fear will help him deal with it.
  - c. Ask the Trailman to assist with support functions and with the safety equipment on the ground at the event, and thank him for his help

Answers 1a, 2b, 3c, 4a, 5c



# Chapter 9 - THE ADVENTURERS TRAIL GUIDE

**Objectives** Learn How to Supervise an Adventurers Patrol  
Learn How to Work with Your Advisor and Your Boys

## You, The Trail Guide

Sure, your title is Trail Guide, but out there on the canyon rim trail you are one of the guys. It's a bit hot and the air is still, so you are mindful of the need to keep properly hydrated. "It's been a while since I've seen any canteens," you say.



At least everyone remembered to put on their sunblock this time. You find yourself tempering the enthusiasm of youth with some discipline and forethought, but the need to do this occurs less and less with the older boys.

When the Adventurers Patrol started, things did not run nearly as smoothly. The first backpacking trip was frustrating for the younger boys when a few "jackrabbits" thought to lead the way by hurrying along and leaving the others far behind. Eventually the lead boy could not hear the ones in the back complain. You solved that problem next time by putting the slower boys up front to act as pathfinder. Your training prepared you to exercise good influence without becoming the boss. Phil, your Adventurers Advisor, not only enjoys your company on trips, he also appreciates you taking up some of the slack so he can concentrate on the unique aspects of his job.

### Your Position

You are assisting the Adventurers Advisor.

Depending on circumstances, you may have a job assigned to you or you may simply go where you are needed. You have the most direct contact with youth, and that makes your job very rewarding and very challenging.

### Your Major Focus

Adventurers patrols are teams and you are an integral part of that team. The success of that team becomes your success and a source of joy and pride. Because you are a part of a small group, you see the boys as individuals with unique strengths and weaknesses. You use that knowledge to help them plug into the program most effectively.

Your work may take you to physically challenging locations and test your nerve. After all, it is high adventure. Meeting the challenge and passing the test may prove uniquely rewarding if you are serious about adequate preparation and realistic expectations of the body God gave

you.

You wear many hats:

*Coach* – instilling confidence and the will to succeed

*Cheerleader* – celebrating accomplishments and setting the tone

*Counselor* – taking a genuine interest in the boys as individuals with motives and goals

*Doctor* – solving problems as they occur and keeping healthy patrols healthy

*Teacher* – instructing the boys in new skills

*Teammate* – joining in the activity with enthusiasm

*Mentor* – providing an example of a life well lived to impressionable young people

*Friend* – both in wanting a friend and being a friend to others

*Peace Officer* – since your presence alone will discourage the majority of discipline problems, and you convey authority to youth leadership by supporting their decisions



### Scenario One:

The hiking trip down and up Wilson's Canyon sounded great on paper and looked even better in the video. However, about a third of the way down the trail, Hosni began complaining that he



was tired and needed to rest. The complaints got more and more frequent as he labored under the hot sun to keep on the narrow switchback trail. You begin realizing it would be a miracle if he made it all the way down with that rucksack on, so you begin carrying it yourself. Even that is not enough to keep Hosni from wilting.

### *What's Wrong?*

There is blame to spread around here. Certainly the rucksack may have been lighter if Hosni had not brought extra items in it, but whose fault was it for not having a shakedown before the hike? And what about some extra physical conditioning hikes in the months leading up to the main trip that could have pointed out a need for more exercise and less junk food?

### *How You Might Handle It*

By this point your options are limited. You need to summon a park ranger. Predictably you do not have cellphone reception where you are, but you ask one of the people up ahead to



contact a staffer at the bottom of the canyon. If at all possible have at least two adults with the boy while waiting for help to arrive. Your options for shelter from the sun are limited but make sure he is hydrated and get him to sit down by the side of the trail.

#### Scenario Two:

Your patrol has already bedded down for the night. You are having trouble sleeping so you are awake to hear footsteps outside. Of course it may be someone that made a late-night trip to the latrine but you feel the need to look outside and make sure. What you see makes you **angry...it is Shawn carrying a bag of chips and a carton of soft drinks. You know** that did not come from the supplies you packed in and ask him where he got them. "From the market down the road," he answers.

#### ***What's Wrong?***

- o Shawn left the campsite without permission
- o The buddy method was not used
- o The food was contraband

#### ***How You Might Handle It***

It is obvious that Shawn knew what he was doing was wrong. It is also obvious that his behavior was very risky. The proper response depends on several circumstances such as **Shawn's past record, the size of the infraction, and how he acted when he got caught. It** should be guided by a balance between knowing the importance of rules and the importance **Advisor would be involved. If the offense were even worse, the Troop Committee and the boy's** parents might get involved, but probably not in this case.

Certainly constructive discipline may be called for, but the immediate issue is typically handled by a conference with the Trailman, followed by redirecting him to the appropriate activity at hand. A severe rules infraction that places someone in danger may require the Troop Committee to consider a period of time that the Trailman may be forbidden to take part in certain activities. In any event, there is no reason to embarrass him in front of his friends by informing the rest of the patrol of what happened or what his punishment was. You should never involve more people in a disciplinary action than necessary.

Make sure Shawn understands that any actions you take are for his own good rather than to punish a perceived offense against you. Discuss with him which aspects of his behavior were unacceptable and why. You may want to ask him what he thinks would be a fitting punishment before you make your final decision.

Take the Self Check on the next page.

#### SELF CHECK:

#### The Adventurers Trail Guide

The following questions check your understanding of the chapter. Some of the questions have

more than one right answer and you should try to pick the best one.

1. **Your leader is:**
  - a. The Adventurers Advisor
  - b. The Troop Committee Chairman
  - c. The Charter Organizational Representative
2. **Your main emphasis during Adventurers Pro- gram meetings is:**
  - a. Ensuring that youth leaders follow procedure
  - b. Providing discrete supervision of youth leaders
  - c. Maintaining Constructive Discipline
3. **Best answer: you are the leader of:**
  - a. The Patrol Leaders
  - b. Your role is not supervisory in nature
  - c. All Adventurers Trailmen
4. **An Adventurers Trailman is deathly afraid of heights on a rappelling activity. Your best course of action is:**
  - a. Strongly encourage him to make at least one descent so he will see it is not as frightening as he thinks it is
  - b. Ask the Trailman why he is afraid of heights— perhaps talking about the fear will help him deal with it.
  - c. Ask the Trailman to assist with support functions and with the safety equipment on the ground at the event, and thank him for his help

Answers 1a, 2b, 3c, 4c

# ADMINISTRATION

# Chapter 10 - THE TROOP COMMITTEE

- Objectives**
- Understand the Role of a Well-run Troop Committee in a Successful Troop
  - Understand Your Job on the Committee
  - Understand How the Troop Committee Should Function
  - Understand Recruiting and Selecting Leadership

## Why a Troop Committee?

The Troop Committee supports the work of direct contact leaders by stewardship of Troop equipment and funds, managing business affairs, ensuring that trained leadership and adequate facilities are provided, and administering advancement.



The more Troop Committee members know about the general working of the Troop, the better. This is particularly true for an Advancement, Equipment, or Activities Chair.

## Required Positions

### Committee Chair

The Committee Chair is a Christian man or woman at least 21 years old who is appointed by the Charter Organization Representative, either from within the organization or from outside, based upon ability, experience, and willingness to serve. Committee Chairs must be able team-builders, administrators, recruiters, and delegators.

As Committee Chair you preside over committee meetings, recruit other committee members and adult leaders for approval by the Charter Organization Representative, and indirectly oversee direct contact adults through the Troopmaster.

You determine the agenda for the committee meeting and your sense of fair play and camaraderie helps divergent opinions of committee members to become a coherent policy that everyone can accept.

You are the spokesperson of the group, taking the concerns of the committee to direct program leaders or, through your Charter Organization Representative, to your organization's Institutional Head. If called upon to consider a disciplinary action involving an adult or youth Troop member, you oversee careful deliberations with concern for the privacy of all individuals concerned. In certain cases, you may need to convene a smaller subset of the committee to address specific issues or concerns. In handling sensitive matters, you should work closely

with the Charter Organization Representative and the Troopmaster.

The Committee Chair gauges progress the Troop is making in serving Trailmen through being aware of advancements, fiscal management, and enrollment, and looks for ways to keep the Troop health strong. The Vision of the Trail Life USA program is to help boys grow into godly men. If adult leadership is not achieving that, it is your duty to advise or counsel them, assist them by recruiting new volunteers and resources, or replace them.

**Although you are “in charge,” there are certain ongoing and special activities that can and should be done without full committee approval.** An Advancement Chair can sign advancement paperwork, a Treasurer can write checks, and an Activities Chair can look into that trip to the Boundary Waters area without coming to you.

Here is a list of things you should insist upon. It may not contain all the priorities for your circumstances, but you should insist that:

- o Monthly Troop Committee meetings are held
- o Multiple regularly scheduled Troop meetings are held each month
- o Openings in top leadership positions are filled in a timely manner
- o Regular communications take place with the Troopmaster and Chaplain
- o Religious activities are scheduled for the Trailmen
- o An ambitious program toward Trail Life USA Spiritual Awards is developed
- o An active group discipleship program exists
- o An active age-appropriate outdoor program for each group exists
- o Service projects take place both with and separate from other groups in your congregation
- o Some activities are scheduled where the pas- tor(s) from the congregation can participate with the Trailmen and their parents

### Chaplain

Your presence on the Troop Committee reaffirms the importance of a vital relationship with God in the development of a boy into full and honorable man- hood. You help set the reverent tone for meetings and activities, ensure that religious obligations and opportunities are properly handled on outings, manage and promote the approved Faith Building Activities, and set an example for both Trailmen and Trail Leaders to follow through your personal conduct.

On weekend events, Troops should hold an outdoor service and, depending upon the faith tradition of the Charter Organization, you may be asked to organize, officiate, or participate in one. You would be responsible for ensuring all required resources were present for a simple yet meaningful service, and for choosing willing and qualified assistants.

Sometimes, the Troop Chaplain provides other services to Troop families such as spiritual guidance to grieving families, helping needy families connect to resources, connecting Trailmen and leaders to Church pastors for guidance, etc.

### Charter Organization Representative (COR)

Chosen by the organization's Institutional Head, the COR manages relations between the Troop and the Charter Organization. Your job, properly done, is more than a name on the charter. The relationship between the Charter Organization and Troop is much more pronounced in Trail Life USA than it is in other youth development organizations. You represent the interests and policies of the Charter Organization to Troop leadership and also represent the needs and desires of the Troop to the Institutional Head. You have the right of final approval on candidates for volunteer leadership positions.



When you are doing your job right, conditions are excellent for a mutually beneficial relationship between the Charter Organization and Trail Life USA. The COR is the organization's National voting representative.

### Treasurer

The steward of the Troop's financial resources, you also supervise fundraising efforts and always have ready the current balance of the Troop.

You are one of the two signatures that must appear on any checks written. You make sure that checks written to the Troop are marked for deposit only and promptly deposited in the bank or credit union. You keep up with any accountability documents needed for government or organizational use. You also make sure that requests for reimbursement or expenditure are in keeping with the policy of Trail Life USA and all applicable laws.

### Troopmaster

The Troopmaster is the chief executive officer of program activities who coordinates the meetings and activities of the four program levels. As a voting member of the Troop Committee, you represent the Ranger, Trailmaster, Advisor, and Coach. You are a high profile member who helps set the tone of meetings and activities.

You can also be present at the monthly youth leaders' meeting (Officers' Conference), and you should be carefully chosen to be an excellent role model. You would be a natural choice to represent the Troop leadership at special occasions and to act as a spokesperson at such events as may arise.

## Suggested Additional Positions

### Troop Onboarding Facilitator

The Troop Onboard Facilitator will orient new families, walking them through the Troop Fast Start Checklist and making sure they understand the customizable *Welcome to Our Troop* letter.

#### Advancement Chair (AC)

Duties of the AC may include recording Trailman advancements to free up other leaders, keeping the committee updated on advancement in the Troop, purchasing (with the Treasurer) insignia and advancement recognitions to be presented, and assisting in presentation of recognitions.

#### Outdoor Activities Chair (OAC)

Works with the Troopmaster to create an out- door activity calendar and makes reservations for campgrounds and other facilities to support that calendar. The OAC ensures that special activity equipment such as archery gear, climbing gear, canoes, etc. are available and transported to the site, and that it is transported in accordance with TLUSA policies when applicable.

#### Training Chair (TC)

Duties of the TC may include keeping a record of adults trained in specific skills needed to conduct certain activities, notifying those skilled adults when their certifications are about to expire, notifying interested adults when training sessions are available, and keeping the committee updated on the status of training in the Troop. The TC should promote training opportunities to encourage participation.

#### Secretary

Your job is to make sure that decisions of the Troop Committee are properly recorded, and that fliers, notices, and other communications of the Troop reach their intended recipients. You manage the telephone chain for adults and prompt (if necessary) Patrol Leaders to be diligent in calling members of their patrols if a problem arises. You may be asked to help manage the Troop website or social media resources or to document events with photos.

#### Other Committee Positions

Other positions can be created to handle specific duties as deemed necessary by the Committee Chair including a Webmaster, Community Service Coordinator, Fund Raising Coordinator, etc. A full list of positions can be found in the document titled Troop Level Positions.

### Meetings

Regular Troop Committee meetings should be held monthly, and special meetings may be called for issues of immediate concern, such as the replacement of a vital leader. While the direct contact leaders run the Troop meetings, the Troop Committee runs the Troop—members should strive for regular attendance and come prepared to be productive.

A suggested agenda for monthly Committee Meetings can be found in the position description document called *The Role of the Troop Committee Chair*.

## Selecting Leaders

One of the most vital functions of the Troop Committee is ensuring the continuity of effective leadership for the unit. If a primary leader (Troopmaster, Ranger, Trailmaster, Advisor, or Coach) asks to step down, the process of selecting a replacement should begin immediately. If a primary leader leaves suddenly, a qualified acting replacement should be chosen at once. Remember that all leaders, although supervised by the Committee Chairman, must be approved by the COR—so it is always good to involve the COR early on in the selection process.



It is vital to the ministry of Trail Life USA for leaders to:

- o Be capable adults of good Christian character and temperament
- o Agree to and abide by the Trail Life USA Statement of Faith and Values
- o Understand, and agree to live by the Trailman Oath
- o Understand and adhere to TLUSA Child Safety and Youth Protection Policies
- o Agree to become properly trained.

An excellent way to get good leaders is to prepare well in advance. Use adult interest surveys or ability inventories to get to know your extended Trail Life family better. Find reasons to ask parents with special skills, resources, or interests to participate in teaching, providing refreshments, arranging transportation, or judging events. If you get them to wade into the shallow waters of casual participation, they are more likely to accept a registered position later and will integrate faster into the carefully controlled chaos of meetings and events.

Review the ideals of Trail Life USA and the elements that make up effective Troop meetings and activities. Then make a list of people who have the necessary enthusiasm and interests and who enjoy working with the boys. Do not worry about how busy the person is or whether you think they would enjoy being a Leader: the candidates should make that decision themselves. It may surprise you how many people react. After listing prospects, rank these people in order of suitability. Once you have agreed as a group on the top three candidates, get the short list approved by the head of your Charter Organization before you approach anyone. Then you can call upon them one-by-one starting at the top until you have found someone willing to serve and be trained.

Someone with experience as a Leader may move up within the Troop. If not, you may have to



coldcall one of the parents of a Trailman or even talk to someone new to Trail Life USA. There is a time-tested best way to do this to help ensure success.

When you visit a candidate, take at least three people. It is best to arrange the meeting by asking to speak with them about an issue affecting young people in the area. Travel together either in one vehicle or by meeting up in a pre-**arranged spot near the candidate's** home.

Explain to the candidate how they were selected and that they are at the head of the list and accept- able to the Charter Organization. Make sure they have a positive yet realistic appraisal of what the job will entail, including any unique strengths and challenges in your Troop. If they accept, thank them and explain that a routine check of references will be needed before they are installed. Have them fill out an on-line adult application, then end the visit on a positive note.

After you have **checked the candidate's suitability**, verify their application is approved and contact them to welcome them aboard and schedule basic training.

You may go through your first three candidates without finding a suitable leader. Choose three more and begin the process again. It is important not to get discouraged—God will find a way for you.

# Chapter 11 - YOUTH PROTECTION

- Objectives**
- Understand YOU are responsible for Child Safety and Youth Protection and the Basics of Protecting our Youth
  - Understand the Two-Deep Leadership Policy and Buddy System
  - Learn How to Properly React and Report
  - Understand the Importance of Regular Instruction on these Issues for Youth

“The Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in its publication ‘*Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-Serving Organizations*’ (Saul & Audage, 2004) has highlighted the importance of sexual abuse prevention for children and teens who participate in programming provided by youth serving organizations. These organizations represent a broad array of programs and organizations which include youth sports (e.g., organized football and baseball leagues), mentoring programs (e.g., Big Brothers & Big Sisters), and activity and leadership focused programs (e.g., Boys & Girls Clubs, Boy Scouts of America).”<sup>3</sup>

## Child Safety and Youth Protection Policies

Trail Life USA is dedicated to equipping Charter Organizations and volunteer adult leaders to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others, and experience outdoor adventure in a healthy and safe environment through a program of education and the establishment of procedures and policies focused on the prevention of emotional, physical, spiritual, and sexual abuse.

