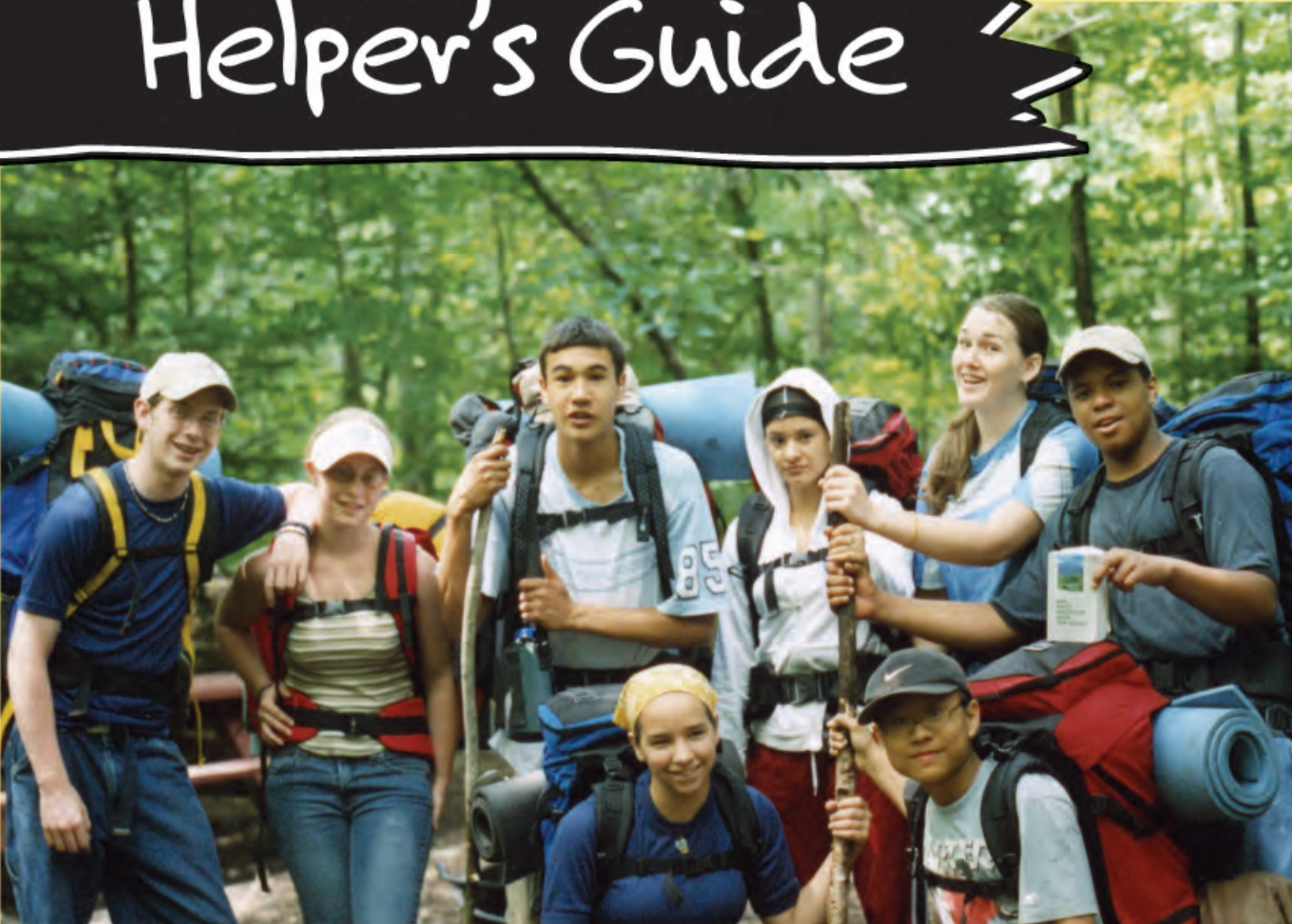




Name \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

# Group Activity Helper's Guide



## OUTDOOR ADVENTURES GROUP ACTIVITIES

Grades 3-12



REVIEWED & RECOMMENDED  
National 4-H Curriculum

# Note to the Project Helper

Welcome to the 4-H Outdoor Adventures curriculum. As a Helper and mentor you are in a key position to support the positive growth and development of youth. This curriculum provides opportunities for you and the young people you work with to develop caring relationships and a lifelong appreciation for the outdoors.



