

Coppell Family YMCA
YADVENTURE GUIDESTM
Meshenewa / Member's Manual

The following pages will help explain the Adventure Guides program and how to run a successful circle on a monthly / yearly basis. Throughout the packet you will see the term Meshenewa used numerous times. A Meshenewa is an experienced father that is well versed in the in's and out's of the Adventure Guides program and how it is run. If you feel comfortable conducting your own circle meetings without the help of someone else outside your circle feel free to do so. However, if you would like for your circle to have a Meshenewa please tell your YMCA director and you will be assigned one as soon as possible.

Organizing a new circle can be a rich and beneficial experience for you and your son/daughter. You both will have an opportunity to help another group of dads and boys/girls enjoy the many benefits of the YMCA Parent-Child program. This experience will also give your son/daughter an opportunity to be in a leadership role and can be very important to him/her.

In order to make this a rich experience for yourselves and for the new circle, it will be important to give the time and enthusiasm necessary. These few sheets will help as an outline of possibilities for organizing, but feel free to work out ideas of your own about things that you know you can do and will work. The Basecamp Officers are available to help out any time as you are preparing for this job.

Responsibilities of the Meshenewa:

- Attend the recruitment meeting at the schools and meet with dads of the Circle you will organize.
- Conduct first dad's meeting. (Select host at organizing meeting.)
- Conduct the first meeting of the Circle with your son/daughter. (Select host at organizing meeting.)
- Visit the Circle for one or two additional meetings to help as you are needed. Help out, such as singing a song during the second meeting, and just observe the third meeting.
- Be available for the new Navigator and members to call when they need help.
- Attend the second dad's meeting after the Circle has been meeting for a month or so.

I. MESHENEWA DUTIES AT SCHOOL RECRUITMENT NIGHT:

Those dads and sons/daughters who are ready to join a Circle will be formed into a small group (from 6 to 9 dads) and you are assigned a group. This is done informally, so please help form the groups and take one group as your own.

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Pass around the "New circle" roster for dads to fill out. Keep this for your records and make a copy and give to the YMCA Program Director as soon as possible.
3. Pass out registration cards for the dads to fill out. These registration cards need to be turned in with their dues. They can do it this night at the registration table, or you can collect the cards and the money at the first dad's meeting and then return them to the YMCA.
4. Ask for a volunteer for the first dad's meeting and select a date, the sooner the better. Explain that this meeting will further explain the makeup of the circle.

5. Ask for a volunteer to host the first circle meeting.
6. Tell the dads to have their names and their son's/daughter's name selected and be ready to tell these names at the first circle meeting.
7. Have your group look at the list of circle names and have them select a circle and an alternate circle from that list or they may wish to make up a name.

II. FIRST DAD'S MEETING:

Supplies Needed for First Dad's Meeting:

1. Name tags (make up) and pens.
2. Extra program registration cards.
3. Blank rotation schedule sheet (make up).
4. Sample Circle meeting agenda.
5. YMCA Manuals and kits.
6. Dad's meeting agenda.

Dad's Meeting Agenda:

1. Introductions
2. YMCA Registration / Fees
3. Program / Activities / Calendar
4. Circle Name
5. Circle Officers
6. Meeting Night / First Meeting
7. Fall Camp-out
8. Circle Chant

The first dad's meeting is probably the most important time in getting a circle started. Normally, you have 6 - 9 dads, all of whom are un-acquainted with one another, and at the same time asking themselves "How did I get dragged into this?" It is a time when you, the Meshenewa, can start the enthusiasm required for an active circle.

The following is a suggested agenda for conducting the first dad's meeting:

1. As each dad arrives, introduce yourself and have him fill-out a name tag.
2. Start the meeting on time.
3. Have each dad introduce himself, telling where he works and anything else of interest, such as hobbies. Have him tell also whether he has been in the YMCA parent-child program before and where.
4. Repeat again that the YMCA Parent-Child program is to foster the father-son/father-daughter relationship and that it will enrich both of their lives. Relate an experience of your own.
5. Collect the membership registration cards and the dues (if they have not yet registered and paid) and please deliver to the YMCA the next day.
6. Ask for questions about the program and answer as much as you can. If there is any question that you cannot answer, refer it to the YMCA Program Director or one of the Basecamp Officers.
7. Describe how a Circle operates. Tell that each circle is autonomous and follows its own program within the basic framework of the YMCA Program Manual. The Program Manual provides the basic guide as to the agenda. Describe the circle Officers and their duties and the circle's connection with the basecamp meeting. Mention the Honor circle program and the activities needed to earn points (this is in the smoke signal.) Also, tell them the importance of having the navigator of their circle or his representative attend each month's

basecamp meeting. The meeting is always the first Tuesday of each month. The circle Officers and their duties are:

Navigator. The Circle Navigator ensures continuity in meetings and typically conducts portions of each meeting. The Navigator acts as the leader and representative for the Circle. He or she also presides at parent meetings, makes assignment sheets, and checks to see that jobs are being done. The Navigator represents the Circle at the Expedition meeting. The YMCA will provide training for the Navigators.