All members – both adults and youth – share the responsibility of protecting and safeguarding our youth. These responsibilities include attention to the following:

### *Volunteer Leader screening, including*

- o Volunteer applications, including reference checks, and recommendation by Charter Organization
- o **Agreement with Trail Life USA’s Statement of Faith and Values**
- o Successfully passing Criminal Background Check before approval of adult volunteer leaders
- o Additional Criminal Background Check as scheduled by Trail Life USA
- o Satisfactory passing of Child Safety Youth Protection Training before approval to

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<sup>3</sup> “*Prevention is Better Than Cure: The Value of Situational Prevention in Organizations*,” Keith L. Kaufman, Ph.D., Haley Tews, B.S., Jessica Schuett, B.S. and Benjamin Kaufman, B.S. (2012)

serve as an adult volunteer leader

***Know the Environment to Keep Youth Safe***

- o Being aware of other events and individuals who might have access to the area
- o Previewing facilities before events and evaluating the safety of the location
- o Knowing who will be in attendance

***Education about protecting the health and safety of youth***

- o Child Safety Youth Protection Training must be regularly renewed as directed by the Home Office
- o Being vigilant for signs of child neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and child sexual abuse – ***including sexual abuse or inappropriate sexual conduct by other youth***
- o Abusers cannot be easily identified and are typically trusted by children and their families, **NOBODY IS ABOVE THE RULES – ALL SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR OR VIOLATIONS OF POLICIES MUST BE REPORTED.**

***Mandatory Reporting and documentation of incidents and/or allegations***

- o Regardless of whether you observe it or hear it second hand Trail Life USA requires you to report to law enforcement and/or child protective services,<sup>4</sup> Trail Life USA, and the Charter Organization any good-faith suspicion or reasonable belief that any child is or has been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused or neglected, has been (whether in person, online or through communication devices) exposed to sexual exploitation, child pornography, solicitation or enticement, or obscene material.
- o It is also mandatory to report to Trail Life USA and the Charter Organization of any violations of Trail Life USA Child Safety and Youth Protection Policies.
- o Report what you have seen or heard immediately and document.

Sometimes even people that we trust do things that are wrong, and can intend to misuse our trust and hurt us. Any act that threatens to harm another’s physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual health is wrong. Unfortunately, there are some adults or even other youth who sexually abuse children. **Any sexual contact with a youth – regardless of who the other person is – is wrong and should be reported.** The following guidelines can help to reduce the possibility of that happening:

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<sup>4</sup> For the appropriate agency to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect, go to the Child Welfare Information Gateway, [https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl\\_dsp.cfm?rs\\_id=5&rate\\_chno=W-00082](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/reslist/rl_dsp.cfm?rs_id=5&rate_chno=W-00082) or call the National Child Abuse HOTLINE: 1-800-422-4453.

***All members are to adhere to the Trail Life Oath, Motto, and policies***

- o Immoral conduct, including physical violence, insults, illegal drug, or alcohol use (including under-age and excessive drinking), any sexual conduct outside of a biblical model of marriage (one biological man and one biological woman), inappropriate language, theft and deceit are inconsistent with Trail Life USA values and policies.
- o All activities are to follow the policies and guidelines set forth in the **current** *Trail Life Health and Safety Guide* including obtaining appropriate permissions from the Charter Organization and parents.

***Everyone should respect youths' privacy – especially when it comes to toilets, showering, and sleeping arrangements.***

- o Separate accommodations, showers, dressing/ changing areas, and restrooms for adults and youth are required.
- o It is never acceptable for an adult to be on or in the same bed.
- o No interaction between adults and youth in a bedroom or a bathroom, except in limited situations required due to health and safety concerns, in which case the no one-on-one rule must still be followed
- o While youth will be in close proximity with one another during these times, additional safety procedures apply even youth-to-youth (such as Woodlands Trail, Navigators and Adventurers tenting only with “buddies” their own age.
- o **Any** sexual activity or overtures are strictly prohibited.

***A minimum of two (registered) adult leaders must be present for each activity (Two-deep policy)***

- o **Although parents'** participation is welcome, a parent who is not a registered member (thereby trained and screened) is not considered part of this two-deep leadership requirement.
- o Of the two required Registered and trained Trail Life USA Adult Leaders, those 18-20 years of age may count for one of the two-deep leadership positions required in the Youth/ Leader Ratios and for satisfying the two-deep leadership requirement. The second leader must be age 21 or above except overnight activities where the second leader must be age 25 or above.

***A youth should never be alone with only one adult (unless it is his parent) (No-one-on-one policy)***

- o This includes electronic communications such as texting and on-line communications;
- o This includes transportation to and from TLUSA activities;

- o Stay in areas designated for the activities and keep doors open.

***Adults and youth are not to have “secrets,” nor are adults to provide “special treatment,” gifts or “forbidden items” (e.g., tobacco, alcohol or allowing risky behavior) to youth.***

*There should be no secret activities, meetings, or clubs.*

*Appropriate clothing should always be worn – especially for swimming activities.*

*Hazing, bullying, physical hitting, and/or corporal punishment (even if intended as discipline) are strictly prohibited.*

*Youth leadership should always be monitored by adult leaders.*

***No inappropriate physical contact***

- o No “rough-housing,” butt-slapping, massages, or inappropriate hugs
- o No touching of children in the genital, breast, or buttocks areas
- o Children may not sit on the lap of an adult other than their parent
- o Children should never be touched against their will unless they are in clear danger

***Cameras, cell phones, and other electronics should never be used inappropriately or in any way that can violate someone’s privacy or cause them any harm.***

***Discipline should always be based on the betterment of the child, never the result of anger and should never belittle, insult, or demean the child.***

***Discipline should never be physical, e.g., spanking, slapping, pushing, or hitting, nor ever involve a deprivation of food, sleep, shelter, medical care, or other neglect.***

Youth members are instructed that if anyone fails to follow these guidelines, they should report them to their leaders and to their parents. It is the right thing to do and can help to protect them and others from harm. Likewise, adult leaders are to report any violations of the guidelines directly to Trail Life USA and to the Charter Organization of the individual violating the rules.

## **Youth On Youth Sexual Abuse Awareness <sup>5</sup>**

Youth organizations are now more often recognizing cases in which children are victimizing other children. Of all sexual crimes committed against children, over one third (36%) are committed by other children. Approximately 1 out of every 4 (27%) child sexual abusers started sexually abusing children when they themselves were children. The average age at

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<sup>5</sup> Thank you to Richard J. Mathews for his contribution to this section of the document, © 2017, All Rights reserved. No revisions, modifications or derivative works are authorized without the specific permission and authorization of Richard J. Mathews.

which abusers committed their first criminal sexual assault was *14 years old*.

Because victims of child sexual abuse generally allege that the organization (church) is responsible for their injuries on the basis of negligent selection, retention, or supervision of the perpetrator, many such cases have been lost due to the failure to implement appropriate safeguards in the selection and supervision of employees and volunteers who work with children. This even applies to other children volunteers (e.g., youth staff). Therefore, screening, background investigations, reference checks, and interviews before the individual's involvement are essential.

*In many cases, there were several warning signs, red flags that observers (even parents) ignored because they did not rely on their instincts. They overlooked "minor" boundary violations. Even other youth can potentially "groom" younger or more vulnerable children to expose themselves or "experiment" – particularly in a society which now pro- motes individuals questioning and even "redefining" their sexuality. Some experts have indicated that being gay or questioning their sexuality increases the risk of children being victims of sexual abuse.*

Children do sexually abuse other children. In addition to recognizing when a child's sexual knowledge or behavior is more advanced than his age, some of the warning signs to look for include:

- o Early sexual behaviors/acting out, sexual abuse, or early exposure to pornography
- o Over-sexualization during childhood adolescence
- o Stimulating, exciting, arousing contact with other childrenChildren and teens engaging in sexual activity or sexual talk with each other (even if not "same sex" talk), including sexual jokes
- o Repetition of, patience in, and consistently "crossing the line" and engaging in inappropriate activity

Interviews of juvenile offenders who sexually abused other children revealed that:

*Adolescent sex offenders:*

- o Tend to be boys
- o These juvenile offenders were between 8-11 years old when they first started sexually abusing other children, they **"liked other boys;"** then at 18-20 **"knew not supposed to have sex with children; but fooled around with children as a child and continued it."**

*Awareness of youth sexually abusing other youth indicates:*

- o Often situational or experimental behavior – taking advantage of an opportunity
- o More prevalent among generally delinquent youth

- o Rationale for assault: “wanted to know what it felt like”; “didn’t think that I would get caught”
- o Often the victim and abuser have a “current or former romantic relationship”
- o Attributed to the fact that brain development and self-control is very different – behavior may be more impulsive than compulsive and they may not have sound judgment –which is why they need adult guidance
- o Boys can be enticed to act out sexually
- o “Motivation more often exploratory” – “friends can play a role in kids being more sexually active
- o – if opportunity exists and thinks he can get away with it”
- o “Curiosity is a huge motive for youth engaging in child sexual assault”
- o More likely to occur at school, “but could likely occur on campouts also”
- o Often in cases **where they were active sexually from age 5**. In most cases, the victims were typically known to the juvenile offender – they focused on male victims between 11 and 18 years old. **They got youth interested in sexual discussions, which led to sexual behavior.**
- o Some offenders before the age of 18 were molesting older boys, with a smaller age difference
- o The majority of victims were under the age of 12 years old

### **Additional Policies To Prevent Youth On Youth Abuse**

The following guidelines must be followed at all times including at the meeting location, camping, or during other outings.

#### ***Buddy system***

- o Inasmuch as is possible, and particularly in bath- rooms and other sensitive situations, groups of three or four
- o Within the same program group (e.g., a group of Foxes, Hawks, Mountain Lions, Navigators or Adventurers)
- o Buddies change frequently to prevent “favorites” for grooming by an abuser

#### ***Restrooms***

- o Youth should use the buddy system above for restroom visits
- o Two youth should not be alone in the restroom; either they go in and come out as a group of three or more, or they go in one at a time.
- o Usage by youth should be closely monitored by a leader outside the restroom for



adherence to the guidelines listed here.

- o Should be monitored by leadership before and after meetings when buddy system is often dropped because parents are “in-charge” of youth

### **Camping & Activities**

- o Trail Life USA standards restrict boys to only tent with buddies of the same program group (e.g. Navigators tent with Navigators, Adventurers only tent with Adventurers, etc.) unless they are siblings.
- o Whenever possible, three or four boys should share a tent, rather than only two.
- o The same rules above for restroom usage apply to bathhouse usage on overnight trips.



### **Youth Protection**

All adults are required to support and help youth members adhere to the teaching and instruction they are given in *The Trailman’s Handbook for Navigators and Adventurers*:

*“Your mind, your body and your soul are three things over which you have certain rights that other people cannot take away. A doctor may need to examine you in a very personal and private way, but if it makes you feel uncomfortable tell your parents or ask one of them to be with you during the examination. People may say things to you about ideas with which you don’t agree. If people go beyond what you think or have been taught is reasonable, or if they ask you to see, read or do things that make you feel uncomfortable—whether it’s a physical act or a spiritual one—you have the right to refuse it, and that is precisely what you should do. If they offer you alcohol, illegal drugs, or ask you to help them steal something, or they touch you or ask you to touch them in inappropriate ways, go find someone you trust and tell them. Tell them more than once if you have to, or tell other trusted adults. If you can’t get through to them, find someone else until you are believed.*

*How do you know if something is wrong? One of the best things to do is to look for God’s direction. It is that gut feeling based on reason, love, and developing your conscience by studying moral issues and the Bible’s teaching on them. The more you develop your conscience, the easier it will be to know what the right thing to do is. Adults should know better than to ask young people to perform sexual acts, disobey the law, or violate their religious principles. It is **never** your fault if someone asks you to do something wrong, even if they say it is. **“Say NO, then GO, and TELL.”***

### **Incident Reporting**



In the event of an accident, injury, or violation of TLUSA policy, the following steps should be taken:

- o Keep yourself, the affected youth and others calm;
- o Encourage, affirm, reassure and communicate with the youth;
- o Youth health, safety and protection are the main priority;
- o Summarize in writing the details, facts and action taken;
- o In addition to any required reports to law enforcement or other agencies, an incident report should be filed with Trail Life USA and the Charter Organization as soon as possible, certainly within 24 hours. A Trail Life USA Incident Report can be found online.

# Chapter 12 - FACILITY REQUIREMENTS

**Objectives** Understand the Requirements for a Safe and Comfortable Meeting Space

Learn How to Be a Good Neighbor to Your Charter Partner

Learn Best Practices with a Troop Trailer and External Storage

## Facility Requirements



The Troop is typically chartered by a church or Christian organization, usually with a few large rooms and several smaller rooms. The different age-level programs need separate meeting spaces. While this is most easily accomplished in different rooms, it could potentially work using different corners of a large all-purpose room.

The Troop should meet in a place that is safe and comfortable, but not luxurious. Avoid distractions in meeting rooms such as classroom equipment that may pose an attractive nuisance. It is important that the program itself holds the Trail- man's attention.

The main room should be large enough to accommodate boys as they are seated and as they work on projects and perform ceremonies. Give thought to spaces where different age groups can go after dismissal to programs. You will also need a place where you can safely and conveniently store props such as flags, flip charts, ceremonial items, and records.

Some rooms seem ideal in mild weather but become stifling in summer or chilly in winter. Work to ensure year-round comfort for Troop and committee meetings.

### Weekly, Monthly and Special Facility Needs

The anticipated time and room requirements for the Troop are as follows: weekly meetings range from 60 to 120 minutes in length and need a larger room for the opening, and smaller rooms for five distinct age-level groups (Foxes, Hawks, Mountain Lions, Navigators, and Adventurers).

Special event meetings held perhaps 4-6 times per year may need a larger space such as a multi-purpose room, basement, or fellowship hall. Special award nights and/or recruiting fairs (skill demonstrations and project displays) are generally held once or twice a year. Special projects (community service, fundraising support activities, etc.) occur perhaps 2-3 times per year.

## Facility Conflicts

The Troop should clean up and leave the space at least as neat and orderly as it was found. Consider the needs of other groups that use the facility, such as Sunday school classes, social clubs, and other out-reach ministries. They may occasionally have needs for the facility at the same time as the Troop does.

**When time and space conflicts do inevitably occur, have a firm “Plan B”** pre-arranged in the event activities like Vacation Bible School commandeer your room. Communicate changes in meeting place in a timely manner to all Trailmen and Trail Leaders as soon as you learn of them. Even a room full of well-behaved boys is going to be noisy, so avoid possible conflict as you make arrangements for meeting space.

Consider ways your Troop can help with the Charter **Organization’s activities**. Remember the Troop is part of the **Charter Organization’s community outreach**. In keeping relations friendly and stress-free, the Charter Organization Representative will be a great help.

Bulletin boards in public areas, yard signage, and notices should be neat and reflect a respectful and mutually beneficial relationship with your Charter Organization.

Use of fire, woods tools, running water, or other potentially damaging or disruptive materials should follow organizational guidelines and be cleared in advance. The phrase, **“Should you people be doing that here?”** should rarely be heard. Move chairs, tables, and other items to their original locations. The rooms should look as good or better when you leave as they did when you arrived.

If any damage is done to Charter Organization property, it should be promptly reported to the Institutional Head through the Troopmaster or Charter Organization Representative and sincere, adequate reparation made at once.

## Facility Access

Sometimes **the difference between meeting and not meeting is hanging on someone’s key ring**. The ability to reliably access the building is a real issue in some Troops. Perhaps your Charter Organization fully understands your needs and allows you to keep a key. If they **don’t**, make sure they have someone who is trustworthy to let you in.

Establish early on which parking spaces are open for use, and what to do when special events displace your slots.

If you must walk through a room such as a cafeteria or gymnasium to get to your meeting place, figure out in advance what to do if those areas are occupied.

## Comfort and Safety

Be sure to have adequate access to restrooms and drinking water. Arrange in advance to have

adequate climate control—the Charter Organization may only run HVAC when the building is occupied and they need to accommodate you.

Learn and be ready to use fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and fire evacuation routes. Know where to gather outside the building after evacuation.

There should be a first aid kit available at all meetings and Troop activities. Also, if your building has an AED station, make sure adult leaders in your Troop are trained in its proper use. We encourage and stress adult leader training and certification – through organizations like the American Red Cross, American Heart Association, and The Wilderness Institute.

### Troop Trailer

**If you have a Troop trailer, select a leader’s home or a place on the Charter Organization’s property that can hold it safely. Look into insurance issues to make sure your investment is protected. If possible, keep photographs of all covered items and retain sales slips for ease in establishing your claim. Sadly, in today’s world a trailer that is not protected by a good lock may as well not have a roof or sides. Do not count on the basic decency of a burglar not to steal equipment used by children. There are people who take gifts from under Christmas trees, and they won’t hesitate to loot your trailer. Additionally, a “trailer hitch lock” will reduce the possibility of someone simply stealing the entire trailer!**



Thought should be given to how things are stored in the Troop trailer to encourage people to put things back in an orderly manner the way they got them out.

Depending on state laws, your trailer may need a license plate. It definitely needs working brake (as required by law), signal lights, and a chain to ensure it does not separate from the hitch on the road. The tires should be in good condition and properly inflated, and the load should be evenly distributed. It is also advisable to have a spare (inflated) tire on all trips.

### External Storage

You need storage space for tents, camping gear, props, and other essentials. This should be a secure location which the group and the church staff can access through lock and key.

**Depending on the size of the group’s membership, this space may be as small as a locker in a garage or basement or as large as a small 10x10 room (for larger groups).**

There are practical considerations for suitability such as extremes in temperature, humidity, harmful pests, and last but not least turf issues. If it is a prime location, no doubt there will be other people in the Charter Organization that have an eye on using it as well.

