



How to Plan and Staff a Youth Gathering

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INTRODUCTION

This manual is divided into two sections, "How to Plan a Retreat" and "Functioning as an Adult Friendly Presence". Both sections were developed over time from experiences with Young Friends' conferences sponsored by the Religious Education Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.

The first section, "How to Plan a Retreat," is the work of Ralph "Cookie" Caldwell, Program Coordinator, Young Friends. Much of the material therein will be useful not only to planners of Young Friends' events, but to planners of any event requiring advance planning and publicity. The second section, "Functioning as an Adult Friendly Presence," was compiled by Margaret "Peg" Bernstein, clerk of the Young Friends Subcommittee of the Religious Education Committee. We recommend it for its many insights into crossing generational barriers. It is followed by two supplementary papers on Guidelines and Standards.

Friends are encouraged to call or write Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Religious Education Office, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19102, (215) 241-7221, both to ask questions and to share experiences about the usefulness of this material.

This publication was edited by Barbara Rose Henderson, Executive Secretary and members of the Curriculum and Training Subcommittee of the Religious Education Committee, Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. Martha Haines provided additional editing as well as the final formatting and typing.

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HOW TO PLAN A RETREAT

Why Do This At All?

The great truths of religion cannot be handed down like a material legacy from one generation to another; they have to be experienced anew by each one who receives them.
Christian Faith and Practice, #447
London Yearly Meeting

First Things First

What are your objectives in planning an event?
How will this event help achieve these objectives?

If you are not clear what you are trying to accomplish then there is no context for choosing between various activities.

Choosing an Activity

Different types of activities attract different people. Whom are you trying to attract? Is it sedentary or physically active? Is it intellectual or experiential? Will participants be asked to share or perform personally or will they be anonymously part of an audience? Is the program or activity appropriate for the developmental level of the children? Is the activity within the physical ability of the participants?

Will the activity be carried out by individuals or will participants act as a group? If group building is one of your objectives then activities that require the group to work together will be helpful. Take care not to force an activity to absorb more people than it can accommodate.

Retreat Leaders and Speakers

Decide if an outside leader is needed or whether members of your group can lead the activities. Plan carefully how you want the retreat to be structured, contact potential leaders and work out programming and scheduling. (Should there be free time? Do we want to have worship-sharing? Do we plan times for singing, volleyball, swimming, worship?)

Retreat leaders and speakers must be arranged for well in advance. Eight months to a year ahead is not too early. Two to three months should be considered a minimum. Shorter notice will make it difficult for you to get the leader you want or to include any meaningful program information in your flyer.

Legal Responsibility

Who is the legal sponsor? The name of that organization should appear on the flyer and on any

agreements you enter into: camp rental, child-care workers, program leaders. Check with the sponsoring organization about liability insurance. What must you do to have the event you are planning covered? What will it cost?

For events sponsored by Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and its committees, consult with the Associate Secretary for Administration, 215-241-7202.

For other organizations it is a good idea to check with the Treasurer.

Finances

Ask the Treasurer of the sponsoring organization who the registration checks should be made payable to. Ask how to get an advance to pay for out-of-pocket expenses, how to pay for deposits (camp rental, etc.,) and how the Treasurer wants you to account for the money spent.

Budget

Program	_____
Printing	_____
Postage	_____
Rental	_____
Insurance	_____
Food	_____
Supplies	_____
Child Care	_____
Telephone	_____
Miscellaneous	_____
Total	_____

How to Plan a Retreat

The total divided by a conservative estimated number of expected participants equals the registration fee. Be realistic with your estimates - better to allow too much money than to come up short. Which brings up another important point: how will the losses be covered if you don't figure this right, or if for some reason you need to cancel the event?

The Site

Reservations often must be made months in advance, even for your own meetinghouse. It is a good idea to talk to the clerk or secretary of the Meeting to find out if the dates you want are clear on the Meeting calendar. Your request may need to go to the business meeting for approval. Find out when the business meeting is held, put your request in writing, and get it to the clerk of the Meeting at least a week before the meeting date. The clerk may have questions that were not answered in your letter. It may be a good idea to have someone attend the business meeting who is prepared to answer questions.

Camps, conference centers, etc., should be reserved far in advance (nine months to a year) in order to get the desired dates, but there might be a date open on shorter notice due to a cancellation.

Some questions that you should ask of the Meeting or other facility: What is the fee for the site? What is the policy and penalty for cancellation? What are the rules and expectations of the facility? [There may be rules regarding smoking areas, use of pool, canoes, kitchen, building campfires, number of persons permitted, sleeping arrangements for men and women, number of adult chaperones, clean-up required, etc.] What are the locations of the phones, first-aid supplies, bathrooms, sleeping spaces, meeting areas, child-care equipment, the nearest hospital, and the fuse box (in case you blow a fuse with the coffee pot)? Are there smoke alarms? What do you do in the event of a fire? If the smoke detectors automatically call the fire department, what do you do in the event of a false alarm? Do you have directions to the site, and a map? What phone number can people call if they get lost, or for families and/or babysitters to call in emergencies?

Ideally, someone familiar with the site should arrive early to welcome participants, direct them to eating and sleeping areas, and collect any unpaid registration fees. It is important that as people arrive they are made to feel at home and welcome. Don't assume that everybody knows everyone else or that everyone will just naturally mix into the group.