This guide complements and supports the three sequential Outdoor Adventures Youth Activity Guides and serves as a resource for hiking, camping and backpacking skills. You'll find activities for a camp setting, helpful information about stages of youth and group development, tips on how to teach experientially and Outdoor Adventures meeting suggestions.

The goal of this series is for youth to learn experientially about living more simply and exploring their environment by getting out into it! The same is to be said for you, as the Helper. You will be involved in the experiential learning process as you begin to work with youth in planning a hiking, camping or backpacking trip. You'll want to begin this adventure by acknowledging your own level of experience. Before taking youth on even the most basic day-hike, ask yourself questions like these, "Am I physically fit enough to participate in a rescue situation? What level of emergency training do I have? Have I left a risk management plan with the appropriate people? Is this trip in line with the skill level and goals of every member of our group? "

## Additional Training Opportunities

Often times learning from experience can mean learning from difficult situations, poor judgment and challenging decisions. You will be responsible for making decisions and judgments that will affect the safety and well being of your participants. It is crucial to have the confidence to manage challenging situations. To minimize your own risks, the professionals in the field *strongly* encourage you, as a Helper, to obtain additional professional trainings such as basic first aid, wilderness medicine and other outdoor educator trainings. Check the Outdoor Adventures web page for additional information and links for training opportunities available for you to gain more experience before heading out on the trail or to a campsite with a group.

## Youth Outdoor Adventures Project Outcomes

- Practice and develop the life skills of decision making, communicating, leading self and others, and planning and organizing
- Develop hiking, camping and backpacking skills
- Become confident and competent with a variety of outdoor equipment
- Enjoy the outdoors responsibly

## The Outdoor Adventures Activity Guides

These materials focus on the world of hiking, camping and backpacking. They have been developed to be interactive and experiential. Each of the three youth activity guides is designed to be developmentally appropriate for grades 3–5, 6–8 and 9–12 respectively. Youth may begin the series at any age level based on their skills and experience. The guides in the Outdoor Adventure series have been designed to be used sequentially. With each guide, new outdoor skills are introduced.

Level 1 – Hiking Trails: Day Hiking Skills

Level 2 – Camping Adventures: Base Camping Skills

Level 3 – Backpacking Expeditions: Backpacking Skills  
Group Activity Helper's Guide

## Achievement Programs

The Outdoor Adventures Achievement programs are an important part of this series. By striving to complete each of the three achievement programs, young people will be encouraged to learn more about the outdoors while practicing and developing important life skills. The Achievement Programs provide a system for youth to reach their goals and keep track of their progress.



Explore more at

[www.4-hcurriculum.org](http://www.4-hcurriculum.org)

National 4-H Curriculum

## Acknowledgments

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**Design and Production:** Northern Design Group, MN.

For more Outdoor Adventures check the other guides in this series.



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BU-08043**

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BU-08044**

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BU-08045**

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# Teaching and Learning Experientially

The 4-H Youth Development Program promotes the concept of learning-by-doing before being told or shown how. A five-step experiential process helps turn activities into learning experiences.

The experiential process of learning engages youth in the activity, encouraging them to think more, explore, question, make decisions and apply what they have learned. You will note that each of the activities follows the five-step model.

"Experiential learning takes place when a person is involved in an activity, looks back and evaluates it, determines what was useful or important to remember and uses this information to perform another activity."

John Dewey

## Experiential Learning Model

### 5. Apply

Youth can express what they really learned and how they can use what they learned in other areas. Or they can actually show that they have mastered a skill by performing another activity requiring use of a new skill.