Equipment should be clearly marked and neatly stored in a way that encourages Trailmen—

and Trail Leaders—to put things back the way they got them.

# Chapter 13 - TROOP EQUIPMENT

- Objectives** Learn What Constitutes a Well-Equipped Troop
- Learn Advice for Parents on Obtaining Equipment for their Son

## How Much is Enough



**God gave you a wonderful world** to explore, and wonderful boys to enjoy it. Troop equipment is what you use to bring these together safely and comfortably. To keep too much equipment from becoming a distraction, or too little of it from becoming a handicap, you need to identify a happy medium. Money can never truly compensate for a lack of creativity and forethought in program planning. On the other hand, minimal or cheap equipment will spread misery and discourage attendance. To find your happy medium, start with the most essential items, selected wisely to balance quality and economy, and work your way out to a well-rounded Troop. To prevent constant rebuying, put this equipment in the care of a trained, reliable person. In doing this, a good Quartermaster is not optional.

Do not purchase exactly enough items to service your current membership—allow for growth of the Troop and for breakage or loss. Depending on your outdoor program emphasis, you may need other things not found on the suggested lists.

## Meeting Equipment

The Charter Organization should provide you with tables and chairs. You will have to provide an American flag, a Troop flag, and their bases (all available in the Trail Life USA online store). Your Charter Organization may also provide a flip pad, places to store records and equipment, and a computer with access to the internet for entering advancement records and conducting Troop business. You will also need a box of equipment commonly used during meetings for advancement requirements such as natural fiber rope, synthetic rope, a source of flame for fusing nylon rope, whipping cord, first aid supplies, Troop compasses, maps, and lengths of line for knot tying, and other equipment. It also helps to have paper and pens for older boys, and arts and crafts supplies for younger boys.



## Outing Equipment

There are two main types of equipment: general and specialized. You should acquire general equipment first. If you plan to do a lot of backpacking, kayaking, or rappelling, you may find yourself looking at a large expense and a maintenance nightmare. Perhaps you will want to rent specialized equipment, especially since you won't know how fun an activity is until you've tried it.



For general equipment for simple car-camping, you will need chuck boxes, properly provisioned (cutlery, paper towels, cups, plates, condiments, cleaning supplies, pots and pans, an oven mitt, etc.), propane lanterns and stoves, propane fuel tanks, various tools (such as scissors, screwdrivers, a crescent wrench, duct tape, and a tent stake hammer) and a first aid kit. For

transporting food, each Patrol will need a large cooler, a smaller raw-foods cooler, a dry-goods box, a 2-gallon drink thermos, and a water jug. You will need a dining fly (canopy) and folding tables. You will need at least three basins of sufficient size to handle a three-step dishwashing and sanitizing regimen.

Decide if you want boys to provide their own tent, sleeping bag, camp chairs, sleeping pads, rain gear, and daily essentials. Your Troop may budget to provide certain items for Trailmen, or you may require Trailmen to acquire their own. There is no right or wrong way to distribute this responsibility, except that it should fit your Troop and it must be acquired since outdoor adventure is essential to the Trail Life experience.

Make absolutely sure you have the approved, legally-required equipment for challenging activities. That is especially critical where water, caving, climbing, or rappelling is involved. Certain activities require certified adult supervisors be present and on guard. Use the outdoor code and safe boating code, as well as the *Trail Life USA Health and Safety Guide*.

### Reusable vs. Disposable Supplies

Disposable supplies can certainly reduce the time spent cleaning up after meals, and they are a cheaper initial expense than buying dishes and flatware. This convenience comes at the expense of generating a lot of trash, and rebuying a lot of materials. In the larger sense, it can send the wrong message to the boys that embracing convenience and the avoidance of work are a successful way to live. Washing dirty dishes after enjoying a hearty meal can be compared to paying bills promptly after enjoying a desirable purchase. It is also a very real way to measure a Trailman's attitude and character when it comes to doing his fair share of the work without griping, procrastinating, or doing a halfway job.



## Advice to Parents

The outdoor program of Trail Life USA is year round. Most Troops meet year-round, and unless road conditions or other unforeseeable circumstances occur, go camping monthly. Most of a Trailman's **preparedness** for both expected and unexpected happenings is in his head, but he needs the proper equipment to ensure his safety and comfort.

It is not necessary to start out with a complete set of gear. Trailmen can share, borrow (check with older Trailmen who have upgraded their gear to find good used equipment), or make their own as they learn what they need and like.

There is always a tradeoff between cost and quality. Top-of-the-line expedition equipment is not needed to keep up with the other boys in the Troop. Famous brand names often cost much more than the equivalent gear purchased from a dealer who has his equipment made for him. However, poorly made gear will not stand up to rugged use, and it can be uncomfortable, unusable, or even dangerous. Good equipment does not have to cost an arm and a leg, and hopefully, this list will help avoid a major financial crisis in your household.

Beware of stylish or trendy gear. Some things that are popular around school are very specialized, such as short ski jackets, etc. Camping gear needs to be versatile, and a pair of boots designed for mucking about in a ski chalet after a tough day on the slopes will be useless mucking about on a mountaintop in a hail storm.

A boy should learn how to use his gear before he gets out into the woods. For example, he should have a new pack adjusted properly, know how to pitch his tent, and light and cook on a backpacking stove (see the specific section on stoves for more info). The Troop will help with **this training wherever possible, but because of limited time, we can't learn everything about** every conceivable brand of equipment that a boy can show up with. It is very discouraging for a boy to go camping with a new item and have it fail to work as he expected it to because no one took the time to help him learn how to use it before it became something he needed to live. This problem is compounded if none of the trip leaders have ever seen it either.

Remember, if you buy a decent piece of equipment and little Johnny decides that camping is just not for him, it can be sold for just about what you put into it. If down the road a few years, he needs to upgrade a pack, or stove, well-maintained good used gear will be snapped up by **parents in the position you're in now.**



# PROGRAM



# Chapter 14 - USING THE OUTDOORS

- Objectives**
- Understand the Opportunities and Challenges of an Outdoor Program
  - Consider Electronics on Campouts
  - Understand the Outdoors is a Year-Round Program Element
  - Realize the Importance of Good Planning Explore Your Summer Adventure
  - Options Read a Word on Insurance

## Importance of the Outdoors



For the majority of human history, fathers continued to be the role models throughout their sons' adolescence that they now are in their early childhood. A boy's education was mostly apprenticeship and centered upon trying to be more like Dad. In those days teens never had to find themselves or to define themselves as individuals by rebelling against their families' expectations. The boy respected and emulated his father—something the father liked, the boy liked, and society liked just fine.

Only recently has the pace of technology made a father's skills obsolete before he could mentor his son. One of the important aspects of our outdoor program is the timeless environment where the experience of adults is never obsolete. The boy once more looks to emulate the man, engaging his heritage as well as his culture.



## Benefits of Outdoor Adventures

- o The technology of proper camping is within the grasp and understanding of boys.
- o Wilderness unites adults and youth.
- o Nature is God's handiwork and emphasizes his beauty, order, and pattern.
- o The pace of outdoor adventure is quite different from the rush and push of modern life.

- o Nature allows boys to more fully appreciate their heritage.
- o Nature builds confidence and fitness.
- o As future stewards, boys will appreciate what they understand and save what they appreciate.

## Types of Outings

One-way people classify outings is by the way they are carried out.

**Field Trips** – These involve travelling to an attraction such as a museum, town hall, amusement park, or farm tour.

**Service Projects** – These are activities meant to improve an aspect of the community.

**Day Hikes** – Generally a short trip by foot involving a day pack or rucksack, comfortable shoes, and no cooking.

**Backpacking Trek** – Usually a longer trip than a Day Hike, involving a full backpack, boots, sleeping in a tent or shelter, and cooking over a campfire or portable stove. Shelters are individual.

**Car-camping (Short term/Long term camp)** – Gear is brought in and out by vehicle. Shelters may be individual or group tents. Frequently large structures like dining flies, propane stoves, lanterns, and chuck boxes are used.

**Water Voyage** – Participants put in at one place along a waterway and raft, float, motor, canoe, or kayak to another place where they take out.

**Tour** – A travel plan that involves touring across a part of the country. Adventurers can combine visiting interesting places with camping along the way. Participants may only stay for a night or two in each location.

People also classify outings by the degree of difficulty.

**Easy** – Pre-packaged, simple adventures such as visiting the zoo. Supervision is augmented by staff members, clearly marked walkways, and adequate signage.

**Moderate** – There may be a few health and training considerations, but it is extremely unlikely that an emergency will arise, and help is nearby just in case.

**High Adventure** – This is an activity where there is potential danger, but it can be minimized through use of proper equipment, training, and safety rules.



**Extreme** – This is an activity where risk can be reduced but not minimized. Extreme sports such as motorcycle jumping, nighttime diving, parachuting, and freestyle skiing are not approved activities for outings.

### Electronics on Campouts

This is a tricky subject. Other than essential electronics such as leaders' cell phones, two-way radios, and GPS, there is no real need for electronics on a campout. Boys may want—but do not need—to stay in touch with their electronic communities. Keeping track of an online auction or social media account, watching videos, listening to music and messaging are distractions, and they are not conducive to getting the most from using the outdoors. Leaving electronics at home also reduces the possibility of inappropriate images – whether intentionally or unintentionally – being taken or circulated.

The object of experiencing the outdoors is to separate from your usual lifestyle so you can think differently and gain new insights.

Romans 1:20 says, “For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.” (NLT)

Before the electronic age, it was easier to know God. There were fewer distractions, and we had time to be still and focus on the earth and the sky. We can see him there! For some urban boys, going camping for the first time in their lives is a life-changing experience. **It's the first time they can drop their façade and just be boys.**

Even those of us that take part in a monthly camping program through an organization like Trail Life USA would be well advised to just disengage from the culture of technology when **we're camping, and treat that as a special time to engage with Christ in his Outdoors.** Adults too will benefit from leaving electronics behind. Dads, please try to plan your personal and business life so you can disengage when you go camping and focus 100% of your attention on **the souls that have been entrusted to you! Plus, it's tough to tell the kids that they shouldn't check their phones if you feel compelled to check yours!**

Instead of just stipulating an electronic policy as a rule, perhaps you can state it as a challenge. Explain the concept of disengaging from the popular culture on a camping trip, and challenge the boys to try that experience. Once they mentally accept the challenge, they will leave the electronics turned off and experience nature complete with silence and time to contemplate life.

That said, you may want to permit device use in vehicles on long drives. **That's fine as long as it is made clear that loss or damage to electronic devices is at the owner's risk.**

You may decide this electronics policy does not apply to recording devices such as digital cameras or camcorders. Unfortunately, the convergence of devices that serves us so well most of the time only complicates the task of enforcement. Some smartphones have excellent cameras, and a boy may rely on his phone for his only visual record of outdoor adventure. Set your policy on electronics use with an eye to establishing an appropriate and reasonable trust relationship with each boy not to use his camera phone for other purposes, including posting photos to his social media account. He can do that during the ride home after the camping weekend is over.

Since smartphones and digital cameras/camcorders are usually quite expensive, encourage boys not to use them in challenging conditions. Better yet, urge the use of single-use cameras, watertight cameras, or simply designating a couple of photographers to free the others to enjoy the experience. You can take a lot of photos or have a lot of fun, but rarely both.

### **Year-Round Activities**

Four seasons means four different opportunities for fun, adventure, and growth. The secrets to being able to enjoy the Trail Life year round are weather and opportunity. Coping with weather is easy if you find something unique about each season that you love and capitalize on it, or if you select activities for which the weather is irrelevant.

Boys will enjoy fair weather campouts more, but they will learn more from challenging conditions.

This is an extremely important lesson since some things in life—a career, a marriage, a new baby—will have sunny moments and rainy moments. It is not surprising that the expression “fair weather friend” describes someone that lacks the commitment to stick with you when the chips are down.

#### **Winter**

If skiing, survival camping, or snowball fights are things you love to do, winter is an opportunity, not a wet blanket. Winter is also a great time for caving trips since the temperature underground is usually steady year round. Proper diet, proper shelter, and proper clothing will keep you warm and dry.



#### **Spring**

Early spring days may be beautiful, but the weather is temperamental. You can expect rain, and if it comes you can break out cards, board games, or other forms of recreation ideal for sitting under the dining fly. Dress in layers that you can easily add or remove and expect chilly temperatures early in the morning or late in the evening.



## Summer

The main challenges of summer are heat, insects, and sunburn. You can easily prepare for bugs and burns. Heat can be kept at bay too if you make sure you stay hydrated, seek shade during the hottest parts of the day, and recognize the warning signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.



## Fall

Some of your best hiking and camping experiences take place in the fall, especially when the trees turn the hues of flame and sun. Dressing in layers is very important, as is good rain gear. With a little forethought and an extra change of clothes **you'll be just fine.**



These descriptions of the four seasons may not describe the seasons in your area of the country, but you get the idea. Experience both the challenges and the rewards of year-round camping where you live!

## Proper Planning

**Proper planning begins long before the campout. When the Officers' Conference is** determining the calendar of activities for the year, the feasibility of each outing should be checked. Certain attractions are not open year-round; others have long waiting lists or may be closed for refurbishment. There may be age limits or restrictions in place. It is better not to find out these things just the week before you leave.

## Safety

Additionally, the current *Trail Life USA Health and Safety Guide* should always be consulted when planning activities and outings. Certain activities are prohibited, restricted or require obtaining additional permission from the Charter Organization and possibly notification to the Home Office. Activities not listed in the *Guide* are prohibited unless permission from the Home Office is obtained. Risk avoidance tips are provided for each activity as well as required safety parameters and supervision for each activity. Certain activities require a current High Adventure Medical Form for youth and adults be completed by qualified medical personnel. There are requirements for CPR/First Aid training, transportation, weather safety, and much more! This valuable resources will protect your Trailmen, Leaders, Troop, Charter Organization and the national organization from harm if judiciously utilized. **The Health and Safety Guide is updated several times a year with new and revised activities, safety information and procedures so it is important to check for the newest version online frequently.**

## Preparing for the Unexpected

With the reservations in and fees paid, life still may throw you a curve. Inclement weather, a wildfire, or other unforeseen circumstances may come into play. Your reservations are



suddenly worthless. You should always have Plan B that you can fall back on. You don't need a new Plan B every month. You can just have one trip ready to pull out of your back pocket whenever it is needed. Perhaps there is a local campground or park you could camp at with some trails or other options to enjoy.

Even when you arrive, the weather may not be what you expected. Instead of sunshine, you have rain or even an early snow. Instead of warm temperatures, it is unseasonably cold. You should monitor the weather right up to the day you leave and come prepared for the **unexpected so people don't end up miserable or disappointed. Prepared** means being able to concentrate for at least several minutes at a time on things other than the weather and how you feel. It also means that your activities do not center on keeping warm and dry. Standing endlessly right next to the burn barrel to stave off a chill is not camping.



Board games, cards, and other foul weather activities can help you pass rainy hours. Be sure games with lots of pieces are properly bagged and are always carefully put away after use.

Know—**don't assume**—what the rules are about camping, fires, trailer access, water access, and expected behavior. Be aware of any curfews or quiet times.

Permission slips from parents should contain more than enough contact information for you to reach them if they are needed while you are away, and to make sure they clearly understand the trip/ activity plan, including the activities being engaged in and when they (or their designee) should be ready to pick up their sons.

Use the 30-Day-Out Rule at all times, ensuring that a month in advance any necessary skills have been learned, experts (if needed) are contracted, directions are known clearly, and reservations have been confirmed and permissions obtained. If there is a glitch, you will have four weeks to solve it.

Be very careful to ensure that two-deep leadership will always be in place, even if someone has to leave early. There should be no one essential person who the Troop cannot do without.

Last but certainly not least; be sure that the spiritual needs of Trailmen and Trail Leaders are met.

### After the Event

Keep notes and documentation of what worked well and why, what failed badly and why, and what was good but could have been better. Build on your successes and learn from your mistakes. After every activity, rate its good points and bad points and you will eventually find what works for you.

Periodically have a shakedown to inspect the condition of Troop camping equipment and to

make sure you don't run out of propane, that tents have the required number of parts (including tent stakes), and that any perishables in chuck boxes have not expired. A rather painless way to do this is to check out tents as they are being packed up and check propane cylinders as they are being loaded up.

The first Troop meeting after a campout is a great time to get Trailmen to talk about what went right—and wrong—with a campout, and see if they would consider doing that trip again next year. It is also worthwhile to use Boards of Review and conferences to ask Trailmen what their favorite trip of the year was, what their least liked trip was, and why.

### **The Summer Adventure**

Parents of sons in some other youth programs often simply exchange money for a week of summer badge achievements. At Trail Life USA boys learn skills in our Trail Badge program throughout the year under qualified adult and youth mentors in their Troop. **Trail Life USA's** program activities emphasize adventure, character, and leadership, which is why we have reimagined summer camp.

Our Summer Adventure focuses less on achievements and more on adventure designed to reinforce our program. It is a time to have fun, to practice skills, and it is only limited by the imagination.

here are many Christian camps available across the country with excellent facilities where Troops can make private arrangements to camp and enjoy a week of adventure together. Your Troop can enjoy a national travel and exploration program while travelling through a part of our country. How about camping at Yellowstone National Park or the Rocky Mountain National Forest? Professional outfitters can assist with everything from Boundary Water voyages to scuba certification programs, climbing and rappelling, horseback adventures, and whitewater experiences.

