



Guide to Trip Planning for Youth Trip Leaders and Adult Trip Consultants

The Purpose of Trips:

- Is to provide fun, but safe, opportunities for all youth to develop their intellectual and physical wellbeing, character, and leadership. If we keep this goal foremost we cannot go wrong. It is what makes us a special community group, distinct from a competitive sports teams where only a few can play at a time or a travel club that goes to exotic places only for relatively fleeting personal enjoyment.

The Role of the Youth Trip Leader:

- To have a leadership experience in planning and carrying out an activity selected by his or her peers.
- To do as much of the planning and coordinating as is practically feasible.
- To work and communicate with elected youth leaders (Sr. Patrol Leader or President) and adult leaders (Activities Chair, Scoutmaster, Advisor) as needed.
- To gain from a mentoring experience with the Adult Consultant.
- To attend the trip in a leadership capacity serving in consultation to elected youth leaders.
- The Youth Trip Leader is expected to be either high school age or to have attained First Class rank. Less experienced Scouts may serve as assistant trip leaders.

The Role of the Adult Trip Consultant:

- To allow and facilitate the Youth Trip Leader to have a leadership experience by giving advice and guidance, but to the extent possible, not to do it for him/her, even to the point of failure.
- To do those tasks that are impossible for a youth to do, i.e., make credit card reservations, rent cars.
- To work and communicate with elected youth leaders (Sr. Patrol Leader or President) and adult leaders (Activities Chair, Scoutmaster, Advisor) as needed.
- To be a chaperone for the trip.

The Role of the Youth and Adult Together:

- To stay on the same page about the plans for the trip and whether the goals of the trip fit the purpose of Scouting/Venturing.

- These are typically NOT a parent/child pair

Training Requirements for Youth

The Youth Trip Leaders should be First Class or above or at least 14 years old. Younger or less-experienced Scout may serve as assistant trip leader in partnership with an older, more experienced Scout.

Training Requirements for Adults

By vote of the Troop/Crew Committee, Adult Trip Consultants must be trained:

- Youth Protection + Hazardous Weather current
- Scoutmaster Leader Specific + Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills (IOLS)
- Training specific to the trip (e.g., Safe Swim Defense, Safety Afloat, Climb on Safely, etc.)

Assistant Adult Trip Consultants are required to have Youth Protection current.

For trips into the backcountry (backpacking, snowshoeing to a hut, canoe camping, etc.), Adult Trip Consultants must additionally be certified in Wilderness First Aid.

For high adventure trips (Philmont, Maine High Adventure, a week-long unit backpacking or canoe camping trip, etc.), all adults (not just the official Adult Trip Consultants) should have all training, including WFA.

Steps in Trip Planning:

1. **Meet ASAP.** The Youth Leader and Adult Consultant should meet as soon as possible when the schedule comes out. A year in advance is not too soon. Many desirable locations book many months in advance. Please be aware of Youth Protection rules which do not allow adults and youth to meet one-on-one. Be in view of a 3rd person
2. **Check your availability for the proposed date.** Please note that trip dates are chosen by the Activities Chair with the purpose of avoiding the following: holidays with religious and family significance, council events, academic events such as the SATs, and putting two trips too close together. If you examine the calendar you will see the opportunities for changing trip dates are extremely limited. If either the Youth or Adult leader are not available, AND the date cannot be easily changed, it is the responsibility of that person to find a substitute and communicate this as soon as possible to the Sr. Patrol Leader/ President, Activities Chair, Scoutmaster, and Advisor.
3. **Make a list of tasks needed.** Every trip is different. Some things to consider are:
 - a. Where will we stay? Are reservations needed
 - b. How many nights will we stay? Our typical trip is Friday and Saturday night. An Eagle Scout will need 20 nights of camping. This is much more easily accomplished over 10 two-night trips than 20 one-night trips.

- c. How many youth will attend? When do we need commitment? Are all youth who wish to go up-to-date on their biannual fees? Have all the youth signed the behavior contract?
 - d. How many adults? Do we have male and female chaperones if male and female youth attend? Have all adults supplied evidence of current Youth Protection Training?
 - e. How will we travel? Do we have enough cars/drivers?
 - f. How will we eat?
 - g. Are the proposed activities allowed by the Guide to Safe Scouting (G2SS): <https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/toc/>. Not allowed but not surprising are bungee jumping, fireworks, and parachuting. Not allowed and possibly surprising are things like laser tag and attendance at drag racing.
 - h. Are certifications required by the G2SS? Water activities have many requirements, such as swim tests, lifeguards, and adult certification in water safety.
 - i. Do we need preparatory training? For instance, a review of cold weather clothing and safety before a snowshoe trip.
 - j. Do you have individual gear and group gear packing lists? Do we need to conduct a mandatory pack-check prior to the trip for safety (i.e. the snowshoe trip)?
 - k. Do all Scouts and adults have up-to-date medical forms?
 - l. Collect youth permission slips
4. **Divide the tasks.** Figure out which must be done by the Adult Consultant. The Adult Consultant may also have resources to offer the Youth Trip Leader (names to contact, ideas about places to stay).
 5. **Make a Time Table.** The Adult Consultant should help the Youth Trip Leader to make a time table to accomplish the various tasks. The Adult should strategize with the Youth how to accomplish the tasks, obstacles to foresee, and offer encouragement and availability.
 6. **Publicize Early and Often and Enthusiastically.** Overburdened and distracted families need to get the information multiple times and different ways. It is the Youth's job to generate peer excitement.
 7. **Keep on Target.** The Adult Consultant should keep in contact with the Youth Trip Leader to make sure that tasks are being done and vice versa. Depending on the family, the Adult Consultant may wish to communicate the plan with the Youth's parent(s) in order to gain additional adult support for the Youth.
 8. **Keep the Budget.** If trip expenses are exceeding the budgeted amount please consult with the Troop Committee.

9. **What of the Adult Consultant is not doing his or her job?** The Youth Trip Leader should consult with the Scoutmaster or Advisor or Activities Chair as soon as possible for advice and support.

10. **What if the Youth Trip Leader is not doing his or her job?** The Adult Consultant should discuss this with the Sr. Patrol Leader/President. It is the elected youth leaders (Patrol Leaders Council) responsibility to decide to replace the Youth Trip Leader. It is NOT the Adult Consultant's job to "rescue" the trip if the youth is not showing leadership. The Adult Consultant should also consult with the Scoutmaster, Advisor, or Activities Chair as soon as possible.