Child Care

If the participants or program leaders are likely to bring young children, then you should consider offer-

ing child care. Some programs or activities may include children and child care may not be needed. Small children and babies require more child-care workers than older children. Don't skimp; if the children are not well taken care of and don't enjoy themselves, their parents will not be free to enjoy the retreat. Specify the agreement with the child-care workers in writing. Are they volunteering or are they being paid? How much will they be paid? When are they expected to provide child care? Dates and hours? How many and what age children are they to care for? Are they expected to organize activities or just babysit? What kind of space and equipment will be available for child care? How much flexibility will there be in the program schedule, and will they be paid more if the program runs over the time agreed upon? The child-care workers will also need to have directions to the site.

Food

Food can be handled in several ways. One way is planning simple meals, shopping for the food for the entire group, and assigning participants to cook and clean up after meals. This can be a lot of work, but sharing in meal preparation can help build community among a group. A variation on this is to have one or two volunteers take charge of planning the meals, buying the food, and using other assigned participants to help in the actual meal preparation.

A second option is to have everyone bring food to share. Each person or family is assigned to bring a dessert, main course, vegetable, salad or bread for a specified number of people (a coordinated covered dish.)

The easiest option is to arrange for a caterer to prepare the meals with participants helping with the clean-up. This is also the most expensive option.

A final option is to require everyone to bring his/her own food for the entire event. This is most appropriate for camping overnight and picnics, but it is cumbersome for a full weekend gathering.

However you do the food, remember that there may be vegetarians to provide for.

The Flyer: Construction

You will need a flyer. The original must be on white 8-1/2 x 11 or 8-1/2 x 14 paper. Use dark black ink. Do not use blue, green, etc. Do not use a ball-point pen or a pencil. Do not use an old, worn-out typewriter ribbon or a dot-matrix printer on draft mode. Photocopy machines (Xerox, etc.) will not make good copies from poor quality originals. Maps, drawings, or logos may be cut out and glued or taped to the original. Try to make the flyer look attractive and interesting.

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The Flyer: Content

1. Who is this activity for? Are there age or grade limits?

"Overseers", "Parents of Young Children", "Middle School, 6th-8th grade", "Young Friends, 9th-12th grade", "College-age Young Adults, 18 - 23 years of age". Speak plainly - if you don't say who it is for the people you are aiming at might not think it's for them. A vague group name may also attract people you are not prepared for. "Young Friends" within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, New York Yearly Meeting, and Baltimore Yearly Meeting usually means high school age, perhaps some college age. "Young Friends of North America" is young adults 18-40 years old. Try to avoid confusion by saying exactly what you mean without "code" words or alphabet soup designations (i.e., Accountability Group, FCNL, FLGC).

2. Who is the legal sponsor?

"Philadelphia Yearly Meeting", "The Peace Committee", "The Religious Education Committee", "Bucks Quarterly Meeting", "Westfield Monthly Meeting of Friends", "The Friends Institute", etc. Include information about how checks should be made out.

3. What kind of an event is this and what is going to happen?

"A Christmas Retreat, Seeking that of God in Everyone ... including Me", "We Can Do It!, Using Yearly Meeting Resources in Your Meeting", "Are You Good Enough to Be a Quaker, a talk by Frank Goodfellow", etc. The text in the body of the flyer should give some detail about the content of the event. If the event is a series of optional workshops from which the participants are expected to choose, enough information must be given so they can make an informed choice. Remember this is where you "sell" the event. Make it sound interesting.

Example: Retreat

COME OUT, COME OUT, WHEREVER YOU ARE! Searching for God in Yourself and Others. Young Friends Christmas Retreat.

Each of us has moments when we feel the power of God in our lives, whether sitting in Meeting or on a school bus. At this retreat we will try to touch the mystical part of our lives, to learn methods that help set the stage for religious experience, and to share moments that have been important in our spiritual journeys. God speaks to us all the time, but we must learn to listen for the "still small voice within."

Our fearless leader for this gathering will be Steve Stalonas (my favorite Quaker "rabbi"), who will lead the group with stories and tales, real and apocryphal. I always

enjoy working with Steve because I learn so much and have fun doing it!

There will also be time for crafts, singing, fellowship, 4-square, baking cakes, and general hanging out.

Example: Workshops

Organizing Young Friends and Junior High Groups in Your Meeting or Quarter. Ideas for programs, overnights, planning and activities. Peggy Morscheck, Young Friends Subcommittee.

Creating Nifty Quaker Parents: The Meeting's Role. What Meetings are doing and what they need to be doing to support parents as they try to live out Quaker values in the home. Becky Matos, Marilyn Trueblood, Harriet Heath; the Committee on Children Ages 0-13 and Their Parents.

Extending Your Home Food Budget Through Utilization of Road Kills. The Committee for Simply Living

4. When is the event? Day, Date, Times

"Saturday, October 1, 1988, 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m."
"Halloween Weekend, October 28-30, 1988; 5 PM Friday until 2 PM Sunday."

5. Where is it to be held?

"Friends Center, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA"
"Atlantic City Area Friends Meetinghouse, 1021 S. Main St., Pleasantville, NJ"
"Camp Onas, Geigle Hill Road, Ottsville, PA"

Good directions to the site should be included with a simple map in the body of the flyer. Poor or confusing directions will get people lost and they will arrive at your event in a foul mood ... if they find the place at all! If there is good public transportation to the site, this should be included in the directions for anything other than a local event. Maps to meetinghouses in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting are available from the "Map Directory of Monthly Meetings" prepared by the Yearly Meeting Field Committee. Many Meetings have a copy of this book, or individual maps can be had from the Yearly Meeting offices.