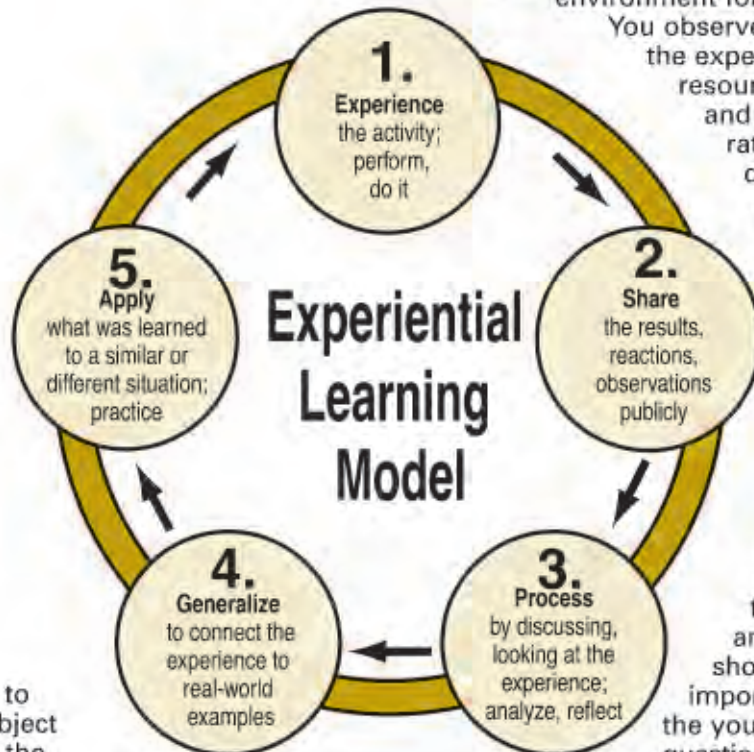
### 4. Generalize

The "Apply" step is a time to talk with the youth. The discussion becomes more personal. So what? Now what? What did the discussion mean to you personally or to your everyday life? The subject matter alone could remain the focus of the discussion, but Outdoor Adventure encourages the process to include life skill development.

### 1. Experience (Do)

This is the "doing" part of the activity. It immediately focuses the attention to the youth rather than the helper. Encouraging the young people to learn by doing before first being told or shown how presents opportunities for life skill development. You act as the facilitator or the "guide by the side" in the experience, providing structure and the environment for the youth to create.

You observe and add value to the experience by providing resources, information and asking questions rather than first demonstrating or lecturing.



### 2. Share (Reflect)

What happened in this experience? What did you do? What did it feel like to do this activity? These are "Reflect" questions to ask the youth. This is the time for youth to generate information and share their observations with one another. Youth who contribute should feel their ideas are important and valued. Encourage the youth to answer each other's questions rather than you answering.

### 3. Process (Reflect)

What was most important about what you did? What did you learn? Common themes that emerge from the sharing discussions are further explored.

Pfeiffer, J.W., & Jones, J.E., "Reference Guide to Handbooks and Annuals" © 1983 John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Reprinted with permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

# Developing Skills for a Lifetime

Life skills are defined in the Targeting Life Skills (TLS) Model (Hendricks, 1996) as "skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life." As a volunteer working with youth in this project, you have many opportunities to assist youth in developing life skills as they acquire project-related skills and knowledge.

## TLS Model

The TLS Model identifies and divides the major life skills targeted by 4-H youth development by the four H's from the 4-H Clover that represent Head, Heart, Hands and Health. These four are further divided into categories of life skills and then into specific general life skills as shown here. The TLS Model handbook further divides each general life skill into separate learning opportunities to develop the skill.

## Experiential Learning Process

Your challenge as a helper is to provide age-appropriate opportunities for youth to experience and practice these skills until they are mastered and able to be used everyday. By using the experiential learning process to help youth internalize both the Outdoor Adventure skills and the life skill practiced, they gain the ability to apply both types of skills appropriately.



## Life Skills

Each activity in this series shows both the project skill and life skills youth will develop by participating in the activity. A well-designed activity will involve the youth in the practice of several life skills. In one activity, youth may practice decision making, communicating, and goal setting. Only one is targeted for each activity so you can specifically discuss it with the youth when the activity is completed.

## Success Indicator

The Success Indicator demonstrates mastery of the learning outcome for the activity. This indicator usually includes both the life skill and project skill. This is the goal for youth to achieve and for you to support their efforts to achieve.

Helping youth develop and understand important life skills while learning about their project is a challenge. However, the youth will appreciate your extra effort now and in the future when they look back on these experiences. Thank you for volunteering!

# Ages and Stages of Youth Development

It is important to note that not all people develop in the same way at the same age. But there are certain patterns to youth development—certain “ages and stages” that are commonly experienced by most youth.