**Your Troop's Summer Adventure might include a week-long caving exploration, an oceanography camp or other science venue, a tour of the national capitol, hiking on the Appalachian Trail or in the Rocky Mountains, or remote wilderness camping. And perhaps one summer in a Trailman's career, he could enjoy an international adventure or even a Troop mission trip.**

The concept of fun and challenging Summer Adventures is catching hold! In every region of the United States, Troops and Area teams are planning high adventure activities to really put the fun and adventure into the program. If you need some ideas, contact your Area Point Man, another Leader, or check the Member Facebook forum!

Trail Life USA maintains liability insurance for all those participating in Trail Life USA – Charter



Organizations, Troops, members (youth and adults) and/ or volunteers and (during Troop meetings) their family members. Coverage under the program includes general liability coverage which insures against bodily injury, personal injury or property damage; sexual misconduct coverage; automobile liability for hired vehicles or vehicles not owned by Trail Life USA; professional liability; cyber liability and accidental death and dismemberment; and umbrella liability coverage. International liability (trips outside the US, Canada, Puerto Rico) is not covered. Failure to follow *Trail Life USA Health and Safety Guide* and policies and those of your Charter Organization may result in denial of liability coverage. Trail Life USA coverage is secondary to any primary coverage individuals possess. The Troop and adult leaders must also be correctly re-chartered and registered every year to avoid denial of coverage.

Some event locations and Charter Organizations will require a Certificate of Insurance (COI) naming them as an additional insured. Instructions for obtaining a COI are available online.

# Chapter 15 - LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- Objectives**
- See that Boys Need Good Leadership
  - Get an Introduction to the Patrol Method
  - Use Youth Leadership as an Effective Method for Growth
  - Review Trailman Discipline and Performance
  - Read the Trailman Anti-Bullying Policy

## The Path of Leadership

The growth of leadership follows a natural and wonderful path. It begins with the infant boy whose only control over the environment is to kick and cry until things get better in the center of his own private universe. One day he realizes that the faces looking over him and arms holding him belong to other people with thoughts and feelings of their own. As he sorts out these grand implications, he begins the gradual process of moving the center of his life from himself to his community and, finally, to God. As the center of his life moves outward his desire to control the environment shifts with it. This is how leadership works in the boy becoming a man, gradually shifting from a way to receive to a way to give.



## Maturation

Boys are not men in young bodies; they are people who are more of a man than they were yesterday and less of a man than they will be tomorrow. This process of maturation is one of **God's great miracles. Literally every boy is like a reenactment** of the creation where God progressively brings light out of the darkness, order out of the chaos, and beauty out of plainness.

Boys do not mature at the same speed, and each boy is maturing in several different aspects at once which do not progress at the same rate. If you think about these aspects of character as horses in a race, the three swiftest will win, place, and show while others will hang back toward the rear of the pack. Brandon may have sophisticated social skills but act irresponsibly, while Eric is a marvel of efficiency and punctuality—as long as he does not have to work closely with others. This spread in the field is what makes your job so difficult and their adolescence so challenging.

One of the most important skills you have in dealing with boys is in appraising their progress on these different fronts. You want to keep them in the golden brackets, an area of responsibility that is difficult enough to be challenging yet easy enough to be doable. The

best growth in each aspect takes place somewhere in the middle of those brackets. As you decrease the challenge, you also decrease the feeling of accomplishment and the potential for personal and professional growth. As you increase the challenge toward the limits of the **boy's potential, the more frustrating the task becomes.** The middle of the golden brackets is a sweet spot where the feeling of accomplishment and the absence of frustration work best together. The activity is fun, exciting, and forms a memorable step along the journey to manhood.



Boys do not take on a challenge simply because it is hard. Getting them to pursue their personal and professional goals is a matter of finding what they want and making growth the most direct path to getting it. Outdoor programs like Trail Life USA know that boys really enjoy coming to terms with the wilderness with good friends at their side and someone they admire to lead the way.

### **The Gift of Leadership**

A teenager understands that he is not a child anymore and he does not want to be treated like one. Yet in his rush to establish **himself as a young man the teen's self-image** may outstrip his actual progress. His parents are more aware of this than he is, raising the potential for conflict. The child that was obedient yesterday is suddenly a teen pushing back against parental restrictions.

These boys may try to establish their new status through coming-of-age activities such as smoking, drinking, dating, and wearing fashionable or expensive clothes. They need better outlets to expand their legitimate need to demonstrate maturity. When societal vices are shown to be childish rather than manly, boys will be open to more productive and Biblically sound expressions of mature behavior.

It is important to do this through ways such as the patrol method and youth leadership in the Troop. As boys show more mature judgment they can and should be given more freedom and independence, meaning less control. Teen years are a very important period for children to learn norms of social behavior and adults should help them do so.

Adult leaders should work to demonstrate that rather than exercising control, they are giving the gift of leadership. As boys have more leadership ability, they need less and less from their leaders who are increasingly there not to command but explain and guide. Relations should be cooperation based on mutual respect with adults serving as role models of Christian

maturity. Of course since every right bears an equal responsibility, Trailmen should receive increased independence along with increased duties and accountability.

### **Relations with Friends**

Teens have a greatly increased desire to associate with their peers. Keeping in touch with friends may become something of an obsession that may even interfere with home life and studies. Rather than forming relationships based on church or school, they may connect with others on hobbies or common interests. Media such as the internet can turn even the most obscure interests into sizeable communities.

Teens crave acceptance by others. They want friends who understand them, someone whom they can open up to with their problems and concerns and get help. These friends become powerful role models—often more powerful than teachers or parents— **so a boy's choice of friends will have an enormous influence over his further development.** The Navigators or Adventurers patrol can be an important source of friends worth imitating and its wholesome activities an important interest to share in common.

### **Styles of Leading**

There are three styles of leadership a Trailman can pursue. **He can try to be popular** by letting members vote on everything. Doing what everyone else wants to do is a sure way for him to become popular—until he runs into trouble. **He can try to be masterful** by choosing what seems **right to himself and barking out orders, but soon he'll be leading a group of one.** **The best leaders are unifying,** harnessing the experience and enthusiasm of the team while giving it clarity and direction. Leadership should be a service leaders perform for others. Helping Trailmen realize this and find joy in it is your calling.

Patrols in the Navigators and Adventurers programs are safe places for teens to experiment with democracy and leadership. Adults are standing by in case they are needed, but not to fully insulate Trailmen from the consequences—good and bad—of their decisions.

Adventurers will need less coaching than Navigators, but Trailmen of both programs should be allowed to push the limits of their abilities from time to time to encourage them to grow.

When you see youth leaders working too hard at being popular or masterful, it is appropriate to give them advice, but be sure to correct or countermand youth leaders away from the group so as not to undermine their standing in the eyes of their peers. Most of the time, your job is to back up youth leaders so other Trailmen will not constantly be going over their head to adults.

When correction is absolutely necessary, it should be appropriate, constructive, non-physical, and non-demeaning. If a situation requires discipline, the parents and Troop Committee should be involved.

In short, a good rule is to praise publicly and correct privately.

### **The Patrol Method**

One of the great tools of Trail Life USA is the Patrol Method. A patrol is ideally a group of 6-8 boys. This number is suited for small excursions, setting up a tent, cooking and eating together, and practicing how to lead—and follow—effectively.

Some thought should go into how boys are assigned to patrols to ensure that new starters will always have old hands to pass along skills.

The major benefits of the patrol method are:

- o **Responsible Democracy** – Learning that the most popular candidates for leadership may not be the best leaders.
- o **Esprit de Corps** – Experiencing things in groups that they cannot experience alone, such as friendship, encouragement, and cooperation. Made in the image of a triune God, there are parts of that image we must experience through companionship.
- o **Interdependence** – Knowing when and how to trust others and how to be worthy of their trust. Society, family, and the patrol are built upon bonds of trust that have been earned honestly and protected diligently.
- o **Friendly Competition** – Desiring to showcase your best work and measure it against the best work of others. When competition encourages everyone to improve and excel, everyone wins.
- o **Synergy** – Leveraging strengths of people working together, which collectively are better than the strengths of people working alone.
- o **Apprenticeship** – The transmission of winning skills and attitudes from teacher to apprentice goes even further with boys learning from their peers. In the environment of the Trail Life and its patrol method, the skills passed on will be worthwhile and wholesome.

Patrol members do not have to do everything on a schedule, but certain things should be put on a duty roster and done in a structured manner:

- o **Cooking** – Over the course of his career, each boy should gain skills and confidence preparing a variety of breakfast, lunch, and dinner menus. Success is measured in safety, appeal, timeliness, and efficiency. An ideal cook prepares food that is properly done, tastes good, and has items that require different cooking times finish about the same time. This is an enormously important skill for learning self-reliance and project management.
- o **Cleanup** – Washing cooking and serving implements properly is a health and safety

issue. The feeling of accomplishment may be less than cooking a full meal, but in the overall scheme it is equally important.

- o **Fire Tending** – Starting, feeding, and putting out a fire are big responsibilities and they should be taken seriously.
- o **Errands** – Whether it is filling the water containers or retrieving equipment from the Troop trailer, there are no bad jobs, just bad attitudes. When a Trailman is doing unpleasant tasks, his fellow patrol members get some idea what sort of leader he would be. A Trailman who is prompt and cheerful stands a much better chance of being elected Patrol Leader than a one who puts things off and gripes.
- o **Layout** – Every Trailman should have real-world practice in the art of selecting a proper patrol campsite, and determining the correct layout of patrol resources such as tents, campfires, and cooking supplies.



Remember, Trailmen will not always be efficient or even as effective as adults, but your job is to coach, encourage, guide and—when all else fails—rescue.

### Using Youth Leaders



Trailmen must be selected to fill the five official boy leadership positions (First Officer, Second Officer, Quartermaster, Patrol Leader, and Junior Patrol Leader). In *The Trailman's Handbook* and in other places, we sometimes talk about these positions as being elected positions. It is up to the discretion of the Troop leadership team to determine the process of selecting these boy leaders.

While elections are often the best solution, specific situations may require creative selection methods. Trail Life USA supports the philosophy of maximizing local discretion for Troop leaders in individual Troops, provided it is consistent with the faith, values, mission, and vision of Trail Life USA. While some Troops may already have a strong election tradition, other Troops may have greater challenges and specific anecdotal situations that they are dealing with.

It is important that your Troop leadership realize that local discretion by Christian leaders is most valuable. In your quest to establish a strong Troop with an effective leadership team, please prayerfully consider the options that your Troop has with a mind toward fairness.

Once you have selected your boy leaders to fill the required positions, these boys are then empowered within the patrol method to assign the boys that they oversee to perform various leadership functions as needed. On an outdoor-cooking camping trip, the Patrol Leader may **ask Jim to assist with leadership because the focus is on Jim's specialty of cooking.** On a canoe trip, the Patrol Leader may ask Andrew to assist with leadership because he is

experienced in aquatics. Using a flexible leadership method like this will enable many boys in the patrol to have the opportunity to assist with leadership.

### **Enforcing Trailman Discipline**

As Trailmen mature, they are less likely to display behavior issues that need correction. Often, behavior issues are more commonly addressed at the Navigators level than with Adventurers. However, whenever behavior problems arise, there is a precise way to handle them.

As a Trailman, the first avenue to confront a behavior issue lies with the Trailman himself. The Trailman Oath stipulates, “On my honor I will do my best to serve God and my country; to respect authority; to be a good steward of Creation; and to treat others as I want to be treated.” It is always best when a Trailman identifies his own misbehavior before it goes too far, and takes the appropriate steps to correct his actions. The preferred method of discipline is summarized simply by, “**Request to Stop / Counsel / Redirect**” (SCoRe).

***Request to Stop:*** The appropriate youth or adult leader verbally requests the Trailman to stop inappropriate behavior.

***Counsel:*** The Youth or Adult leader takes the Trailman aside for a leader conference. Using leadership skill, the leader discusses the inappropriate behavior with the Trailman. An attempt is made to have the Trailman realize his behavior was not appropriate and agree to correct his actions.

***Redirect:*** Following a successful counseling session, the Trailman is redirected to the appropriate activity at hand.

When a Trailman misbehaves, the Patrol Method offers a built-in procedure to deal with him. **The Trailman’s Junior Patrol Leader or Patrol Leader is the one who should try to work with the Trailman first.** As discussed above, he would use the method of “Request to Stop / Counsel / Redirect.”

The third time that the Trailman needs to be counseled by his Patrol Leader, he is directed to the First Officer who, as the senior youth, is more skilled in his leadership and may be more successful in counseling the Trailman. He too would use the method of “Request to Stop / Counsel / Redirect.”

The third time the Trailman needs to be counseled by the First Officer, he is directed to the adult Trailmaster, Advisor, or Troopmaster. These adult leaders will use higher level leadership skills to further counsel the offending Trailman.

Discipline counseling should always be based on the betterment of the child, never the result of anger and should never belittle, insult, or demean the child. Discipline should never be



physical, e.g., spanking, slapping, pushing or hitting, nor ever involve a deprivation of food, sleep, shelter, medical care or other neglect.

Repeated needs to involve the adult leaders in discipline situations would mandate calling the boy's parents, having them take him home from the event, and eventually involving the Troop Committee when the youth fails to respond.

All Trail Life USA Child Safety and Youth Protection policies must be followed at all times in addressing any disciplinary activities.

### **Guidance for Youth Leadership Performance Issues**

While the previous section addressed Trailman Discipline, it also assumed that the boy leaders are motivated and effective at their jobs. However, that may not be the case.

Challenges may include poor attendance, laziness, setting a bad moral example, lack of experience, unequal treatment of patrol members, ineffective leadership style, etc.

In the worst case scenario, a boy who fails to take his leadership position seriously may need to be removed from his leadership position. You may even hear rumblings among patrol members about impeachment. However, even in what appears to be a hopelessly poor leadership situation, remarkable progress and improvements can be realized. Your skillful adult mentorship is vital, and counseling by adult mentors is the key:

- **Don't correct a boy in front of the other Trailmen.** Correcting a boy leader in front of the Trailmen he is supposed to be leading will create resentment and undercut his authority and destroy his chances of turning the situation around. Rather, wait for an opportune time to pull the boy leader aside for a conference. It is best to do this with two concerned adult leaders. Remember to **follow the "No One-on-One Policy": An adult should never be alone with a boy that is not his own son.** If it is not practical to counsel the boy with another adult leader present, then counsel him in plain view of the others at the event, but off to the side where others cannot hear what you are discussing.
- **Talk when calm and show concern.** The first key to a successful conference is **indicating and expressing your concern for the boy's success.** You display this most obviously by your posture, tone of voice, facial expressions, and other non-verbal cues. You should not attempt to counsel a boy when you are upset with him because your non-verbal cues will give you away. It is better to wait to talk to him when you are calm and you can display the more caring attitude of a Christian mentor.
- **Start your conference positively.** Start the conference on a positive note saying positive things such as, **"Tony, I want to tell you how happy I am that you are in our Troop and that you are learning how to become an effective leader. I see lots of potential in you and I look forward to seeing you refine your leadership skills as you gain experience**



in the months ahead!"

- **Be sincere as you identify the issue.** Without being accusatory, identify the specific leadership challenge using precise examples. Don't use words like "always" or "never." Carefully phrase your words in such a way that the boy does not feel the need to get defensive and so that he does not feel he is being punished. Try saying it in a really nice way, like this: "Tony, I can remember when I was your age, how challenging it was sometimes to get the other boys to listen when we were trying to get something done. I would get angry and raise my voice and bark orders out. I see that you seem to be facing some of the same challenges."
- **Ask the boy to express himself.** Before you go further, ask him for his perspective. Sometimes you will be surprised at just how much he understands the issue he is facing. Say something like, "I know these leadership issues can be very challenging! Do you find yourself getting upset sometimes?" Let the boy express himself. In some cases, he'll just talk himself into fixing the problem. In other cases, you will gain deeper insight into other issues in the patrol or maybe in his life that you were not aware of. Try to see what's going on in his life from his perspective.
- **Offer some simple solutions.** Don't lecture, and don't give him more than he can handle. But do offer a few concrete solutions that he can try to use to address the situation. Be instructive but don't talk down to the boy. Say something like, "Tony, I have two ideas for you. The first one is easy to remember – just count to five! When a boy upsets you, count to five before you respond. By the time you do that, your mind will be calmer and you'll already be figuring out a better approach. The second tip is to try to figure out ways that you can lead by example. Instead of barking out an order to set up the tents, you can make it a challenge. You can say that you want to have a contest to see who can set up their tent the fastest and best. Then you set up your tent at the same time that they do!" End with encouragement. Say, "Tony, I know you really want to do a great job as the Patrol Leader. Your leadership will make a big difference for our Troop. Can you see how focusing on some of the simple methods of good leadership will lead to more success?"
- **Finally, get a commitment and let him know you are supporting him.** Let the boy leader know that you are always available to assist him if he is experiencing a challenge. Extend an invitation to him to come back and seek your assistance if he experiences further challenges.
- **End by seeking a commitment.** "Tony, your extra effort to be an effective leader will make a big difference for our Troop! Can we count on you to do your best to help our Troop with the younger boys?"
- **Thank the boy for his attention, like this:** "Thank you, Tony. I am confident that you

are going to really master this, despite the challenges. **Don't let problems along the way get you down. Keep your eye on the goal!"**

Hopefully, this example of dealing with Tony has given you some ideas for how you can use higher-level leadership skills in your own work as an adult leader in the Troop. Just like Tony faces challenges as a youth leader, you face your own challenges as an adult. You too will need to consider the solutions that you can use to mentor the boys in Christian manhood.