6. Registration and Cost

Will there be a cost to participants? Is there a registration deadline? Can people register after the deadline and is there a late fee? Can people register by phone? To whom should checks be made payable? (Usually this should be the legal sponsor.) Are there scholarships available for those who cannot afford the registration fee? How do those asking for scholarship aid apply? There should be some level of confidential-

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ity concerning those asking for scholarships. The process for applying for scholarship aid should be clear and very simple. Will a list of participants be sent out to aid in carpooling and when?

Example:

COST: \$22.00 - PREREGISTER AND PREPAY BY OCTOBER 20TH. NO LATE REGISTRATIONS ACCEPTED.

A carpool list will be sent out on October 21. We keep our fees as low as possible and offer scholarships to encourage Young Friends to attend. Parents who can afford to pay more than \$22.00 are encouraged to do so.

DO NOT STAY AWAY FOR LACK OF MONEY. Scholarship aid is available through the Religious Education Committee. Please pay what you can and indicate on the registration form how much you need.

If you accept late registrations there should be a late fee to encourage people to pay on time, large enough to be meaningful but small enough so as not to prevent anyone from coming, i.e. from \$5.00 to \$15.00. The early registration deadline should also be the deadline for scholarships because without it there is no incentive for those asking for scholarships to preregister at all. If you decide on a deadline and a late fee it is bad policy in the long run to waive the late fee. It is human nature to want to keep your options open until the last minute, but it makes it very hard to plan program, purchase food, or arrange chaperones. In 1976 it was the norm for less than half of the Young Friends to preregister for conferences. Today, with strict adherence to the preregistration deadlines and late fees, very few Young Friends register late.

7. Other Information

When should people arrive? When is the first meal if any? When does the program begin? What should people bring - food? games? sleeping bags? appropriate clothes? swimsuit? tools? paint brushes? extra money or money for some admission fee? Include what not to bring, such as pets, radios, tape players.

8. The Registration Form

There are several functions that are served by the registration form:

- A. It lets you know who is coming.
- B. It gives you the participants' addresses and phone numbers.
- C. It supplies parental permission and medical information for those minors (under age 18) attending the event without their parent or guardian. This is very important in the event of a medical emergency. A hospital emergency room will wait for parental permission unless the injury or illness is life threatening. Painful is not the same as life threatening. **NOTE:** The "release from liability" is really just a "hex sign" to discourage law suits. In fact the individual does retain the right to sue for damages.
- D. It supplies insurance information. This is particularly important for those covered by Health Maintenance Organizations that may require prior authorization for treatment.

Sample Flyer

The numbers and arrows refer to the various sections under "Flyer: Content", p. 5.

SILENCE
 a Young Friends'
 (9th Grade (or age 14) to 12th Grade)
Christmas Retreat
December 27-30, 1989
Moorestown N.J.

"Our task as ... Friends is simply to open our lives to the presence of God. We must first want to let our lives listen and then we will know how to let our lives speak."
 Diana Nicholson

Silence has been central to Friends' worship for more than 300 years and yet today many of us are not prepared to use or appreciate silence in our own lives. We often avoid silence, creating a busyness in our lives that "saves" us from being alone. We fill the silence with diversions, spending "the time of our lives" instead of "having" it. On December 27 Young Friends will gather in retreat at Moorestown Meeting House to open our lives to the presence of God. We will spend 24 hours of our time together in silence, part in solitude and part doing things together without words. We will be keeping journals of our personal journeys and a group journal of our time together. There will be queries to focus our attention and exercises to stir our awareness. There will be time for play without words and we will learn some non-verbal ways to communicate. Maharaja Hess from the Sufi Center will teach us some Sufi dances - I think of them as a mantra for the body.

BEFORE YOU COME, take time to think about some personal goals for using the silence, and how to achieve them. Please bring books, poetry, artwork or whatever has helped you in your own spiritual seeking. There will be time for you to use them and opportunity to share them with others.

Please come with a commitment to the silence which we will enter together - that you enter with a seriousness (not somberness) which will make the silence an enriching time for both you and the group. The silence is not a contest to see who can keep his/her mouth shut for 24 hours. It is an opportunity for all of us - with each others' help - to discover new aspects in ourselves and in our relationship to the spirit. To let this occur, we all need to be clear and strong in our commitment to help the whole group grow through the silence.

Over

5 → **GETTING TO MOORESTOWN FRIENDS MEETING & SCHOOL:** The meeting house is on the south side of Main Street just east of the intersection with Chester Ave. There is good access from both I-295 and the New Jersey Turnpike. From Philadelphia use the Ben Franklin Bridge to NJ Rte 70 East, to Rte 38 East. At the Rte 73 Interchange take Rte 41 North (King's Highway - becomes Main Street) into Moorestown. Chester Avenue is just east of the business district. A detailed map will be sent with the carpool list in December.

BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: From Philadelphia - New Jersey Transit operates buses from Broad Street between Arch and Cherry Street, two blocks north of City Hall, four blocks from Suburban Station. On weekdays #7 or #71 buses leave Broad and Cherry Streets every half hour at 1/4 of and 1/4 after the hour. Ask for Moorestown Friends School on Main Street at Chester Ave. **PHONE NUMBER AT THE MEETING: 609-235-1561.**

6 → **DREARY FINANCIAL DETAILS: COST: \$30.00.** Your registration and payment must be postmarked (or hand delivered) by December 13th. **NO LATE REGISTRATIONS ACCEPTED. NO PHONE-IN REGISTRATIONS ACCEPTED.** We keep our fees as low as possible and offer scholarships to encourage Young Friends to attend. Parents who can afford to pay more than \$30.00 are encouraged to do so. All fees and donations are used to support the Young Friends Gatherings.