Grades 3–5	
Characteristics	Helper Tips
Learn best when physically active, use physical energy.	Offer youth physical activities.
Have a special attachment to older youth	Encourage youth to choose an older youth to be their helper and role model.
Are easily motivated	Use encouragement to keep them motivated.
Reading becomes an individual experience	Allow time for youth to read on their own and think of activities before working with others.
Attention span is about 45 minutes	Use varied activities to keep them interested.
Acceptance by peer group is important.	Use the peer group to recognize good work, such as applauding completed activities and avoiding put-downs.
Interests expand from home, to neighborhood, to community	Talk to youth about their friends and neighbors and what goes on in their community. Involve them in community service.
Enjoy both cooperation and competition	Plan activities so that sometimes youth work together, sometimes compete with each other.
Show independence by seeking individual attention and sometimes disrupting the group	Involve youth in selecting activities they would like. Give additional attention as needed.
Feelings of competence enhance self-concept	Provide activities that will let youth feel good about themselves and succeed. Recognize them for their accomplishments.
Show loyalty to members of their own sex and antagonism toward those of the opposite sex	Involve youth in choosing partners.
Grades 6–8	
Can take responsibility in planning and evaluating their own work	Give youth responsibility for group activities, including planning, implementing and evaluating.
Can plan their own social and recreational activity	Provide opportunities for youth to work together. Form committees to plan recreational and social activities.
Can discuss current events, international affairs and social issues with some help	Use discussion, activities and games that encourage awareness of current events and issues.
Want to make decisions but still depend on adult guidelines	Establish guidelines that give parameters for youth to follow.
Gain skills in social relations with peers and adults	Provide activities which foster social interaction with peers and adults.
Peer pressure mounts, first from same sex, then from the opposite sex	Use peer pressure to influence positive behavior. Have group give encouragement to individuals.
Can be quite self-conscious	Avoid asking youth to share their work individually until they feel more comfortable with the group.
Strong emotional attachment to older youth and adults	Encourage youth to participate in activities with older youth and adults.
Choices are often unrealistic	Assist youth in making realistic choices. Review their plans, discuss alternatives and help them weigh options before making decisions.
Grades 9–12	
Personal philosophy begins to emerge	Use activities where youth search for experiences which will allow them to identify their own philosophies.
Enjoy discussing world situations as well as personal activities	Encourage discussion of events and feelings.
Abstract thinking and problem solving reach a higher level	Put youth into real-life problem solving situations.
Strong desire for status in peer groups	Develop a climate in which youth are encouraged and supported by peers.
High interest in social activity	Encourage youth to plan and carry out their own social activities.
Need freedom from parental control to make decisions	Help youth realize that their decisions have consequences.
Widespread feelings of inferiority and inadequacy.	Encourage and help youth see their positive worth.

# Creating Full Value Contracts

## Getting Organized

**Outdoor Skill:**  
Creating Full Value Contracts

**Life Skill:**  
Sharing values

**Success Indicator:**  
Develop group guidelines of conduct

**Time Involved:**  
30–45 minutes

**Suggested Group Size:**  
Five to 15

**Materials Needed:**  
Large poster paper, markers

**A** Full Value Contract is a set of values or rules/guidelines of conduct that the group establishes and agrees to use during its time together. By developing this together each member will have a voice in creating, accepting and taking ownership of these group guidelines. This contract asks everyone to fully value themselves, other members of the group and the environment—both the outdoors and the emotional and interpersonal environment the group creates.

### Prepare

There are several interactive methods that have proved successful to fully involve youth in creating their own guidelines. One method is known as “The Being”.

### Get in Gear

Start by tracing the shape of a person lying down on a big sheet of paper, or drawing a human figure freehand. This “Being” represents the whole group. Ask group members to contribute values they think the group should uphold. Then write these values somewhere on the Being, leaving space around the edges. Ask group members to list values they would like to leave out of their community (e.g.) disrespect, hurtful words etc.) and write these words on the outside of “The Being.”

“The Being” becomes a living, working document the group can display in a place of importance for them. As the group members move through their experience together, they can look back to their Being to point to things they are doing well and other things they can still continue to improve upon.

Another way for youth to participate is to ask them to trace their hands on a large sheet of paper. On one hand they write strengths they bring to the group (e.g. sense of humor, good listener) and on the other hand they write things they need from the group (e.g. support, clear communication). The mural of hands is then displayed and the youth explain what their hands mean to them.

*Discovering and sharing the values in each other is cool.*



## Talk it Over

### Share the Experience

- What did you contribute to the group's norms?
- What did you agree would be the group's norms?

### Reflections

- Why are group norms/guidelines important?

### Now What?

- What should happen if someone breaks the rules your group set?