**Don't lose sight of our vision: "To be the premier national character development organization for young men which produces godly and responsible husbands, fathers, and citizens."** That requires your sincerest efforts in the face of challenge. Just as we want to encourage the boys to Walk Worthy, adults need to also Walk Worthy. The example you set exceeds the words you speak.

By the way, we have a secret weapon. You may have guessed it – prayer! Your prayers for boys that are challenged do not fall on deaf ears. And remember – we are a Christian organization and we unashamedly lift up the name of Jesus Christ. That means that you can pray WITH a boy leader, not just FOR him. If you want a powerful solution, try prayer!

## **Guidance for a Worthy Environment**

### **Do's and Don'ts**

- Adult Leaders have the authority to confiscate all items deemed inappropriate or dangerous.
- Trail Life USA prohibits the use and display of fireworks at Troop functions except where the fireworks display is conducted by a certified or licensed fireworks control expert. Trailmen are prohibited from possessing or using fireworks on any Troop activity.
- Firearms will be permitted at a Troop meeting only if the Troop program calls for such activities and if it meets with all Charter Organization and Trail Life USA standards outlined in the *Shooting Sports Guidebook*.
- Each Trailman is responsible for making restitution for any damage caused by his actions or negligence. A Trailman treats others as he wants to be treated.
- Trailmen in vehicles to and from events will remember they are guests of the driver/owner of the vehicle. Trailmen will follow the rules set by the driver/owner, e.g., eating, drinking, seating arrangements, and noise levels. Insurance regulations require that seat belts shall be worn at all times.
- Fighting is not permitted and is grounds for immediate disciplinary action.

- Foul language, swearing, cursing, blasphemy and abusive/suggestive gestures are not in keeping with the ideals of the Trail Life and will not be allowed.
- Sexually explicit materials, including magazines, pictures, etc., shall not be brought to Trailman activities. Such materials will be confiscated and returned to the parents of any Trailman involved.
- Some Troops set guidelines for electronic devices that play music, video devices, electronic game devices and/or laptop computers on weekend camping trips.
- Modern cell phone usage can be a distraction at Troop events. Trailmen should mute phones and avoid texting or using phones during meetings. At events, Trailmen should restrict cell phone usage to those times during the event when organized Troop activities are not being conducted.
- Cell phones and other devices capable of capturing photos or video should never be used in bathrooms, showers, or other places where privacy is expected. It is a serious legal matter to take or circulate pictures in such circumstances. The cell phones or digital devices of any Trailmen with such pictures shall be confiscated by adult leaders and delivered to law enforcement authorities to determine whether a criminal offense has occurred.



### Improperly Leaving a Troop Event

A Trailman who leaves an activity without permission, runs away, or refuses to come when summoned by the Adult Leader, will be removed from the event, parents will be called, and disciplinary action by the Troop Committee will follow. This is a dangerous situation because a boy who leaves an event effectively divides the adult leadership as they mount a search for the boy. This creates unplanned program changes and potential problems. The boy also puts himself in danger by leaving an event without using the buddy system and without accountability.

### Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

Any Trailman guilty of using, possessing and/or distributing a controlled substance (drugs and alcohol) will be dropped from the Troop roster upon the decision of the Troop Committee.

Parents of the Trailman will be advised of all actions taken. The Trailman may later be reinstated once his problem has been resolved to the satisfaction of the Troop Committee.

No Trailman will be allowed to use a controlled substance of any type at any Troop function. This includes alcohol and tobacco.

Parents of Trailmen that must take prescription medication over the period of a Troop event will discuss the requirement with the Troopmaster or Unit Leader. Serious medical

requirements may require a parent to attend an event and administer medication.

Medications must be held by an Adult Troop Leader with a **permission note from the boy's** parent. A Trailman may not possess medications on a trip except for as needed medications such as Asthma Inhalers.

### **Trailman Anti-Bullying Policy**

It is understood that boys are subjected to many inappropriate situations every day in school and elsewhere. Children can be very cruel to each other. Inappropriate behaviors can include physical striking, aggressive or inappropriate gestures, sexually inappropriate behavior or gestures, name calling, ruffling the hair, sarcasm, insults, put-downs, exclusion from the **group, laughing at a person, joking about a person, commenting on a person's physical** attributes, imitating or mocking a person, inappropriate internet comments and more.

The Troop and the Trail Life USA program are supposed to be a refuge, a safe haven for boys from these types of abuse. Many of our children exist in a daily environment full of these abusive situations, but the Trailman shall not bring this behavior into the Troop. Trailmen and Troop leaders must work together to effectively identify and eliminate such behaviors from the Troop.

#### ***First Defense***

Trailmen must refrain from bullying and other behaviors that have the effect of hurting **another's feelings or making them sad. "A Trailman treats others as he would want to be treated."** It is understood that a Trailman may occasionally be sarcastic or inconsiderate of another, but the Troop expects a Trailman to catch himself when he acts this way and make immediate amends without being told to do so.

#### ***Second Defense***

If a Trailman is subjected to bullying behavior by another, he should demand that the bully immediately stop the bullying behavior.

#### ***Third Defense***

If a Trailman observes another Trailman engaged in bullying behavior, the Trailman should immediately demand that the bully stop that behavior.

#### ***Fourth Defense***

If an Adult Leader observes a Trailman engaged in bullying behavior, the Adult Leader must immediately tell the bully to stop that behavior.

#### ***Immediate Solution***

Once a Trailman has been identified bullying, the Trailman should make immediate amends to the person he was bullying, including a Trailman handshake with an eye-to-eye sincere apology (saying, "I'm sorry"), and repairing or paying for any damages.

### *Let Each Defense Have a Chance*

If you are an adult leader, unless there is the threat of physical harm, count to three before you step in. Allow an opportunity for the bully himself, then the bullied Trailman, and finally any observing Trailman to identify the bullying behavior and demand that the bully apologize with a Trailman handshake. After three seconds, if no youth has acted, then step in as an adult, gather the facts, and make the appropriate demand for a handshake. (Remember, just as in sports events, sometimes it is the person who retaliates – rather than the first offender – whose behavior is caught!)

### *Catching the Little Things*

There is great benefit in catching the smaller insults, sarcasm, etc. before they escalate. Boys will become attuned to actions which are hurtful towards others, and you will largely avoid more extreme bullying situations by establishing an environment where smaller actions are identified and remedied.

### *Adults Need to Apologize and Give the Handshake, Too*

Adults are not immune to sarcastic remarks and joking comments. Set the environment for this system to work by identifying your own actions and offering the handshake freely. There is no shame in doing so, and when the boys see that you as an adult freely offer the handshake, they too will freely offer it! After a while, it is like a game to catch bullying behavior and demand a handshake. Even smaller Trailmen feel empowered and entitled to demand an apology from larger boys and adults.

### *Further Consequences*

If the bully does not make immediate amends as described above, it will be dealt with in the normal disciplinary fashion with conferences by the Patrol Leader, First Officer, and adult leader, with appropriate action to be taken by the Troopmaster as described on “Enforcing Trailman Discipline” on page 192 in the section titled “Enforcing Trailman Discipline”.

### *Endangering Situations*

If a Trailman engages in bullying behavior that places himself or another in danger, immediate appropriate action must be taken by the Troopmaster as needed to ensure that Troop members are free from danger.

# Chapter 16 - TEACHING SKILLS

**Objectives** How to Train the Trainer

Learn the TEAM Method of Teaching Skills Make Learning Skills Fun

Understand Leadership Training

**When you teach a skill**, whether it is to boys or to other adults, know the skill cold. When you begin your explanation, the student will be paying careful attention. So if you start out with, **“First turn the knob to the right,”** and then correct yourself, **“No, sorry, I meant to the left,”** the jumble of conflicting images will interfere with learning.

There are two ways people demonstrate a skill; like a typist or a pianist. Both use a keyboard. **But all that matters to the typist’s mind is striking the right keys in the right order.** The pianist gives more thought to how the keys are struck. Try hunting and pecking your way through a Beethoven sonata! Successfully teaching a skill is a live performance, so be a pianist rather than a typist. Give thought to how you demonstrate the skill. Call the students by name. Show genuine enthusiasm about the topic and a genuine desire to help.



## **Training the Trainer**

Having a skill and teaching a skill are two different things. The necessary elements to make a good teacher out of a good tradesman are:

- o **Communication Skills** – The ability to express certain concepts verbally or manually that the student needs to succeed.
- o **Avoid Distractions** – This includes avoiding unnecessary digressions and distracting behavior such as annoying body language or a noisy/ inappropriate environment.
- o **Have Patience** – What seems easy to you may seem impossible to them. If you try to pressure them to pay attention or try harder when those are not the real problems, you may very well make the skill impossible for them to learn.
- o **Relationship Skills** – You are the teacher and he is the pupil, but both of you want the **same thing to happen ... learning.** You are full partners in achieving this goal.
- o **Build on Previous Skills** – If skills are taught properly, advanced skills are combinations of—or variations of—simpler skills learned earlier.



## The “Team” Method

Every skill learned goes through three stages: when you can’t get it right, when you can get it right, and when you can’t get it wrong. You were born at stage one. To get yourself and your students to stage two where you can get it right, use

TEAM-work:

- o TELL the student about the skill
- o EXHIBIT the skill
- o ASSIST them in doing it themselves
- o MEASURE success by testing them unaided



To get students to stage three where they can’t get it wrong, use the “Three P’s”:

Practice, Practice, and more PRACTICE.

You will notice that the fourth P was intentionally left out: PROMOTION. You are not doing a boy a favor to pass him on a test simply because he tried hard. When he moves out into the world of men, his boss, his wife, and his clients will not give him points just for trying hard.

**Don’t raise false expectations about what quests Trailmen can win armed with the sword of good intentions.**

T

- o **Tell** – Avoid jargon, though you may need to teach Trailmen new terms so they can communicate clearly. One thing you want to tell the student is why it is important. Before you teach someone to tie a bowline, mention that it forms a non-slip loop for rescue.

E

- o **Exhibit** – When you exhibit a skill, don’t just do it quickly. Make sure the individual parts that make up the entire skill are clearly shown. As you tie the bowline, you might recite a mnemonic (memory aid) such as, “The rabbit comes out of the hole, goes around the tree, and back into the hole.”

A

- o **Assist** – You may stand behind the Trailman to show him how to tie a bowline on himself rather than tie one around yourself while facing him. By not having to reverse the knot, the Trailman learns the skill more easily. When it appears they can do it on their own, go to the next **step...**

M

- o **Measure** – You want your student to succeed, but success means they can perform the skill when you are not around to prompt them with hand gestures, little hints spoken to them, or any other body language. When they can pass the test cleanly, they truly have reason to be proud.



## Learning Can Be Fun

Learning is naturally fun, but all the fun can be drained out of it when it becomes more discipline than discovery. The best way to teach skills is for each skill to stimulate curiosity about the more advanced skill that builds upon it. This turns learning a series of related skills into a voyage of discovery. One of the best ways to do this is to forget the chalkboard and slide projector entirely. Bring ropes, spars, canvas, and cookware instead. Roll up your sleeves and get involved.



Show that the skills being taught will enable the Trailman to do something enjoyable later. That's what makes putting on a wetsuit more exciting than putting on an overcoat.

Reduce the time spent talking between hands-on experiences by breaking long lectures into a series of steps. These should fit neatly within the attention span of the Trailmen. Remember, you can lecture older boys a bit longer than you can the younger ones.

Where possible, start with steps that have immediate application. Think about your first lesson with a musical instrument where you were taught to play the simple tune "Hot Cross Buns" or "Mary Had a Little Lamb" so you could leave with a feeling of accomplishment from day one.

## Leadership Skills

There are two broad goals of Troop leadership: action and growth. Leadership for Action will help you have successful activities. Leadership for Growth will help you have successful meetings.

### *The Three Leadership for Action Skills are:*

- o **Determine Potential** – Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the group. Ask yourself what the group could do with the right training and experience.
- o **Make a Plan** – Draw up a desirable goal that is within the group's potential. See what skills and experiences are needed to reach it.
- o **Meet Your Potential** – Through teaching and practice, prepare to achieve the goal. Pay special attention to the individual needs of members, as no two are alike.

### *The Four Leadership for Growth Skills are:*

- o **Effective Communication** – Ensure a good two- way flow of information by using good listening and speaking skills. When people know what they should be doing and how they should be doing it, they will function much better. As a leader, you will benefit from

feedback, and you should listen as carefully to constructive criticism as you do to praise.

- o **Leadership by Example** – People are more apt to do what you do rather than what you say. Your actions should show that you are still very much a part of the group.

- o **Sharing Leadership** – Delegating authority frees you up to focus on the overall direction, but it is also an important part of continuing the growth of the people you lead.

- o **Building Trust** – The most important dynamic of a group is specialization, the ability of each member to bring his full attention to one task and do it well, relying on others to carry out the other needed chores. This system only works well where there is trust in the willingness and ability of others to do their jobs.

# Chapter 17 - ADVANCEMENT

- Objectives**
- Understand the Importance of Advancement
  - Learn About the Troop Standard
  - Review the Age, Grade, and Special Needs Requirements
  - Learn to Conduct Effective Conferences and Boards of Review
  - See the Unique Features of Navigators and Adventurers Advancement Schemes
  - Understand Servant Service and Service Stars
  - Learn about the BSA to Trail Life USA Achievement Transfer
  - Get an Introduction to the Guidon Program
  - Learn Elements for a Successful “Welcome to the Trail” Conference for a New Trailman

## Opportunities for Advancement

A properly-run Troop provides opportunities for advancement that make learning and doing part of an exciting outdoor program. Navigator- and Adventurer-aged Trailmen spend enough time in school attending classes and doing homework. Trail Life USA concentrates on experiential learning rather than traditional scholastic methods. You should make it a priority to keep intentional study to a minimum by looking for ways to help boys advance as a byproduct of attending meetings and engaging in activities.

### Records of Progress

Records of progress are vital to both ensuring that boys stay on track for their next achievement and to be sure they are promptly and appropriately recognized. The more time that passes between a Trailman satisfying requirements and recording them, the more likely the records are to be incomplete or inaccurate. Leverage handbooks, forms, and electronic resources (computers, tablets, smart phones) to their fullest utility. It is almost as discouraging to a boy to not be recognized for his achievements as it is to fail achieving them.

### Advancement of Navigators

Navigators advance through three ranks: Recruit Trailman, Able Trailman, and Ready Trailman. If earned, they retain the rank of Ready Trailman when they become Adventurers. The detailed requirements for advancement are found in *The Trailman’s Handbook*.



### Advancement of Adventurers

Adventurers advance through three awards: Journey, Horizon, and Freedom. The Freedom Award is a life-long accolade; as an adult the holder becomes a Freedom Trail Leader.

The detailed requirements for advancement are found in *The Trailman's Handbook*.



### Freedom Rangeman

A Freedom Rangeman understands and appreciates his freedom as a gift given all mankind by God. He also understands that the chance to enjoy that freedom was bought by the hard work, courage, and sacrifices of men just like him.

The detailed requirements for advancement are found in *The Trailman's Handbook*.

### The Troop Standard

Throughout the Scriptures, the staff is a symbol of leadership and protection. Shepherds used their staff to lead their sheep, and keep them from harm. Our Lord Jesus Christ describes himself as the Good Shepherd. As the Good Shepherd, his staff represents God's power and authority. His staff represents His leadership. Jesus leads God's people out of harm's way, out of the oppression and slavery of sin and death.

With this imagery in mind, we present to you the Trailman Standard: the display of a boy's character and leadership as he progresses through the program.

### Why a Standard?

For the boys in Trail Life USA, we wanted to use a powerful, masculine image to display our awards. We hope that every time a boy gazes at his standard, he is reminded that as Jesus is our Good Shepherd and leader, so likewise he is to "lead with integrity, and serve others." The Standard is where a boy can display the medallions (Trail Badges) he has earned in the Navigator and Adventurer Program for years to come. He can pass it on to his future son. It is a testament to the faith he embraces, the oath he has pledged, the achievements he has



*Woodlands Trail Foxes:* Kindergarten and at least 5 years old by October 31st

*Woodlands Trail Hawks:* 2nd Grade and at least 7 years old by October 31st

*Woodlands Trail Mountain Lions:* 4th Grade and at least 9 years old by October 31st

*Navigators:* 6th Grade and at least 11 years old by October 31st

*Adventurers:* 9th Grade and at least 14 years old by October 31st

### Age Level Exceptions

Most requests for an age level exception will fall under one of the following scenarios:

***Held Back a Year in School*** - A boy who is a year older because he was held back in school would remain at a lower level with his classmates. The Troop Committee may allow the boy to move to the upper level by waiving the grade requirement.

***Consequences:*** A Trailman remaining in the lower level would be limited to three years rather than four to work toward completion of his Freedom Award in high school. If the Trailman does not aspire to earn the Freedom Award, this lost year will not pose a problem. The Horizon award is a pinnacle award in its own right, and a worthy goal for most boys in the program. The Adventurers Program has a focus on high adventure, travel, self-selected activities, age-appropriate socialization, community service, and spiritual growth, and for many boys, that program emphasis will be plenty. Advancement for advancement's sake is not the aim of the Trail Life.