DO NOT STAY AWAY FOR LACK OF MONEY! Scholarship aid is available through the Religious Education Committee. Please pay what you can and indicate on the registration form how much you need.

ADDRESS LISTS will be mailed December 18th. Use the list to arrange carpools or to ride public transit together. Make a long ride fun and an unfamiliar ride safe.


4 → **OTHER QUESTIONS ANSWERED:** Plan to arrive Wednesday after 3 p.m. Meals start with dinner at 6:30 p.m. Ninth grade through college age welcome. **NOTE:** Please plan your transportation connections or rides to leave at 2:00 p.m. Saturday afternoon.

7 → **BRING:** warm clothes, jammies, pillow, blanket, sheets or sleeping bag, air mattress, towel, teddy bear, games, musical instruments. Showers will be available. **Please do not bring:** radios, cassettes, or pets. **Further questions answered:** Cookie Caldwell, 215-241-7221, or 1-800-DIAL-PYM toll free.

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Sample Registration Form

The numbers and arrows refer to the various sections under "Flyer: Content", p. 5.

1 →  9th Grade (or age 14) to 12th Grade.

REGISTRATION
Young Friends' Christmas Retreat

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____
Amount of Scholarship Requested: \$ _____

2 → Religious Education Committee
Philadelphia Yearly Meeting
1515 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

6 → Cost: \$30.00
Make checks payable to
Religious Education Committee

8A → Name _____ Grade * Birthdate ____/____/____ *

8B → Address _____

Phone _____ Meeting _____ Are you Vegetarian? _____

[] Check here if this is a change in address.

8C → I give permission for my above-named child to participate in the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Young Friends gathering Dec. 27-30, 1968, at Moorestown Friends Meeting, Moorestown, NJ. I hereby release the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, its staff and volunteers, from liability for any injury or illness that my child (I) may sustain during this retreat. In the event of an emergency, I hereby authorize an adult leader of this retreat, as agent for me, to consent to any X-ray examination; medical, dental, or surgical diagnosis; treatment; and hospital care advised and supervised by a physician, surgeon or dentist (as appropriate) licensed to practice under the laws of the state where the services are rendered, either at a doctor's office or in any hospital. I expect to be contacted as soon as possible. *

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian: _____
(or self if over 18 years of age)

Date: ____/____/____

Phone numbers where you can be reached during the retreat: _____

8C → MEDICAL INFORMATION:

ALLERGIES _____

MEDICATIONS BEING TAKEN _____

8D → FAMILY DOCTOR _____ Phone # _____

DATE OF LAST TETANUS SHOT _____

MEDICAL INSURANCE COMPANY _____ Group # _____

POLICY NUMBER _____ MEMBER'S NAME _____

No one will be permitted to attend the gathering without a completely filled out and signed registration form.

To Parents: I am willing to help at this gathering _____

Another gathering _____ Name _____

**Grade, "Birthdate" and the permission section can be omitted for a gathering of adults over 18 years old. For a group of Young Adults 18 and over it is wise to specify that the participants must be 18 years of age.

FLIER CHECKLIST

1. Who is this for? _____
2. Who is the Sponsoring organization? _____
3. What is going to happen? _____

5. When is it to be held? Date _____ Time: _____
Do you eat before you come? _____
6. Where is it to take place? _____
7. How to get there? _____

- Phone at the location? _____ Do you have a map _____
Buses? Trains? _____
8. COST: \$ _____ Registration deadline _____ Late fee\$ _____
9. Make checks payable to: _____
10. Scholarship aid? _____
11. Phone for further information: _____
12. Age Limits? _____
13. What to bring and what not to bring! (Add or subtract as needed):

Pillow, blankets, sleeping bag, floor pad, swim suit, towels,
flashlight, teddy bear, bug spray, games appropriate clothes, jammies,
musical instruments (this does not include radios, cassettes, walkman),
arts and crafts materials

Adult Supervision (Names, Addresses, & Phones):

Special Rules to fit the needs of the host facility: _____

Food preparation. Who will do it? _____

Cleanup. Who will oversee it? _____

FIRST AID & EMERGENCY INFORMATION:

Hospital _____ Phone _____

Ambulance _____ Phone _____

Crisis Center _____ Phone _____

Non-Conference Adults to aid in a crisis situation: driving, place to stay,
house & grounds person: _____

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Possible Conference Themes

AIDS
Abortion
Alcoholism
Appearance
Assertiveness
Authority
Bible
Central America
Cheating
Conscientious Objection
Depression
Divorce
Drugs
Eating Disorders
Environmental Concerns
Friends' Testimonies: How do you carry your beliefs into your life?
Friends' Beliefs / What do you believe about God?
Friends: choosing your friends; what does your choice of friends say about you and your values?
Gossip
Health
Homelessness
Homosexuality
Honesty
Injustice
Intercultural relationships
Israel and the Palestinians
Leadership and supporting leadership
Loneliness
Love/sex/dating
Lying
Meeting for Worship
Membership in your Meeting: what does it mean?
Music
Nonviolence
Parents
Patriotism
Peer Counseling
Peer Pressure
Physical Abuse
Politics
Prayer
Prejudice
Rape and Date Rape
Relationships
Religious Doubt
Self-Esteem
Silence
Stealing
Suicide
Terrorism
Values: what are yours?
War
Workcamps

WORSHIP SHARING GROUP DIRECTIONS

Worship Sharing is part of most Young Friends' events. The following directions will help you lead this activity successfully.