# Let's Make Plans

Outdoor Adventure project meetings offer exciting settings for youth to develop both outdoor and life skills. By participating in planning, youth develop an important life skill as well as become more personally involved in the group's activities. You'll find programs more closely meet the needs of youth when everyone participates in identifying what to do, when to do it, how to do it and who will do it. This outdoor adventure activity has been designed to help your group plan its year's program to include five or more activities.

## Outdoor Skill:

Program planning

## Life Skill:

Planning and organizing

## Success Indicators:

Group plans a one-year program of group activities.

## Time Involved:

One hour

## Suggested Group Size:

10-50

## Materials Needed:

Pencil, paper, flip chart or blackboard, poster paper, project achievement programs, literature, resource materials, project meeting idea list (page 33)

## Prepare

Before the meeting you may want to talk to the parents to see what they feel their children need and how this program can help. This is also a good time to introduce the Outdoor Adventure project literature and the list of Outdoor Adventure project meeting ideas from page 31 to help them become better acquainted with the project.

## Get in Gear

First ask everyone what the group's goals should be for the year. The

Read each idea and have all members give their rankings. Add up the numbers. Allow time to discuss the choices as they relate to the group's overall goals. From the decisions made, outline the list of topics for the year's program.

process described here to determine what the

## Deciding Who Does What

Now that the group has decided what they want to do and learn, you will want to be sure everyone shares in the responsibility of seeing that it happens. Allow as many members (and families) as possible to have one or more specific responsibilities on the year's program. Recreation, obtain equipment, transportation, demonstrations, community service, share outdoor skills and talents, locate resources, provide refreshments and hosting are all possibilities. If the group is large, the team approach is encouraged.

## Completing the Program

Write an outline so everyone can see the plan taking shape. Here is an example of one possible format. After the program is completed, make copies for each family. You might want to include a listing of everyone's name and phone number.

activities should be can also be used to set goals. Then ask each person to write down ideas for project meetings and supporting activities (community service, contents, fun days, promotions, etc.). Sometimes youth can generate more ideas by working together in groups of two or three with one person writing down the ideas. Provide copies of the activity guides and the list of project meeting ideas.

Then have each person share his/her ideas in round robin fashion. One person shares an activity idea, then the next person and so on until all ideas have been recorded on a blackboard or a large sheet of paper. List the ideas quickly without discussion, comments or judgment. After all ideas are listed, provide time for the person who suggested the idea to clarify or explain it. Others can add support, questions or criticism. After a short discussion, move to the next idea.

From all the ideas generated and discussed (and possibly combined). Have each individual rate the items in the order of preference on a separate sheet of paper. You may want to have participants indicate their top five, ten or whatever choices. If ten choices are indicated, the top choice would receive a ten and the last choice a one.

## Outdoor Adventure Project Group Calendar

Name of Group \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Group Leaders \_\_\_\_\_

Project group goals for the year \_\_\_\_\_

1. All members complete at least one-half of their achievement programs.
2. Practice the life skills of decision making and planning.
3. Involve each family in activities.

Meeting Date, Time & Place	Meeting Topic and Planned Activities	Who's Responsible	What to Do Before Next Meeting
July 29 Lee's 7:00 p.m.	1. Hiking 2. Presentations 3. Refreshments	Junior Leaders Chin Family	Pack a day pack





## Talk it Over

### Share the Experience

- What did you learn about planning?
- How do you feel about this planning session?

### Reflections

- Why are decisions made through discussion often more accepted than those made by voting?
- Why is it important for youth, parents and leaders to work together to plan activities?
- What life skills did you practice when you planned?

### Now What?

- How will this experience help you plan family experiences?
- How will it help you plan in other areas of your life?



*Deciding your goals for the year and writing an outline so that everyone can see the plan will be a great benefit for all.*



## Successful Outdoor Adventure Meetings

- Remember what it was like to be a kid? Try to be back in touch with the feelings of kids. What is fun? What is exciting? What is interesting?
- Make the time to plan for each experience, regardless of whether it is a meeting, hiking trip or individual lesson.
- Plan for the individual member—consider who they are, what they are to learn, how best to help them experience the activity, and evaluate if things went as well as they could have.

**Involve Families** - Family involvement is one of the strengths of 4-H and other youth programs. When families work together to earn about outdoor skills, it benefits the individual member, as well as the community.