**October 31st Conflict** - In the rare event that a boy is in a certain grade in public or private school, but did not have his birthday until after October 31st, the Troop Committee may allow the boy to participate with his classmates' age-level program. A younger boy may not be admitted to an older boy program fully one year ahead of his age group. While many home-schooled youth are working on advanced materials, our program levels are based on social development, not academic achievement. This concept has to do with stages of maturity in the Christian development of Manhood as a social construct with unique age-level social development parameters. It is best to trust the wisdom and benefit of the Trail Life as designed, given that it is firmly grounded in an understanding of youth development and Christian education. Each level in the program is rich in age-appropriate material and mentorship in its own right. Accelerating a boy ahead would cause him to miss out on age appropriate activities and events.

**Special Needs Trailmen** - Trail Life USA has developed a policy for meeting the needs of mentally and physically challenged Trailmen. This policy is administered by a Committee of qualified volunteers and has a defined process for evaluation. Please contact the Program team at [Program@TrailLifeUSA.com](mailto:Program@TrailLifeUSA.com) to be connected to the Committee and for more

information.

## Leader Conferences

Leader Conferences are discussions between a Trailman and one of his leaders about the **Trailman's progress, morale, ambitions**, questions, and suggestions. Conferences are about strengthening the relationship and understanding between Trailmen and Leaders. They are an opportunity for a wise adult leadership to continuously improve Troop operations and stay relevant.

Conferences must always adhere to the requirements of the Child Safety and Youth Protection policies, and can take several forms.

### Conferences for Enforcing Discipline

This type of conference was discussed in an earlier chapter and involves the preferred method of discipline summarized by, **"Request to Stop / Counsel / Redirect"** (SCoRe). A Troop leader uses higher level reasoning to help a Trailman to direct his behavior in a more appropriate fashion.

### Progress Conferences

These conferences can take place any time a leader feels that it would be helpful to have a discussion with a Trailman. These are informal conferences that allow the Troop leadership to determine how a Trailman is doing in the Troop as well as to determine how he is doing in life in general. The Trailman should get the sense that the leaders care about him and what is happening in his life, and that they are always available to assist with any problems the boy may be experiencing.

### Advancement Conferences

**These are more formal conferences in which a Troop leader evaluates a Trailman's progress** towards rank advancement or towards earning an award. At the Navigators level, this should be done by the Trailmaster, and at the Adventurers level by the Advisor. The first step is to ascertain that all requirements have been completed. This is followed by a discussion of the meaning of the particular rank or award being earned, and casting it in focus as it applies to the **Trailman's life**. **This is an opportunity** to provide wisdom for the Trailman as well as to help him conceptualize his commitment to the values of the Trail Life.



**Able Trailman Rank** involves gaining certain outdoor proficiency, beginning a focus on servant service, and stepping up to the next phase of the **Trailman's journey** with his patrol peers. A Trailman should be experiencing increased competency, and success with his interpersonal relationships with his family and peers. An increased focus on faith-building activities is optional at this level.





**Ready Trailman Rank** involves full competency in the outdoor program, being ready for all situations, stepping up to leadership, continued servant service, as well as a faith-building requirement. There is much to discuss with a Trailman at this level.



**The Horizon Award** marks completion of all required Trail Badge work. This award is a pinnacle award in its own right. At this point, a Trailman has reached a horizon, where he both looks back and mentors the younger Trailmen in the Navigators program, as well as looking beyond the horizon towards engaging in higher level active citizenship.



**The Freedom Award** will not be achieved by all Trailmen. It involves continued servant service, plus leadership as exemplified in the Freedom Servant Leadership Project, a faith-building requirement, as well as extensive community involvement through the Freedom Experiences of the Majors and Minors Program. There is also the deeper symbolic meaning of having obtained eternal freedom through a relationship with Jesus Christ **and the Trailman's** commitment to his relationship with God. There is again much to discuss with a Trailman at this level!

## **Boards of Review**

When a Trailman is seeking rank advancement or an award, he should first engage in an Advancement Conference with his Trailmaster or Advisor as described above. When the leader approves the Trailman for the rank advancement or award, then a Board of Review is held as the final evaluation.

Except for the Freedom Board of Review, the Troop Committee Chair (or his/her designee) should form the Board and preside over the Board of Review.

**Boards of Review should include three or more adults, none of whom are the boy's parents or guardian.** This is an excellent opportunity to involve the Pastor, Institutional Head, or the leadership of the Charter Organization. If they schedule their involvement for this monthly meeting, over time they will have the opportunity to get to know each boy as he advances through the program. This will help keep the Troop and the Charter Organization strongly engaged with each other and supportive of the mission of the Troop.

One approach is scheduling Boards of Review on demand. Another good approach is scheduling monthly Boards of Review during the Troop meeting at the same time each month, for example, on the third Thursday. If during any particular month there are no Trailmen ready for a Board of Review, then the team can call certain boys into a conference just to check their progress or discuss their Troop experiences. What a great way to demonstrate to the Trailmen that adults care about their progress!

This process is not intended as a defense of the Trailman's previously documented achievements, but rather to assess the overall readiness of the Trailman to achieve the sought-after rank or award.

The Board of Review should be conducted in a separate room. The adults should already be in the room when the Trailman arrives. He should knock on the door and be told to enter. Upon entering, the Trailman should announce himself and his purpose as follows:

**"Trailman Mike Jones reporting for my Ready Trailman Board of Review."**

At this point, a member of the Board of Review should ask the Trailman to make the Trailman Sign and repeat the Trailman Oath before he is invited to be seated.

The tone for what follows should be friendly but businesslike. Questions should be appropriate for the boy's level of experience. This questioning should last no less than seven minutes and no more than fifteen minutes. Typically, higher ranks and awards take longer. Care should be taken not to let the Trailman become unnecessarily nervous. The Board of Review should leave a lasting impression but not become something to dread.

After the questioning is over, the Trailman is asked to step outside while the members of the Board of Review confer. When the decision is made to pass the Trailman or to defer advancement, the boy is invited to step back in. After the decision is announced, the spokesman gives the boy a Trailman Handshake.

### The Special Freedom Award Board of Review

There is a special Board of Review for the Freedom Award. One or more members of the Area Leadership must be present for this special Board of Review when a Trailman is being evaluated for the highest award in the Trail Life USA program. The Area Advancement Chair (or his designee) approved by the Area Point Man should form the Board



and preside over the Board of Review as the Chairman. Extensive guidelines for the Freedom Board of Review are available in the Freedom Award documents online.

### **Servant Service and Service Stars**

Service costs something, usually your time and energy, and you derive no benefit (monetarily or otherwise) from it. Service is a matter of the heart, something we do because we love

others as Christ loved us, not because we gain something but because we care. Political activities do not count as service; neither does serving at a Troop fundraiser. Being a part of a family requires work but projects or service by a Trailman to benefit his family do not count for TLUSA service hours. **A Trailman's service should be approved ahead of time by Troop leadership.**

Trailmen in TLUSA are recognized for their Servant Service with Service Stars. It is the desire of TLUSA that by requiring service, Trailmen will develop a caring spirit and regular habit of service throughout their lives. Be sure to plan regular

projects throughout your program year for your Troop and recap with the Trailmen the benefits, challenges and spirit of the projects they are involved with through the year. Trail Life USA leaders at all levels are great examples of Servant Service!



**Navigator Trailmen** must earn one service star (Silver) for each year since joining as a Navigator for their Able and Ready Trailman Ranks. Each service star requires 15 hours of service.



**Adventurer Trailmen** must earn one service star (gold) for each year since joining as an Adventurer for their Horizon Award. Each service star requires 20 hours of service.

Service stars are received for completing the required hours for Rank/Award or additional hours after the required number for Rank/Award. It can be from Troop organized projects or approved projects done with their family, church, or other local ministries.

Stars are awarded at advancement ceremonies and are affixed to **the Trailman's Troop Standard.**

### **BSA to Trail Life USA One Time Achievement Transfer**

*(For Navigators and Adventurers)*

For a limited time, Trail Life USA offers a transfer module developed that will allow you to **enter all of a boy's BSA achievements onto a worksheet** and obtain a Transfer Record for use when joining Trail Life USA. This module is only for the MIDDLE

SCHOOL Navigators program and the HIGH SCHOOL Adventurers Program. Trailmen are allowed to transfer their BSA advancements one time only, it can be when joining or at a designated later date (when he finishes his Eagle Rank for instance). Trailmen, their parents and Troop leadership should carefully consider when this transfer should occur depending on

the age of the Trailmen, his BSA rank, his continued participation in the BSA program, etc.

Once you open the module, it should be self-explanatory. **A boy's BSA record can be entered into the module by the boy himself or by an adult. Once the boy's BSA achievements are entered, you will be able to instantly see what the boy's Transfer Record will look like.**

To obtain a proper Transfer Record, it is important to properly complete all sections **requesting input on the form. When you are satisfied that the boy's record has been properly recorded, print out the 5-page printout and staple it together. Use it to record advancements in the online system.**

### Younger Eagle Scout Transfers

Trail Life USA has a fair and equitable policy of rank and achievement transfer for former members of the Boy Scouts of America. Since the Horizon and Freedom Awards are not Navigators Awards, a transferring younger Eagle Scout will need to wait until June 30th following his 8th grade year when he actually joins the Adventurers Program and receives his Horizon Award. A younger Eagle Scout would transfer in as a Navigator and, unlike an Eagle Scout who transfers in as an Adventurer, he will have the opportunity to earn the Ready Trailman Rank. To do so, he will need to complete a Middle School Faith Building Activity Option, if he has not already done so. High School boys will never have the option of earning that prestigious middle school level rank designation. Until June 30th following his 8th grade year, he will carry on as a Navigator, and will have the opportunity to take part in the rich program at that level.

These rules are not intended to hold a boy back, but rather to give him age-appropriate adventures, familiarity with the Trail Life fundamentals, and focuses for him while he is in Middle school. Middle school is just a different program with options such as these:

- o Focusing on any of thousands of potential elective Trail Badge options that he can develop based on his own interests. If he completes ten elective Trail Badges while in middle school that gives him a bit of a jump on the Horizon award.
- o Developing servant leadership skills by teaching the younger boys.
- o Earning more Service Star awards for each additional 15 hours of middle school community service.
- o Participating in an optional Christian discipleship program or faith-tradition-specific religious awards program.
- o Getting a head start on becoming a good productive citizen by participating in the same types of Freedom Experiences that are required at the Adventurers level to earn **the Freedom Award. They won't count** toward the Freedom Award, because the object is to actually have a boy engage in active citizenry between the ages of 14-17 (grades 9-12). **There's no age where we want a boy to feel like he has completed that task and can stop**

engaging in active citizenry! However, what a great head start for a boy to experience these types of programs in middle school as well.

- o Kicking back occasionally and just having some fun! Not all activity on the Trail Life has to be directed towards advancement. Sometimes it's OK to just "Be still and know I am God." Other times, it's OK for him just to enjoy fun and fellowship with his friends. Our Summer Adventure Program is designed to be a fun experience rather than an activity badge mill.

The Navigators program is a rich program that has lots of activities for boys in middle school to do and also to share and develop socially with other boys their age. If a boy is intellectually or developmentally advanced for his age, there are still many challenges in the rich Navigators program, plus he can rise to lead the other boys and lift them up through his leadership skills. A boy that is a special achiever needs to learn how to relate to people who are not, as this will be a lifelong challenge for him.

When the boy enters the Adventurers program, that's a whole new journey. It involves a different level of social functioning with a different age group of boys focusing on a different type of program. And it is also a rich program with many program options of its own just like the Navigator program.

### [Can an Atheist Earn Our Top Award, The Freedom Award?](#)

The simple answer is, "Yes. But not without learning about Christian faith." Here are some further considerations:

- o While a boy of any faith or no faith at all may take part in our program, he and his parents agree by virtue of signing the membership application that their son is participating in a distinctly Christian Organization with distinctly Christian Leaders using a distinctly Christian biblical worldview.
- o Regardless of their religious beliefs all Trailmen must be respectful of and honor the rules of our organization which are based on a Christian standard.
- o All boys must participate in Troop events, including respecting Christian prayer as practiced by the particular Troop which a boy joins.
- o While most faith-building activities within Trail Life USA are optional, the Christian message is built into the program, kind of like carrot in carrot cake.
- o There are faith building activities required of all Trailmen to earn the rank of Ready Trailman and the Freedom Award. There are Christian Faith programs available in Trail Life USA that do not require a Christian proclamation of faith. These programs can be adjusted to operate similar to a Christian Study or Christian History class, which means that while he may be learning about Christianity and its religious tenets, he is not required to profess Christian faith.

## Freedom Award Extension Allowance

Some Trailmen are granted an extension to earn their Freedom Award until June 30th following their 18th birthday, provided they are registered in high school on their 18th birthday. However, they must register as an adult leader in the Trail Life USA program and complete Child Safety and Youth Protection Training to do so. All adult leaders must sign the Trail Life USA Statement of Christian Faith and Values. Therefore, it is not possible to extend an **Atheist's or non-Christian Trailman's deadline for completing his Freedom Award** requirements beyond his physical 18th birthday.

It is our hope and expectation that a boy that participates in the Trail Life USA program will find Jesus Christ as his Savior as a product of participation in our program!

## Guidon Program



Trail Life USA has a special college-aged program for 18- to 25-year-old Christian young adults that engages them in further outdoor adventures and travel experiences, while further focusing on centering their lives in Christ and holding themselves to a higher level of spiritual accountability in a world where that is not common.

Trail Life USA Trailmen will be part of a Christ-centered contingent of young adults that will propagate **Christ's work in communities and on university campuses across the country.**

As we graduate Christian young men from the K-12 program at Trail Life USA, we look forward to the great work that will be done by these young men as they allow themselves to be used **for Christ's greater purpose!**

Separate documents are available that further define the Guidon program.

## **“Welcome to the Trail” Conferences for New Members**



### Recruit Trailman Joining Rank

A boy who enters the Navigators program must participate in a Joining Leader Conference. In addition to getting to know the Trailmen during the Joining Leader Conference, the following are the two key items to discuss:

- o Troop safety
- o Advancement program

It is reasonable and desirable for the Trailman's parent(s) to sit in on the Recruit Trailman Joining Leader Conference. Parents should be *strongly* encouraged to do so.

When you have several new recruits joining at the same time, a great alternative is to run the Joining Leader Conference during a Troop meeting with the new boys and their parents as a group presentation, with question-and-answer opportunities spaced throughout the presentation.



## *Troop Safety Discussion*

For Troop safety, you should first go over the youth protection aspects of the program including:

- o *Two-deep leadership*: Two registered leaders must be present at each event.
- o *No one-on-one*: An adult can never be alone with a youth that is not his own child; additionally, no texting or on-line communication that is **“one-on-one.”** *Buddy system*: A Trailman should always be with two or more other buddies from his unit when away from the group.

This next item should be emphasized - refer to *The Trailman’s Handbook*, Chapter 4 - **“Dangerous Relationships”** section; then Chapter 5 - **“Bullying and Harassment”** section; and go over these key points:

- o Respect privacy
- o No secret ceremonies, activities, or meetings
- o Appropriate clothing
- o No hazing, bullying, or physical hitting – Get help from an adult leader
- o No use of technology to violate privacy
- o Say No to requests for inappropriate behavior and then Go and Tell an adult

Then give a brief overview of the following items relating to activity safety in *The Trailman’s Handbook*. It is not intended to teach or test any of this material at this time, but rather to make the new Trailman aware of the safety rules he will be learning and where to read about them in *The Trailman’s Handbook*. One approach is to show him the section in his book, give a key point or two about it, and mark it with a Post-it so he can read it in detail later:

- o Chapter 5 - **“Avoiding Disease”** section
  - Wash your hands often including every visit to the restroom.
- o Chapter 5 - **“Avoiding Injury”** section
  - Wear prescribed protective gear.
  - Follow safety rules.
  - Use common sense.
- o Chapter 5 - **“Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs”** section
  - These are harmful
  - Tobacco smells bad and degrades your aerobic capacity
  - Alcohol and illegal drugs impair your ability to function and pose a safety and health risk
  - **Don’t use any of them**
- o Chapter 7 - **“Safe Aquatics Method”** section



- Safety method used for all aquatics activities that you will learn about in the Aquatics Trail Badge.
- Chapter 8 – “**Low Impact Camping**” (including fire safety) section
  - Six-point good stewardship method to minimize our usage impact on the environment that is discussed in the **“Ready Trailman Required Trail Badges.”**
- Chapter 9 – “**Lost ... and Found**” section
  - Most important step is to stop moving around so you can be found.
- Chapter 10 – “**Woods Tools Safety Rules**” section
  - You will be trained on safety and use of woods tools before you will be permitted to use them.

### *Other Safety Rules*

In this discussion, mention (particularly as a reminder to parents) that medical history, conditions and forms must be current.

- All health and safety rules must be followed
- Each member must have on file a current (within the last 12 months) annual TLUSA Member/Participant Health and Medical Form
- For high adventure activities or events lasting longer than 72 hours, a High Adventure Medical Form is required
- All prescription medications to be taken on an activity must be kept by one of the adult leaders
- Proper clothing and footwear on activities is important for health and safety
- Any injuries at an activity must be reported to adult leaders and parents

### *Advancement Program Discussion*

In this part, give a brief overview of the Navigators advancement program showing him the requirements for the following:

- Able Trailman
- Ready Trailman
- Ready Trailman Required Trail Badges
- Elective Trail Badges

If applicable, finish with a review of any transfer credit he may have earned in another program and where he stands with regard to full and partial credit towards Trail Badges, ranks, and awards.