Why do worship sharing? To quote William Stringfellow, "Listening is a primitive act of love..." It is rare to have the opportunity either to receive that love or to give it. It is a good way of building a sense of community within a group.

Worship sharing also can have a positive impact on Meeting for Worship. As people become more comfortable with sharing the important issues and events of their lives, they also become more comfortable sharing their spiritual journey and God's movement in their lives.

How to do it:

Worship sharing is not weighted with all the baggage of Meeting for Worship. There is no "right" way to do it. In fact there are several "right" ways and you may think up more.

1. In its simplest form, a worship sharing group may gather in silence, much like a meeting for worship but without the expectation that God is speaking through each speaker. Participants share whatever is on their mind.
2. A variation of 1: Someone might read a short inspirational passage, a poem, play some music, the group may center their attention on a work of art, a photograph, etc. One group of mothers had a worship sharing session focused on their infants that were crawling on the floor in the center of the group.
3. Another style uses a series of three or four questions related to a single topic. The first question usually asks people to share an early memory or experience. The follow-up questions bring the subject into the present. "Creative Listening", from Claremont Friends Meeting, is an excellent resource. Request it from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Library, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19102, (215) 241-7220.
4. "The Ungame" provides a simple structure for worship sharing. This is a commercial board game complete with dice, markers, directions and several wonderful decks of question cards. The questions are "Light-Hearted", "Deep Understanding", "Christian Belief", and "Questions for Couples". This game is good with kids and/or adults.

Among Young Friends (PYM) we just use the decks of cards. The group settles into silence. The person holding the deck takes a card

from the top of the deck and reads the question to the group. That person then answers the question. When finished, the card is put on the bottom of the deck and the deck passed to the next person to take a card. A new variation on this has been to ask each person in silence to think of a new UNquestion. 3x5 cards and pencils are circulated, the questions written down, cards collected and shuffled. We then proceed as above.

Advice for Leaders

Worship sharing is not a therapy group. No one is required to share anything. No one needs to explain a response. People say only as much as they feel comfortable sharing. If a person does not want to share they may just say that they want to pass.

Risk taking: Let the group know that you only get out of this what you are willing to risk putting in. If you don't share anything important, if you censor your thoughts because they are too painful or too revealing, then no one will know any more about you when the worship sharing is over than when it began. As the leader, you can't expect that anyone else will risk more than you are willing to risk with the group.

Confidentiality: Remind the group that whatever people say within the group stays within the group. Do not tell other people what someone else has shared. That person felt safe at that particular moment, with these particular people. In reality, they may or may not mind your spreading the information, but you don't know and it's not your choice.

Humor: Acknowledge that sometimes people say things that are funny. However, the group needs to be mindful that too much laughter can make people afraid to share. It can also create a mood of frivolity and people won't share anything important. Most importantly, humor is sometimes used to cover over something that actually is very painful.

Follow-up Questions: People will share what they want you to hear. Your "job" is to listen and give the speaker your complete attention. The question you ask out of concern may well feel like interrogation, if not to the person you are directing the question to, then to one of the other people. It means that you might "interrogate" them when their turn comes around. They may feel it unsafe to share anything important.

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Leadership: The group leader has agreed to start things off, to remind participants of the ground rules if they forget (no unnecessary talking, confidentiality, no follow-up questions, making sure everyone gets a turn). Emphasize that each participant is also a leader, setting the tone for the group, taking risks, being present with loving concern for the group, listening with full attention.

Tears: Sometimes someone will cry when they are sharing with the group. These may be tears of joy or tears from remembering a painful experience. Do not try to distract someone who cries or overdo well intentioned support. The tears are not the pain. Simply sit quietly, hold a hand or give a hug, listen.

The following quotation describes the wonderful experience of real listening which worship sharing encourages:

Listening is a rare happening among human beings. You cannot listen to the word another is speaking if you are preoccupied with your appearance or with impressing the other, or are trying to decide what you are going to say when the other stops talking, or are debating about whether what is being said is true or relevant or agreeable. Such matters have their place, but only after listening to the word as the word is being uttered.

Listening is a primitive act of love in which a person gives himself to another's word, making himself accessible and vulnerable to that word.

William Stringfellow

COOPERATIVE GAMES - A BIBLIOGRAPHY

Most Young Friends' Gatherings involve some game playing. Here are some good sources for games.

Silver Bullets by Karl Rohnke. Order from Project Adventure, Inc., P.O. Box 100, Hamilton, MA, 01936; (617) 468-1766.

A Manual on Nonviolence and Children by Stephanie Judson. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1977. Order from Friends General Conference, 1216 Arch St., 2B, Philadelphia, PA 19107, (215) 561-1700. Includes a special section of games, *For the Fun of It!*

The New Games Book by Andrew Fluegelman, Headlands Press, 1976.

More New Games by Andrew Fluegelman, Dolphin Books, Doubleday & Co., Inc., Garden City, NY, 1981.

Follow Me: A Handbook of Movement Exercises for Children by Marianne Torbert. Order from L. G. Advisors, Box 175, Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004; (215) 649-7879. The Girl Scouts recommend this book highly.

The Second Cooperative Sports and Games Book by Terry Orlick. NY: Pantheon: 1982. Available from commercial bookstores. Other books by the same author: *Cooperative Sports and Games Book*, *Every Kid Can Win*, *Winning Through Cooperation*, and *In Pursuit of Excellence*.