**Involve Teens** - Teen leaders can work with you or on their own in a leadership role, with you as the adult helper. Older teens can help with teaching at project meetings, make arrangements for trips and activities, and give individual attention to younger members. Take advantage of their knowledge and willingness to be involved.

**The First Meeting** - This meeting will set the tone for all meetings to come. Make it relatively short and very interesting. Use this meeting to motivate the members and build interest in the Outdoor Adventure Project. Invite and encourage parents to attend with the youth. Some things to include are:

- Help youth get acquainted. A game or icebreaker can be a fun way to start.
- Share a little about the Outdoor Adventure project club. Use this time to build enthusiasm and interest. Let each person share why he or she has an interest in being involved.
- If you have project materials, let everyone spend a few minutes looking at them. Discuss with the group what they want to learn and begin the planning process suggested in this Let's Make Plans activity. Generating the group goals and then identifying the activities and experiences that will help reach those goals is usually a good way to proceed.
- Conclude the meeting with a hands-on activity related to Outdoor Adventures.
- Review the schedule the group has established as a reminder about who will do what for the next meeting.
- Discuss how parents who attend each meeting can help. You may find an assistant or other helpers in the group who can assist with various responsibilities of the group.

### Additional Meeting Ideas

Several ideas for meetings are listed on page 31 along with specific suggestions for six additional meetings following the initial organizational meeting.



1. *Promote your group in the community by doing one of the activities listed in Project Meeting Ideas on page 31.*

2. *Organize another Outdoor Adventures Club in the community.*



## Hiking Group Activities

**T**his activity will give your group members the opportunity to think critically about specific Leave No Trace principles and hiking etiquette.

### Prepare

Write the following pieces of information on individual note cards and place them in a paper bag or hat. You'll find more ideas about LNT principles at the LNT web site.

#### Outdoor Skill:

Practice Leave No Trace (LNT) principles while hiking and camping

#### Life Skill:

Leading self and others

#### Educational Standard:

NPH.K-12.7 Understanding Challenge

#### Success Indicator:

Use critical thinking skills to practice LNT principles while hiking and camping.

#### Target Audience:

Youth ages 10-17

#### Time Involved:

20 minutes

#### Suggested Group Size:

8-15 students

#### Materials Needed:

Strips of paper, markers or pens, paper bag or hat

- Know your limits and make it known when you are too tired or need help.
- Enjoy, appreciate, and respect the trail at all times.
- Carry in and carry out your garbage.
- If you come across obstacles in the trail like tree limbs, try to remove them to make it safe.
- Most trails are on public land—remember that others might be around so keep your voices low to be respectful of others.
- Allow fast walkers or riders to pass you on the left.
- If you want to pass someone on the trail, let that person know and pass on the left.
- Leave signs and trail markings where you find them, so others do not get lost.
- Be aware of and watch for bikers, horses, or others not on foot.
- Leave the trail as you find it—most trails are laid out with careful consideration for plant and animal life.
- Do not trespass on private property—look for signs.
- Do not frighten or disturb wildlife or livestock near you.



*Learning the Leave No Trace principles through games can be challenging and fun!*

### Get in Gear

Ask each participant to draw a slip of paper. Give the group some time to think about why each point is important. Youth can brainstorm, or can write notes on a white board or scrap paper to present to the other group members. This activity should create some positive discussion about Leave No Trace principles and ensure that all group members are “on the same page” about these principles and guidelines. This activity can work well when partnered with further discussion of the Full Value Contract.

# Talk it Over

## Share the Experience

- Why was it difficult to brainstorm ideas about why your principle or guideline is important?
- What did you learn about the LNT principles?

## Reflections

- Why do you think it is important to respect wildlife?
- Why do you think it is important to respect the land?
- What are some ways you can show respect for your environment?
- What are some examples of ways you can show respect for others?

## Now What?

- How will you change your behaviors based on what you now know?
- What is one thing you may try to do differently on your next hiking trip?



# Variation of Original Activity

Once each person draws out his or her piece of paper, keep it secret and head to a trailhead, or take a walk through your neighborhood. While on this walk, each person should act according to what is listed on the piece of paper. After you've traveled a good distance (perhaps for 10–15 minutes) and each person has had a chance to act out his behavior, take a rest and discuss what each person noticed. See if each person in the group can guess what another participant was trying to encourage. Someone in the group should record what is being said. Upon your return or after your conversation, ask each person to reveal what his or her piece of paper really said, and see how many got it right!