## Journey Trailman Joining Award

Boys entering the Adventurers program are likewise required to participate in a Joining Leaders Conference. In addition to getting to know the Trailman during the Leader Conference, the following are the two key items to discuss:

- o Troop safety
- o Advancement program

It is reasonable for the Trailman's parent(s) to sit in on the Journey Trailman Joining Leader Conference, and is desirable if he is joining Trail Life USA for the first time.

### *Troop Safety Discussion*

If the Trailman is a moving up to Adventurers from the experience of the Navigators program, and has earned at least the Recruit Trailman Rank, then a brief summary of the Recruit Trailman Troop Safety discussion is warranted.

Otherwise, for a new Trailman joining the program as an Adventurer, go over the whole detailed safety section with him as outlined under Troop Safety. In addition, the following points should be discussed:

- o He is now a role model for the Navigators and it is critical that he treats them respectfully and respects their privacy.
- o He cannot share a tent with a Navigator on a campout.
- o He needs to be mindful of youth protection for himself as he branches out into the community on his chosen Freedom Experiences.
- o He needs to understand activity safety well enough to teach it to the Navigators.
- o **The material in Chapter 17 in "The Man You Will Be" section**

### *Advancement Program Discussion*

In this part, give a brief overview of the Adventurers advancement program showing him the requirements for the following:

- o Horizon Award
- o Ready Trailman Required Trail Badges- if joining as an Adventurer
- o Horizon Required Trail Badges
- o Elective Trail Badges
- o Freedom Award

If applicable, finish with a review of any transfer credit he may have earned in another program and where he stands with regard to full and partial credit towards Trail Badges, ranks, and awards.

# Chapter 18 - TRAIL BADGES

**Objectives** Learn to Effectively use Trail Badges in Your Troop

Finding Effective Trail Badge Mentors

How to Create DYOB (youth-developed) and TEAM (adult-developed) Elective Trail Badges

## **Ready Trailman & Horizon Trailman Required Trail Badges**

Trail Badges are used for advancement in the Navigator (grades 6-8) and Adventurer (grades 9-12) programs. The Trail Badge program emphasizes the key components of wisdom: knowledge, skills, experience, and judgment. To provide a well- rounded experience, some badges have requirements addressing the other five Program Emphases: Teamwork, Heritage, Leadership, Character, and Faith.

Authority figures in the Trail Badge process include:

- o **Mentor:** A Registered Adult member of Trail Life USA who usually has a special interest, skill, or vocation related to the Trail Badge.
- o **Unit Leader:** Either the Trailmaster or the Advisor who is usually involved for safety or other approvals.
- o **Leader:** Any youth or adult in a leadership position such as First Officer, Second Officer, Quartermaster, Patrol Leader, Junior Patrol Leader, Troopmaster, Trailmaster, Advisor, Trail Guides.

The fifteen (15) Required Trail Badges are identified in *The Trailmans Handbook*.

Nine (9) are completed specifically in the middle school Navigators Program. The other six (6) may only be completed while registered in the high school Adventurers Program. They represent the requisite skills required of Trailmen during their time in the Trail Life. It is recommended that new Trailmen complete the Camping, First Aid and Trail Skills Trail Badges within six months of joining as these are essential skills necessary for further outdoor and high adventure activities the Troop will be doing.

In addition, a Trailman is required to round out his experience with a minimum of ten (10) additional elective Trail Badges in areas of his own choice.

These electives may be completed as a Navigator, as an Adventurer, or in a combination of both. In order to earn the Ready Trailman award in the Navigators Program, at least five (5) of these must be completed while in the middle school Navigators Program.

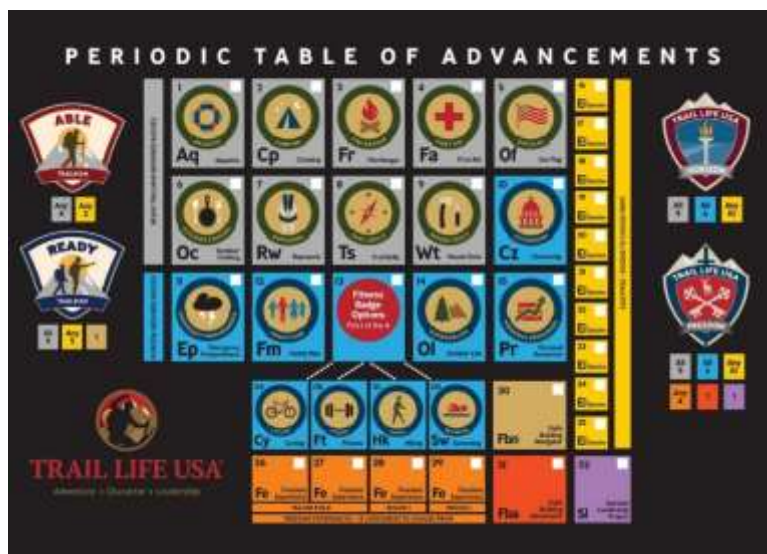
Required and Elective Trail Badges are for Navigator and Adventurer Trailmen only.

This helpful graphic is available for download or may be purchased online in an 11" x 17" full-color poster that Trailmen can use to track their progress.

### Finding Effective Trail Badge Mentors

Any TLUSA Registered Adult leader may serve as a Trail Badge Mentor for any Trail Badge. Even if he isn't an expert in that field, he can

supervise the completion of the requirements by the Trailman as he learns or works with an expert in the field. Registered Adult leaders in Trail Life USA are approved for association with your boys. However, even with approved and Registered Adult leaders, no one-on-one should be maintained, and at no time should a Trail Badge Mentor or an outside expert be alone with a boy that is not his own son. Utilizing only Trail Life USA registered leaders as Mentors provides consistent Christian worldview counsel to the Trailmen when completing Trail Badges.



### Utilizing Outside Experts

If you locate an individual outside of Trail Life USA as an expert in a certain field to work with a Trailman or group of Trailman in your Troop, that adult must be approved by the Troop leader before work can be started on a badge. It is important that a Registered Adult or parent accompany a Trailman when he visits with non-registered adults. The prospective individual must understand and agree to the standards of conduct we expect from adults. A good teacher is someone who inspires boys by his achievements AND by his example. It is clear you do not want Trailmen in an environment where conditions are unsafe, alcohol is used, calendar art is indecent, profane or irreverent language is used, or the Trail Life USA program itself is disrespected.

This may necessitate a meeting or visit to a location of the individual before approving them to work with Trailman. At no time should a field expert be alone with a boy that is not his own son.

### Elective Trail Badges

Trail Life USA has pre-written Elective Trail Badges available online that Trailman can select from. This list grows as new elective Trail Badges are written by volunteers and added.

Electives are arranged in Frontiers. See table called “**Elective Badges are Grouped under Seven Frontiers**” below.

However, Trail Life USA offers youth Trailmen our unique “**Design Your Own Badge (DYOB)**” program and the “**TEAM**” method for adult volunteers who want to write badges of interest for their Troop. This provides an opportunity to create thousands of different Elective Trail Badges, limited only by a Trail- **man’s imagination**. Youth and Adults are encouraged to submit their Trail Badges to the Home Office for consideration as published Elective Trail Badges by emailing them in an editable format to [Program@TrailLifeUSA.com](mailto:Program@TrailLifeUSA.com).

Neither a Design Your Own Badge nor a TEAM Elective Trail Badge may be used as the required Fitness Trail Badge for the Horizon Award. Adventurers must use one of the defined Trail Life USA Fitness Badges outlined in their handbooks.








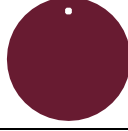

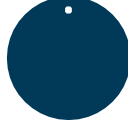






### **Design Your Badge (DYOB) – Youth Only**

Boys are curious. They may see something on television that captures their attention and do a quick web search on it. They may even share their findings on social media. Doing this increases their awareness of the world around them, but lacks mentorship, in-depth knowledge, and hands-on experience.

**A Trail Badge’s structured and in-depth** approach to exploring a topic of interest that may be life- changing, leading to a serious pursuit, or even a career.

There are plenty of outdoor adventures in Trail Life USA, but there is also a world of intellectual adventures; these trails of education can be just as exciting to explore. Trail Badges will lead you there. And just as outings can go to unique places rather than the same standard camps, Trail Badges can also take you on unique journeys as you meet the challenge of writing Elective Trail Badges.

## Elective Badges are Grouped under Seven Frontiers

<i>Frontier Description</i>	<i>Front of Badge</i>	<i>Back of Badge</i>
<p><b>Heritage Frontier</b> An exploration of a Trailman's family heritage, American heritage, and Christian heritage.</p>		
<p><b>Hobbies Frontier</b> Includes a variety of indoor and outdoor hobbies that demand varying levels of knowledge, skill, or aptitude.</p>		
<p><b>Life Skills Frontier</b> Life lessons ranging from the practical to higher-level interpersonal skill sets.</p>		
<p><b>Outdoor Skills Frontier</b> Includes basic and advanced skill development in woodcraft, hiking, exploration, survival, camping, and shooting sports.</p>		
<p><b>Science and Technology Frontier</b> An exploration of physical and natural science concerning our created world.</p>		
<p><b>Sports and Fitness Frontier</b> Having fun in the outdoors with sports and other fitness activities.</p>		
<p><b>Values Frontier</b> Instilling biblically based values within the Trailman regarding any number of pertinent topics. A central focus of this Frontier is the teachings of the Christian faith.</p>		

The Elective Badges are laser-cut from olive wood and come from Bethlehem. They are attached to the Standard with paracord in a manner determined by the Trailman, allowing for customization of the Standard.

## DYOB Writing Guidelines

Elective Trail Badges help the youth Trailman round out his experience with topics that have personal appeal. They also present an opportunity for him to develop research and communication skills when he tackles creating a new badge of his own. As such they are a very valuable advancement tool that prepares the young man for later educational and career projects in the adult world.

After a Trailman creates a new badge and it is approved by his Troop Advancement Leader, he can submit it to the Home Office for consideration as an official Elective Trail Badge to be earned by other Trailmen. There are three ways to create a DYOB Elective Trail Badge: Analogy, Certification, and the CLEAR Method.

### *Design Your Own Badge by Analogy*

This is one of the easiest ways to draft an Elective Trail Badge. Simply find an analogous badge and modify it for the new topic. For example, a Kayaking Trail Badge can be derived by analogy from the Canoeing Trail Badge.

### *Design Your Own Badge by Certification*

Find a significant certification (Scuba, Jr. Life- guarding, etc.), and after getting approval from your adult leader, earn your certification. The certification should take at least 8 hours in order to qualify as a complete elective Trail Badge.

### *Design Your Own Badge by the CLEAR Method*

Choose, Learn, Explore, Apply, Report (CLEAR), is a formulaic Trail Badge method that will work well for many topics no matter how general or specific. The designed Trail Badge should take at least 8 hours to complete and the CLEAR method requires adult leader approval of all designed elements of the Elective Trail Badge. The method is as follows:

#### **Choose**

- o A topic of interest for your Elective Trail Badge
- o A Registered Adult leader to serve as your Mentor

#### **Learn**

- o Basic facts and broad concepts of the topic
- o The history or development of the topic

#### **Explore**

- o Details and gain mastery of key elements of the topic
- o Hands-on or practical experience

#### **Apply**

- o Complete a personal project of at least three hours duration (advanced experience, career, certification, group activity, mentoring, or service type requirement)



- o Demonstrate acquired knowledge or skills (advanced experience, exam, paper, presentation, or other method approved by his adult leader)

## Report

- o Submit a Trail Badge Summary Report
- o Trailman or Troop advancement leader submits documentation to the Home Office

## **TEAM (Troop Experience, Activity, and Mentoring) Badges**

The TEAM Elective Trail Badge program has been developed to address individual Troop interests and activities as electives towards advancement and was designed for use by **Navigator and Adventurer adult leaders** wishing to develop a badge for their Troop or Patrol for a group activity in which multiple Trailmen are participating.

TEAM elective Trail Badges may be considered for publication as Trail Life USA Elective Trail Badges.

### *Trail Badge Specification*

TEAM elective Trail Badges should define a set of requirements that satisfies the following goals:

1. All badges must align with the Trail Life USA Mission, Vision, and Oath.
2. The badge should include a group experience, activity, or mentoring by an adult leader or the Mentor for the badge.
3. Badges should be written to be moderately difficult and should require a minimum of 8 hours of effort.
4. Requirements should cover the knowledge or skills central to the topic.
5. Requirements should focus on hands-on experiences.
6. Badge requirements should be fun and experiential.
7. The Mentor for the badge should be qualified by education, training, or experience in the Trail Badge subject.
8. The Mentor will be responsible for determining the Frontier best representing the badge content for purposes of reporting and tracking advancement.

### *Recording*

You may enter completion of a TEAM Trail Badge for those Trailmen who have completed it. You must specify the appropriate Frontier for the badge when recording completion.

### *Submitting Badges for Publication*

If you wish to submit your TEAM elective Trail Badge for consideration by the Trail Life USA program committee for publication to Trail Life USA as an official Elective Trail Badge, please also write your requirements to meet the following badge writing guidelines:

1. In general, Trail Badges should be written so that they may be earned either in a Troop/Unit setting or individually.
2. Requirements generally should be split out into one specific requirement (action) per requirement number to make it easier for the boys to see what they need to do.
3. Requirements should be stripped of unnecessary constraints and worded as simply as possible.
4. Informational content generally should be pulled out of the requirement and provided up front or as an endnote.
5. Requirements should have a prominent action verb to make clear what the Trailman needs to do to complete the requirement. Examples include: attend, compare, cook, create, define, demonstrate, describe, determine, discuss, do, explain, go, list, make, participate, perform, plan, present, report, visit, and write.
6. Elective badges should include at least three optional requirements selected from at least six choices.
7. Optional requirement choices may be of any requirement type; providing a wide variety of types is highly recommended.

Send completed badges to Program@TrailLifeUSA.com if desired.

### Types of Badge Requirements

Trail Badge requirements fall into a number of categories that are described below in a list that is comprehensive but not complete. Each type of requirement has special characteristics that guide how to write the requirement and whether it should be core or optional.

#### *Group Experience, Activity, or Mentoring (core)*

Group requirements are those done together with members of your Unit or other Trailmen. Group requirements are essential for the TEAM Elective Trail Badges. A group experience activity example is a wilderness backpack trip. A group activity example is the ***Our Flag Trail Badge*** requirement *ie. Participate in a flag ceremony for your Troop meeting, Award Ceremony or other indoor ceremony*. Group mentoring examples are: the forums in ***Family Man*** and ***Personal Resources Trail Badges*** and the ***Personal Resources Money Management Activities #2 Investments***.

#### *Experience (core)*

Experience requirements are among the most important. These are part of doing the activity of the Trail Badge. One example from the ***Camping Trail Badge*** is: *5. Spend at least 15 nights camping in a tent or under the stars and participate in assigned cooking, clean-up and other*

*camping related duties.*

Experiences central to the topic should be required, but a selection of experience alternates is often a good choice. The most important factor in experience requirements is to not over-specify or over-constrain the activity. Note that, in our example, no constraints on the camping are placed except that it is in a tent or under the stars.



### ***Knowledge (core)***

Knowledge requirements are the material to be learned or what are often called academic requirements. One example is the ***Citizenship Trail Badge***, Requirement *1a. Learn the definitions of the following political systems: democracy, republic, autocracy and oligarchy.* Knowledge central to the topic should be required. A selection of knowledge options for related information is appropriate. Rote memorization requirements are discouraged unless central to the topic (e.g. requirement 3 for learning the parts of a paddle and canoe for ***Canoeing Trail Badge*** because the instructor needs to be understood when he says “Move your lower hand down the shaft to the throat.” and “Hold the gunwales when entering the canoe.”).

### ***Skill (core)***

Skill requirements are for learned skills that are then demonstrated. One example is the ***Woods Tools Trail Badge***, requirement *5. Demonstrate cleaning and sharpening an ax or hatchet.* Skills central to the topic should be required. A selection of related skill options is appropriate (e.g. portaging a canoe for canoeing). In the ***Canoeing Trail Badge***, portaging is an optional skill (see requirement 18). The reason for this is that portaging a canoe would be required for a wilderness trip in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Northern Minnesota, but is not required for most lake or day trip river canoeing (e.g. Russian River in Northern California).

### ***Certification (optional or core in certain situations)***

Certification requirements are those that require or offer the option of getting a certification. One example is in the ***First Aid Trail Badge*** where most of the requirements can be completed by a basic First Aid-CPR-AED certification. Generally, these are an optional or alternative requirement offered for partial or full completion of a Trail Badge.

### ***Physical Fitness (core for Fitness badges)***

Physical Fitness requirements encompass the development and execution of a fitness and training plan and progressive fitness demonstrations. One example is ***Hiking 6. Complete a progressive hiking program consisting of at least 10 hikes beginning at 5 miles for the first hike and increasing to at least a 20-mile hike ...*** These constitute the core requirements of any

fitness type badge, but alternatives can be offered. For examples, see *Cycling* and *Swimming Trail Badges*.

### *Career (optional)*

Career requirements are those asking the Trailman to explore, research, or learn about careers related to the Trail Badge topic and also those asking that he interview a professional in the field. Two examples are shown below:

**Photography 16.** *Photography is used in many fields. Interview a professional photographer to find out what steps he took to prepare for this career.*

**Camp Counselor 13.** *Explore a career in camp program implementation or management and the qualifications necessary for members of camp staff, by interviewing a Camp Program Director or other senior staff member at a camp. Locate the closest Institution to provide the training for this career.*



### *Mentoring (optional)*

Mentoring requirements require teaching a skill or knowledge to younger Trailmen. One example is the **Our Flag Trail Badge** requirement 11. *Teach a Woodland Unit a flag ceremony and help them perform it at a Troop function.* In general, these types of requirements should be optional because the opportunities for teaching are not always present.