Games Manual of Non-Competitive Games by Jim Deacove, 1974. A Family Pastimes Product, RR 4, Perth, Ontario, Canada K7H3C6. Write this address for a catalogue which includes this book and games you can purchase.

FUNCTIONING AS A FRIENDLY PRESENCE

OR

How to Survive a Young Friends' Gathering and Love It

[Editor's Note: This section was originally written as a handout for adults who help at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Young Friends' Conferences. Therefore it refers to logistics which are specific to those gatherings. Friends from other Yearly Meetings or those planning local events may need to revise some of the details, but the general advice for Friendly Presences will be useful in all youth conference settings.]

INTRODUCTION

If you asked ten people who volunteer at Young Friends' (YF's) gatherings for their motivation for doing so, you might well get ten different answers. There are many good reasons. There is fellowship and community with the participants, young and older, and unexpected opportunities for spiritual growth. This guide is intended to help you maximize the rewards of the experience.

Generally, you need to approach the Gathering in the manner of Friends. YF's respond best to guidance which is firm, but respectful and loving. It is important to remain calm, despite an atmosphere which can be hectic at times. Above all, our YF's need to be accepted as people (don't we all?) even when, or particularly when, their behavior should not be accepted.

The role of an adult at a gathering is multi-faceted, and changes frequently during the Gathering. You may wear some or all of the following "hats" during a given gathering: member of the community, role model, enforcer of rules/guidelines, shepherd, first aider, secretary, teacher. Each of these roles will be explained in more detail. In addition, you should feel free to utilize your special gifts to enhance the event and your enjoyment of it.

PREPARATION

It is important to be clear with the person in charge about your commitment, as far ahead of time as possible. If you are from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, this will usually be a staff member of the Religious Education Committee, who can most easily be reached at that office. The experience will be more valuable if you can arrange to be present for the entire gathering. You and the kids will have a greater sense of continuity and community, and (no small thing) you will learn more names. However, not everyone is able to make that kind of commitment, and you are welcome and encouraged to come for as long a period

of time as possible. Should your plans change, it is very important that the person in charge find out right away, so another volunteer can be recruited in your place.

In general, Friendly Presences are our guests. There is no charge for attending a Young Friends' event. We can even fund transportation to the event where necessary.

Don't feel shy about packing everything and anything you might need to be comfortable. At most Gatherings, sleeping arrangements are on the floor. An air mattress or floor pad is highly recommended. For specific recommendations, refer to the brochure for the event you will attend.

Should you need to bring younger children (below 9th grade) in order to participate, they are welcome as our guests. You will, of course, be responsible for their supervision during the Gathering. Please let the person in charge know that you will be bringing additional guests. They are welcome to participate in the workshops, as they are able and interested. Some of the programs are, however, quite serious, so you will want to discuss the program with the person in charge ahead of time.

UPON ARRIVAL

Arrival and Departure are usually the busiest times for adults. If you can arrive a little early, it will be helpful to you. I find it easier to learn the kids' names as they arrive, in small groups, than later in a large group.

The first step is to find the person in charge, let him/her know that you have arrived, and make yourself a name tag. At this point, generally, one adult needs to be checking in the kids, and another will be taking photographs of people who have not been to a previous Gathering. Please remind the photographer to take your picture if the Gathering is your first. If you are not needed for one of these tasks, you will still be busy.

Functioning as a Friendly Presence

It is useful to engage in a scavenger for essential items hunt early on. At some point in the Gathering, you will need (or one of the kids will ask for) the following:

- First Aid Kit.
- Bathrooms
- Posted schedules of events and lists of "groups".
- Light switches (no easy feat in some settings).
- Thermostat.
- Fuse box or circuit breakers.
- Cleaning supplies.
- Toilet plunger.
- Program Supplies (generally in cartons)

In addition to locating these potentially useful items for future use, walk through the property, inside and out. You will spend some of your time "herding" the Young Friends (more about this later), and you will need to know where the nooks and crannies are.

Along with getting to know the site, you will want to meet the kids, and the other adults. Like all of us, the Young Friends respond much more quickly when called by name. I can't begin to tell you how much easier life becomes when you no longer need to holler "Hey, you!" Of some assistance here is the "face book". This is a picture album of participants in the program. Use it with the knowledge that the participants are in a stage of rapid growth and may resemble their pictures only slightly.

DURING THE GATHERING

Your Relationship with the YF's

The general guidelines for behavior are listed on each brochure, posted at every Gathering, and discussed with the Young Friends and adults at each Gathering (see Guidelines example, p. 19). The following are prohibited: use of illegal drugs, use of alcohol, and inappropriate sexual behavior (also includes massive displays of affection). In addition, participants are expected to exercise that uncommon virtue, common sense. This embraces those behaviors which may present a danger to life, health, property, or the reputation of Young Friends.

Any blatant violation of guidelines should be stopped. Before handling a difficult situation, however, you will probably want to consult the person in charge. This person must be notified in any case, as soon as possible. Behavior which might be life threatening should, of course, be interrupted immediately.

One of your roles (a surprisingly rare one, actually) is to enforce guidelines, or deal with otherwise inappropriate behavior. It is important that Young Friends be elderd when necessary. In general, the emotional health of any individual is more important than the program, but not more important than the emotional health of the group. A Young Friend who

is upset may be excused from a program, perhaps to talk with an adult, in another place. In Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Family Relations counselors are available, on an on-call basis, should the need for a professional arise.