# Get to the Point

## Outdoor Skill:

Practice using a compass

## Life Skill:

Self-sufficiency

## Educational Standard:

NPH.K-12.7 Understanding Challenge

## Success Indicators:

Successfully navigate from point "A" to point "B"

## Target Audiences:

Youth ages 10-17

## Time Involved:

Prep time—up to an hour

## Suggested Group Size:

8-12 students

## Materials Needed:

Materials for skill stations (these will vary depending on the stations you use), score sheet (note paper) and pens/pencils for each station, markers for each station and for "home base"—you could use flagging tape, tent stakes, plastic chips, etc.

Your group will enjoy developing navigation skills if they have a destination. This activity builds these skills and reinforces other outdoor and environmental topics that your group members have begun exploring.

## Prepare

Develop a series of "skill stations" that will reinforce skills already introduced to your members. Here are some examples:

- Tying knots and identifying their uses
- Identifying edible plants
- Hanging a "bear bag"
- Responding to a wilderness first aid scenario
- Lighting a fire with flint and steel
- Pitching a tent blind-folded
- Identifying animal scat

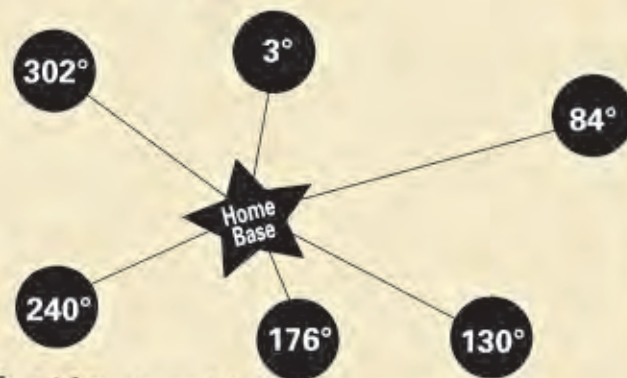
Use your imagination and past activities to design stations that work best for your situation, location and age group. Arrange the 4-6 skill stations at various spots in a wide circle, depending on the size of the group and the amount of time available. If the group is fairly proficient at taking bearings, set up the stations far away so participants will have to find a reference and reestablish their route a few times before reaching their destination.

Make sure to staff each skill station with a volunteer or older youth who will score the teams on how well they accomplished the task and record the scores. Score sheets can be kept by the volunteers or by a team captain and be carried to each station for recording the scores.

Determine a central location where you will set a point from which

to take compass bearings and mark it with chalk, a tent peg with flagging tape or some form of "home base". Record the compass bearings from home base to each skill station and record the exact bearing for each station on a plastic chip with a string to hang around the neck or wrist of one member of each team. You should have one chip for each station. Notify your station volunteers of their bearings, so they can check to make sure all travelers arrive at the right destination.

## Skill Stations



Bird's Eye View (example)

## Get in Gear

Break your group into 4–6 teams of 2–5 members. Have teams think of original names and decide who will be the captains. Captains will make sure all members get to use the compass to take at least one bearing and that the team works together to accomplish the tasks at the skill stations.

Use a “staggered start”. (Option: have timekeeper record how long each team takes to complete all stations.) Each team draws a plastic chip out of a bag or hat, take their bearing and proceed to the first station. Using the chips prevents having two teams arrive at the same station. Each time they complete a task, the teams return and draw their next chip until all teams have reached each station. Add the scores at each station and give points for time taken to complete the entire circuit. Announce the winning teams. Prizes work as a good motivation.

To offer positive encouragement to *all* teams, prizes can be awarded not only to the team that completes each station most quickly but also to teams that: worked together most effectively; showed the most determination; were the most enthusiastic; or showed the most “team spirit.”

## Share the Experience

- What problems in the beginning got worked out in the end?
- How did all members participate on the team?
- Who emerged as the natural leader of your team?

## Reflections

- How could the teams have worked better to improve their scores?
- In what skills areas were some members stronger?
- How did you contribute to your team’s success?

## Now What?

- How will you apply your knowledge of compass use to your next outdoor adventure?
- What are some additional skills you would like to learn about compass use?



Using a topographic map and compass to get to the point.

Photo credit: Pat McNally



For directions:

N = 360°, NE = 45°,  
E = 90°

SE = 135°, S = 180°,  
SW = 225°

W = 270°, NW = 315°