### *Service (optional)*

Service requirements are those for which a service project is performed to meet a requirement. One example is the **Our Flag Trail Badge** requirement 13. *Participate in a flag planting service project at a cemetery for their Memorial Day service honoring veterans.* In general, these types of requirements should be optional to encourage service, but not necessarily require a particular kind of service.

# Chapter 19 - CEREMONIES

**Objectives** Understand the Importance and Elements of Well-Run Ceremonies

## **Ceremonies Are Important**

At any given moment what we know and what we feel may be quite different. Ceremonies help our understanding and our emotions come together to highlight important moments along the Trail Life. A well-planned ceremony gives an occasion the dignity and drama it deserves.

## Elements of a Ceremony

There is no hard and fast rule on what constitutes a perfect ceremony, but most successful ceremonies have certain things in common. You can find many ceremony samples in our online resources and forum, but there are some elements common to most.



### *Things Set Apart*

Certain things may be associated primarily with ceremonial activity, such as lighting candles, setting up props representing rank advancement or award achievement, or going to certain places (perhaps the sanctuary of a church or a clearing in a wooded location nearby).

### *Obligations*

Whether it is taking an oath of office, acknowledging a set of expectations, accepting new responsibilities, or praying for **God's** guidance, most well-done ceremonies indicate some **change in one's life that has an equal measure** of rights and responsibilities.

### *Audience*

The ceremony takes place in front of a significant audience, whether it is the parents, other members of a rank or award, or the members of a patrol or Troop.

### *Opening*

The opening of a ceremony should set the tone for what follows, including setting the expectations of the participants and the audience. It may include such features as turning down the lights to light candles or reciting the Trailman Oath.

### *Symbology*

The colors and names of ranks and the designs and names of awards all carry symbolic value. A symbol is a comparison between two things that makes a meaningful statement. The color red in an award can be a symbol of courage. The name of the Freedom award refers both to the enjoyment of human rights provided by good government and to the freedom from sin and death made possible by Jesus Christ. Symbols appropriate to the occasion should be explained to the recipients and members of the audience.



### *Costuming*

For the majority of major ceremonies, appropriate costuming would be full uniform for participants and presenters. There may be times when an appropriate costume may be something unique to the ceremony.

### *Presenters*

Awards should be presented by someone with a relationship to the recipients. The presenters may be Troop leaders or family members. Be sure to clearly explain to the presenters the proper way to carry out their role in the ceremony.



### *Recitation*

A spoken piece that carries the appropriate message. For recipients of pinnacle awards such as the Freedom Award or Religious Emblem, it may be desirable to include a guest speaker who will follow the recitation with an address of their own.

### *Closing*

The two best remembered parts of any ceremony are its first and final impressions. A reverent closing gives the participants and audience an appropriate sense of closure.

### Opening Ceremony

A Troop meeting should always include posting the colors with all hands at attention, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, giving the Trailman Oath and an invocation or opening prayer. How precisely this is carried out is left at the discretion of the week's patrol, but it should be approved by the Troopmaster.

### Closing Ceremony



The meeting closes with a closing prayer or a benediction. Some Troops may opt to dismiss directly from the separate age-level groups instead of trying to gather all the age levels back together in the big meeting room. However it is done, a closing prayer or benediction should be mandatory!

### Presentation of Ranks and Awards

Typically twice per year, a Troop would hold a special awards ceremony to recognize the achievements of the Trailmen in the Troop. The local unit should use its own creativity in planning the presentation of ranks and awards. One thing that should be strictly avoided is just calling people up to the podium, handing them the emblem and shaking their hand. To keep things moving, if several boys are being recognized, you may ask for applause to be held until the end.

### Specific Ceremonies

The Woodlands Trail offers its own ceremonies. Over time Navigators and Adventurers across the country will develop many versions of awards and recognition ceremonies. Unique to Trail Life USA in our ceremonies will be the use of our Troop Standards (ceremonial walking sticks) which will be adorned with a boy's awards in the form of metal medallions. A boy will be able to both figuratively and literally raise his Standard!





## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

# Chapter 20 - ADDITIONAL AND ONLINE RESOURCES

- Objectives**
- Understand EQUIP Training
  - Know the Personal Firearms Policy
  - Conduct a Troop Self-Evaluation: Trail Tracks
  - Understand that Retention is as Important as Recruiting
  - See Elements of Successful Troop Models
  - Commit to Completing an Annual Safety Program with the Trailmen
  - Discover Online Resources

## **EQUIP Training Explained**

**EQUIP Training events** are THE in-person, hands-on way to train Trail Life USA Troop leadership. EQUIP events impart the mission and vision of Trail Life USA, teach needed skills, and instill a comprehensive understanding of the program.

EQUIP participants will be inspired as they see a bigger picture of Trail Life USA, and excitement will be generated as each participant discovers even greater purpose in their volunteer service position in Trail Life USA.



Whether an experienced scouter or a newcomer to outdoor leadership and adventure, all leaders will learn and grow from the EQUIP experience. For those who are seasoned scouters: What is greater than knowledge? The proper USE of that knowledge! Come to EQUIP and learn the techniques to share and teach the Trail Life USA program to your local area's Troops.

EQUIP Events include hands-on training for Trail Life USA Registered Adult leaders. Training is focused on the specifics of Troop operations, providing valuable and practical information that leaders can use in the day-to-day execution of their local program.

Attendees learn together in a patrol setting, camping and eating together during the course of a structured weekend that incorporates classes on Outdoor Skills, Youth Mentorship, Troop Resources, Troop Weekly Meetings, and Troop Volunteer Service. EQUIP teaches the importance of how spiritual components are woven throughout our program. Our reliance on Christ as our Lord and Savior is the foundation of our program. All we learn and teach in TLUSA is built on this truth.

EQUIP training events are specifically for Trail Life USA members involved in already-

functioning Troops. EQUIP courses are not geared to be promotional or to “come find out more about our organization”, but instead are designed to empower and engage existing members as they serve in their volunteer roles.



**Leaders who attend “first generation” EQUIP events commit to hosting and leading a course to train leaders in their local Area. These “next generation” EQUIP events take place all around the country and are hosted by Point Men (or their appointed Area Training Chairmen) who have been trained at the national EQUIP events.**

Nationally-trained participants are the only ones authorized to conduct next generation events. So, participants of next generation EQUIP events (led by first generation EQUIP trainers) are EQUIP trained, but are not certified to conduct another local Area EQUIP event.

Informal training events that include variations or partial sections of EQUIP training do not provide official EQUIP certification or “Trained” status.

EQUIP training will be tracked as a part of Trail Life USA member records.

**Contact your local Point Man about an EQUIP event near you or visit [www.TrailLifeUSA.com](http://www.TrailLifeUSA.com) for a list of scheduled EQUIP events.**

## **Troop Self-Evaluation Tool**

### **Trail Tracks**

This tool was developed to help you track your progress as you strive to become a thriving Troop! Your Charter Organization Representative, Committee Chairman, and Troopmaster should review the following characteristics together, then self-evaluate to determine where your Troop is now—and where improvement is needed.

#### **THRIVIN’ Troops:**

- o Embrace the church-owned model; COR (church leader) is regularly engaged with Troop operations
- o Have many active leaders (15 minimum if all program levels are offered)
- o Meet weekly throughout the school year
- o Communicate important information consistently to all parents—have scheduled activities (Campouts, service projects), providing general annual calendar and

meeting/activity schedule, and consistent follow-up reminders and advance participation notices

- o Are involved with the Area (attend Roundtables, Training, Camporees, and utilize the Levels of Support)
- o Have high parent participation (all parents are involved and help in some capacity)
- o Have a well-planned Summer Adventure
- o Have an active Woodlands Trail program (Troops with Navigators and Adventurers ONLY soon “age out”)
- o Focus on Advancement and Faith-development (provides the opportunities for mentoring)
- o Continue to grow (growth breeds excitement!)
- o Schedule an annual Open House recruiting event
- o Have knowledge of:
  - o other Troops—nearby or online;
  - o online Resources;
  - o *JoinTheTrail.com* (actively recruiting new members);
  - o and how to conduct an annual Planning (a full year’s program) & Budgeting (how to pay for it) session with all Troop stakeholders
- o Have top leaders who are committed to God, passionate about the mission of TLUSA, and willing to learn and use TLUSA methods and support systems including youth leadership methods.

### **STRIVIN’ Troops:**

- o Accept the church-owned model; involve the COR on a need-to-know basis
- o Have enough active leaders to get by, two-deep at each program level
- o Meet regularly, but not every week
- o Communicate sporadically, often last-minute
- o Participate in campouts and activities (do more than just Troop meetings)
- o **Keep to themselves, but might interact with Area if there’s a problem in the Troop**
- o Have the same leaders “run” almost everything (the program leaders are also on Troop Committee), little youth leadership development
- o Have little emphasis on Advancement or
- o Faith-development

- o Like to keep the same families involved, not actively recruiting new ones
- o Know about online resources, Join The Trail, and Planning & Budgeting but don't use those resources
- o Scrape to get enough money to "keep the promise" of regular trips and adventures
- o Are more about the Program than the Mission— into outdoor adventure, but not religious stuff

### **SURVIVIN' Troops**

- o Don't really understand/buy into "church owned-and-operated"—program leaders run the show
- o Struggle to find enough leaders—many "wear more than one hat"
- o Rarely experience outdoor adventure
- o Have one leader who is actually in charge (no COR involvement or active Troop Committee)
- o Don't participate in Area/multi-Troop activities
- o Have no focus (Advancement or Faith-building)
- o Have no growth or recruiting plan
- o Have no \$, no budget plan
- o Don't know where to go for help

### Score Your Troop:

1. We are faith-focused. We use Faith Building resources and curriculum (1 point), and embrace male mentorship/discipleship methods (1 point). [self-evaluation, total of 0-2 points]
2. Our COR is a paid staff or lay leader within the host Charter Org (1 point), and is engaged in communications at least weekly with Troop Committee (1 point). [self-evaluation, total of 0-2 points]
3. We have enough active, registered leaders (15 is the minimum allowable if all program levels are offered). Less than 5 leaders=0 points; 6-9 leaders=1 point; 10-14 leaders=2 points; 15 or more leaders=3 points). [self-evaluation, total of 0-3 points]
4. We have a Woodlands Trail unit (1 point), which meets at least 2x/month (1 point) [self-evaluation, total of 0-2 points]
5. We send out weekly communications to all Troop member families (1 point), provide an annual calendar that includes weekly meeting and activities schedule

- (1 point), and guide each new family through *FastStart* training (1 point).  
[self-evaluation, total of 0-3 points]
6. We hold a *JoinTheTrail.com* Open House to recruit new members every fall (1 point); added at least 5 new families last time (1 point); re-charter with a growth over last year (1 point).  
[self-evaluation, total of 0-3 points]
  7. We conduct an annual *Planning & Budgeting* session (1 point), inviting all Troop stakeholders— Troop Committee, direct contact leaders, parents, and youth (1 point).  
[self-evaluation, total of 0-2 points]
  8. Troop is involved with Area (regularly attending Roundtables, Camporees, or other multi-Troop activities). [0-2 points]
  9. Troop's top leaders are committed to God (1 point), passionate about the mission of TLUSA (1 point), and willing to learn and use TLUSA methods and support systems including youth leadership methods (1 point). [total of 0-3 points]

#### TOTAL

#### Scoring Results:

- 0-7 points      Please seek help from your Area Team
- 8-12 points    **Survivin'**— good start, room to grow!
- 13-17 points   **Strivin'**— on your way to something great!
- 18-27 points   **Thrivin'**— wow, you have it going on! Find a nearby Troop to mentor!

## Retention Review

### Best Practices for Troops

**PROBLEM:** Low number of youth in a troop

**SOLUTIONS:**

1. Work with another local Troop or adopt each other as 'sister troops', attending campouts and events together.
2. Reach out to chartering church promoting the program as a whole, with emphasis on younger youth.
3. Involve the current members in an Annual Planning session (see Troop Fundraising 101). This teamwork approach will always retain current members while word spreads of the dynamic program being offered.
4. Use JoinTheTrail.com resources to get the word out throughout the community.

**PROBLEM:** Lack of adult leadership ("one-man show" or very few adults involved)

1. Core Team leaders are just "names on paper" to fulfill the requirement; there is no expectation to take on real responsibilities.
2. There is no *Charter Organization* involvement (Direct Contact Leaders "run" the Troop).
3. The Troop Committee is weak/uninvolved.
4. No succession plan exists; instead there is an ongoing "dictatorship".



**SOLUTIONS:**

1 and 2. An active COR takes responsibility for selecting leaders best suited for each position.

3 and 4. Troops must have functioning and regularly-meeting Troop Committees with *defined roles* (such as Committee Chairman, Treasurer, **Advancement Chair**, "Onboarding" Facilitator, Membership Chair, Camping/Outdoor Activities Chair, Training Coordinator, etc). No Direct Contact Leaders (other than Troopmaster) should be on the Troop Committee!

### Models of Successful Troops\*

Finding solutions to problems are often found in best practices of successful Troops.

1. Launching a Troop takes time. Successful Troops seem to be the ones that took



- their time setting up before starting up.
2. Troops that participate in Area and state events are more successful than those **that don't**.
  3. Ministry alignment is in sync; the Troop has the ongoing support of their Charter Organization.
  4. The COR is knowledgeable of/involved in the Troop.
  5. The Troop has a large enough Charter Organization facility.
  6. The Troop has experienced leadership; leaders take training and continue with refresher courses.
  7. The Troop holds efficient and productive monthly Committee meetings.
  8. The Troop follows a detailed calendar of events (and gets notice out well in advance).
  9. The Troop is always encouraging youth leadership (with adults in the shadows).
  10. The Charter Organization/Troop makes sure that their leaders stay aligned with Trail Life USA policies.

*\* Compiled by the TLUSA Regional Team Leaders (the Volunteers who oversee all Point Men—and, in turn, all of the Troops—across the nation).*

## **Firearms Policy**

### **Trail Life USA Personal Firearms Policy**

Persons using or possessing firearms must comply with all local, state and federal laws. Except when carried by active law enforcement officers, personal firearms are not to be present during TLUSA activities without prior written authorization by both the Charter Organization and TLUSA Home Office at [Legal@TrailLifeUSA.com](mailto:Legal@TrailLifeUSA.com).

Requests for authorization require:

1. written permission on the letterhead of the Charter Organization that is signed by either the Institutional Head or the COR;
2. a copy of any legally required license or permit to carry a concealed firearm;
3. attestation that Troop adult leaders and parents of members have been made aware of the practice; commitment by the requesting individual that firearms will be concealed and not be a source of distraction or disruption at meetings;

4. a waiver, release and indemnification agreement that the individual will defend, indemnify, hold harmless and release TLUSA and all associated with TLUSA from any liability or claim arising out of or resulting from the individual's possession, use and/or discharge of the firearm and the naming of TLUSA as an additional insured on any umbrella or supplemental liability insurance applicable to the possession, use or discharge of a firearm;
5. a copy of any liability insurance policy which covers the possession, use or discharge of a firearm.

Except at a shooting sports event, or when carried by active duty law enforcement officers, personal firearms should not be carried openly. The health and safety of all Trail Life USA members should always be considered in discerning whether a personal firearm should be present at any such activities or events.

### **Troop Annual Safety Program** (also see Chapter 11)

This can really cover anything you feel necessary but you should focus on the most common or most needed based on your Troop and the boy(s) you are addressing.

#### **Ideas:**

- o Buddy system
- o The expectation of two-deep leadership and no one-on-one Youth Protections requirements by the leadership and what that means for them.
- o Specific safety items that apply to your meeting location such as water sources on site, restricted areas or activities, traffic patterns/playing in the parking lot, etc.
- o Alerting adults to strangers on site
- o Defining bullying and how to prevent it
- o Appropriate clothing and footwear for safety (closed toed shoes)
- o Review fire safety, knife safety, shooting sports safety and expectations for those three at outings (**who can and can't use or supervise those tools/activities and when they are appropriate, etc.**)
- o Safety rules for outings and overnights
- o Safe use of Troop or personal equipment
- o Weather safety
- o Local wildlife issues to address for safety (gators, snakes, bears)



- o Water safety rules
- o Tenting rules - Navigators share tents with other Navigators, Adventurers share with other Adventurers, no food, no fires nearby.
- o No phones (cameras) near the bathrooms/showers/changing areas
- o Privacy issues
- o Appropriate and inappropriate interactions with others
- o Not finding yourself alone in a room with a girl or younger Trailman
- o No secret ceremonies, activities or meetings
- o No hazing
- o Responsibilities to respect personal rights and space of others

### **Trail Life USA Online Resources**

In addition to online resources mentioned in this text, here is a partial list of other resources that are available to assist you in the program:

Trail Life University Online Training

Trail Life USA Leader Pages including [JoinTheTrail.com](http://JoinTheTrail.com)

Trail Life USA website and blog at [www.TrailLifeUSA.com](http://www.TrailLifeUSA.com).

Trail Life USA Public Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TrailLifeUSA](http://www.facebook.com/TrailLifeUSA)

Trail Life USA Member-only Official Facebook Forum at [www.facebook.com/groups/officialtraillifeusaforum/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/officialtraillifeusaforum/)

*The Trailmans Handbook: Premier Edition* currently available at our national [webstore](#)

## Goals/Notes