Your most important role is to be an adult role model for the Young Friends. They will observe your behavior, and they will listen to what you are saying, even if they don't always follow your instructions. Some of the values we try to model for the kids include attentive listening, acceptance of others who may be different from ourselves, willingness to touch and be touched, openness to new experiences, and the ability to have fun. The kids will include you rather quickly in their community. They don't want you to crowd them, but they like to have you around. I tend to position myself near, but not among, small groups. Other ways to be present without crowding include joining in group games, sharing the program experiences, and ambling around the general area.

The YF's value Gatherings as a safe place to share feelings and experiences which they often do not feel comfortable to share in other places, including their homes. For this reason, and for basic establishment of trust, it is critical that information you may learn about a Young Friend remain strictly confidential. The only automatic exception to this is suicidal thoughts. When in doubt about the seriousness of information shared and whether that information should constitute an exception to this general rule (for example, discussion of abuse), consult the person in charge.

Relationship to other Adults

Your "community within a community" will be the other adults present. Taking the time to get to know this group will pay immense dividends. Some of the program will be done within your group. Although some of these experiences may seem new to you, you will find yourself "stretched" if you participate. You will find the other adults nurturing of you as you become an active participant.

Another role is to assist the person in charge. Aside from the tasks listed elsewhere, the person in charge needs information and feedback from you on an on-going basis. Certain things must be communicated immediately:

- Guidelines violations, as listed above.
- Presence of unknown "outsiders".
- Suspicion of theft, or other crime.
- Serious illness or injury.
- Serious damage to the property.
- Suicidal thoughts, or other evidence of serious emotional upset.

In addition, the person in charge will welcome suggestions about activities, scheduling, etc., and will appreciate your "sense of the group" from time to time.

The Chores

You are not expected to function as a housekeeper. However, we have discovered that the Young Friends need some assistance to complete their chores. They need to be reminded of the chore to be done and they need to be instructed, at times, in how to do the chore. We call this Basic Life Skills Training.

You will find the chore assignments posted on the schedule. At a time when a chore is to be taking place, it is a good idea to scan the group list to see whether the right kids are engaged in the right job. If you have a sense that the job seems to have been completed too quickly, you may be right. The chores, sequentially, are: breakfast preparation, breakfast clean-up, lunch preparation, lunch clean-up, bathroom cleaning, dinner preparation, dinner clean-up, and late night clean-up. Many of the Gatherings now feature a paid Cook, who supervises meal preparation and clean-up.

In the Right Place at the Right Time

A fairly large portion of your time will be spent "herding" the Young Friends from wherever they are to wherever they need to be. Prime herding times are program times, chore times, and even meal times. The kids are so engaged in "gathering" that they lose track of time easily. This can be accomplished gently. Once reminded, they move fairly readily to the appropriate location.

Bedtime may or may not prove an exception to easy herding. The task of putting the YF's to bed usually requires multiple reminders. The reminders tend to become progressively more strongly phrased. Do not forget the "nooks and crannies". Once gathered in the appropriate room, and encouraged into their sleeping wear, the kids need to be sorted into their individual sleeping bags (one to a bag is the rule), and hushed. Adults are asked to spread themselves throughout the sleeping area or areas to maximize supervision. You will, if you are lucky, fall asleep before all whispering ceases. We recognize that attempting to remain awake until all YF's are asleep would be a monumental if not impossible job. However, we are mindful that all of us need, and should be allowed, a reasonable amount of sleep. We do therefore expect you to help communicate the expectation of sleep to the kids.

THE FINAL DAY

The final day of a Gathering can be busy. The schedule will list the tasks to be accomplished and their order. Generally, all participants will be asked to pack personal gear and move it to a designated "out of the way" spot.

Shortly after all gear is packed, the general clean-up begins. Each work group will be assigned an area to clean. They may still need assistance from adults; often they will need help deciding when the area is "really" clean. It is important to the Young Friends' Program that the facilities we use be left in excellent condition. Certain cleaning up tasks may fall outside the specific realm of any group, such as packing program materials or loading the food. Adults will often do this work, or will solicit Young Friends who are finished with their primary task to do so.

Once the place is clean, good-byes start. The Lost and Found pile will remain available throughout the leaving. The building can be checked for lights and locking at this time. It is unnecessary for all of the adults to remain until the "bitter end". However, it is not a good idea to leave only one person waiting. Finally, you say good-bye to friends old and new, find out when the next Gathering happens, and go home to sleep.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Further information on this, or any other aspect of the Young Friends' Program, can be obtained through the Religious Education Office at Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19102, (215) 241-7221. The Young Friends' Subcommittee of the Religious Education Committee will be pleased to provide you with information or arrange a presentation to your group.

Margaret Bernstein

Functioning as a Friendly Presence

This is the behavior guidelines sheet distributed to Philadelphia Young Friends

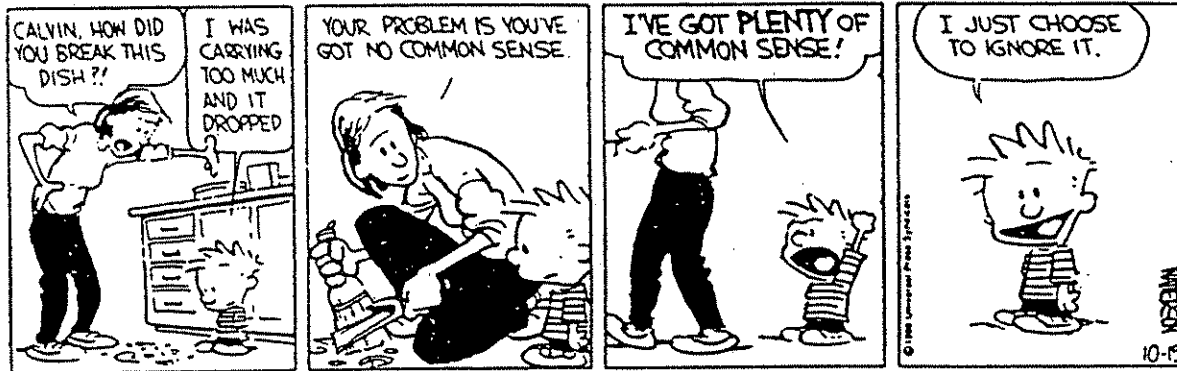
YOUNG FRIENDS GUIDELINES



Young Friends are reminded of the guidelines:

1. NO ILLEGAL DRUGS
2. NO ALCOHOL
3. NO INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL ACTIVITY
This means: No Necking, Petting, Sucking Face, Making Out, Groping, etc. (Ask first if you are in doubt!)
4. NO ONE MAY LEAVE THE CONFERENCE WITHOUT THE PERMISSION OF THE CONFERENCE LEADERS; ie. Kathryn Maleney or Cookie Caldwell. (This includes those over age 18)

AND...



Everyone is required to use common sense and to intervene with others who do not.

Anyone who becomes a danger to him/herself, to others, to the facilities or to the reputation of Young Friends will be asked to leave.

Young Friends' gathering are very special. The "bubble", the community, requires each of us to nurture the group, to be aware of each other and to care for one another.

This must be an active act of caring: doing your part of the cooking and cleaning, listening when others are speaking, working to include others into the group, not using put downs, cheerful cooperation even if you are cleaning toilets.

The community is also very fragile. When trust is broken it is hard to reestablish. If you cannot live with the guidelines or if you are not coming to be an active participant in the community - PLEASE DO NOT COME.

This paper should help Friends set reasonable standards for local events.

STANDARDS FOR YOUNG FRIENDS' GATHERINGS

The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Religious Education Committee's experience supporting local events over the past few years has alerted us to the need for some standards for these local events.

The Religious Education Committee (REC) of the Yearly Meeting has been encouraging Monthly and Quarterly Meetings to sponsor Young Friends' events locally. The REC staff is willing to supply information and mailing lists, to help you decide what you want to do and how to make it happen.

When a Monthly or Quarterly Meeting agrees to sponsor an event it means that the members of the Meeting are personally agreeing to oversee and participate in the planning and carrying out of the event. Benign neglect is courting disaster. This does not mean that the adults need to take over the planning; in fact we would discourage you from doing so. An important part of the event is the organizational experience and leadership skills that the Young Friends gain from putting the event together. Your job is to see that the tasks are carried out and the necessary arrangements made.

Adult Friendly Presences need to be recruited to be at the gathering. There should be one mature responsible adult for every ten high-school-age YFs. Never less than two (if there is an emergency there will be no one to stay with the group). At least one of the adults should be an active member of the Meeting. We cannot emphasize enough that several of these adults must be significantly older than participants and prepared to act as guideline enforcers if necessary.

Reasonable limits should be set on the number of YFs who may attend the gathering. 35 kids is the maximum that we recommend. With special activities or with particular circumstances you may want to set the maximum lower, i.e., a canoe trip, a road trip with limited transportation or a very small meeting house.

If Young Friends are to be transported in cars during the gathering, the drivers should all be over age 18. CHECK to see that (1) each driver has a current driver's license; (2) each driver is insured or covered by a parent's policy; (3) the insurance coverage is adequate. Each passenger must have written permission for transportation from a parent (this can be

included on the registration form). If you must use younger drivers, there should be specific written permission from the parents of kids who will ride in those cars with those specific drivers (this is called informed consent). Regardless of age, use only responsible, safe drivers. All of these items will be difficult or impossible to arrange at the last minute on site. Plan ahead! No one should be transported on roadways in a vehicle not designed for passengers, i.e., trucks, trailers, wagons, cargo vans. There should be a seat and a seatbelt for each person and people must use the seatbelts.

If there is to be swimming there must be a Red Cross certified lifeguard on duty. Most swimming areas require a certain number of lifeguards for a certain number of swimmers. If boats are used, Coastguard approved lifejackets must be worn.

Sleep is important to any gathering. If the kids don't get enough sleep, then the program next day will be a waste. Lack of sleep has also been the source of complaints from parents when kids arrive home exhausted and then stay home from school on Monday. As a general rule people should start getting ready for bed by 11:00 with lights out by 11:30.

The planners and adult overseers should discuss and write down an emergency plan prior to the gathering. This should have phone numbers (and directions if needed). We hope you won't need to use any of these numbers, but it's safer to be over prepared. Include: hospital emergency room, ambulance service, mental health crisis center, Police, Fire Dept., standby adults from the Meeting for emergencies or if one of the Adult Friendly Presences drops out, house and grounds committee people for a building malfunction. Find out where the fuse box, mops, plunger, vacuum cleaner, spare bulbs are, and where the keys are kept that give you access to them. A simple first-aid kit should be on hand.

A simple system should be set up for taking in registration money, advancing money for expenses and accounting for it all when the gathering is over. The Meeting Treasurer should check over the final accounting. This is good practice in general and it helps to keep the honest people honest.