Compass Bearer. The Compass Bearer takes on the duties of the Navigator when the Navigator is absent. He or she attends Expedition meetings and usually becomes the next Navigator.

Treasure Keeper. The Treasure Keeper looks after all Circle resources, including the Treasure Box, drums, talking stick, Expedition awards, and other materials. He or she keeps record of reimbursements to members from the Treasure Box for approved expenses and collects all fees for program enrollment and various Expedition gatherings and submits them to the YMCA office.

Log Keeper. The Log Keeper keeps Circle records and rosters and conducts roll call at meetings. He or she submits reports to the YMCA regarding Circle adventures and accomplishments, conducts the annual Circle evaluation, and is responsible for communication.

Other roles that can be filled as needed include the following:

Naturalist. This Circle member assumes responsibilities for gathering, creating, and leading ceremonies, especially at the Expedition or Federation level.

Scout. This Circle member helps lead recruitment of new members.

Crafter. This member stocks all Circle craft supplies and assists meeting hosts in preparing craft projects as needed.

Song Leader. This member leads songs at Circle meetings and assists at Expedition gatherings as called upon.

Storyteller. This member selects and tells the stories at Circle meetings.

Trail Guide. This Circle member plans outside trips and camps and handles details for such events.

Elder. An Elder is usually a past Navigator or other member of long standing. Elders usually help new Circles get going and sometimes serve as Expedition officers or leaders.

8. Have everyone select their Names before the first circle meeting. Call each dad the day before the meeting to make sure that this has been done which will reduce the chance that there is a duplication of names.
9. Agree on the meeting rotation and check that all phone numbers are correct on the roster. Select a meeting rotation of every two weeks, twice a month or once a month.
10. Select a circle Name if this has not been done previously.
11. Describe the duties of the host and that the main function is to distribute invitations to all circle members in person one or two days prior to the meeting.
12. Describe the Smoke Signal (the federation's Newsletter). Tell them that it carries information of the federation's activities as well as fun pages for the kids.

13. Describe the first circle meeting and go over the sample agenda. Also explain the importance of timing at all circle meetings.
14. Describe circle property and those things which are normally completed before the first camp-out. Also discuss briefly costumes which will enhance a circles togetherness. Ideas are given in the Program Manual.
 - A. **Circle Tom-Tom** - This is usually the first item or circle property constructed and is desirable for the first camp-out. Some suggested ideas are provided in the Program Manual. This is best performed by a couple of dads and volunteers should be solicited.
 - B. **Treasure Pouch** - This can be best completed by the first Treasure Keeper.
 - C. **Paint** - It is suggested that the circle get a package of poster paints. This will be required for some federation activities which includes the Spring Camp-out. The Fall Camp-out Induction ceremony paint will be provided by the basecamp.
 - D. **Circle T-shirts** - Some circles design their own T-shirts or hats. This is a great idea for a circle activity. Circle's may contact the YMCA Program Director for ideas, but the circle is responsible for ordering their own shirts.
 - E. **Circle Vests** - These may be purchased at the YMCA or at www.adventureguidescountrystore.com. Vests are ideal for displaying Federation Activity Patches and as a craft project.
 - F. **Coup Sticks / Walking Sticks** - Explain the Coup Sticks are to mount the various Awards or federation Event Ribbon Awards.
 - I. **Award System** - Explain the first, second, third, and fourth year colors; the camp-out arrowheads, bear and eagle claws; and federation Event Ribbons.
15. Decide on what dues are going to be collected (50¢ a meeting?) Discuss that all explorers / princesses are supposed to earn their treasure and tell how they earn it at the circle meetings.
16. The most vital part of providing a firm start for a circle is the selection of the circles navigator. During the previous discussion you have discovered any dad that has been in the YMCA Parent-Child program previously, and, above all, have had a chance to "feel out" the enthusiasm of all the dads. Your job is to see that the best man is selected. Although not very democratic, it is in the best interest of the circle to have a navigator that will get things going even if you have to volunteer him. The other officers you can either select or ask for volunteers. Describe the rotation of the circle Officers but emphasize that when the navigator is replaced that the YMCA needs to be notified as it is very important to have continuity with the basecamp.
17. Briefly describe the federation Activities during the year as printed out in the Smoke Signals at the beginning of each year – also on the Coppell YMCA web page at www.coppellymca.org .
18. Discuss the importance of future dad's meetings, that they should be informal over coffee or other refreshments, and that these meetings can also provide a time when dads can get to know each other better.
19. Select duties for the second circle meeting and assign responsibilities for songs, games, craft, etc. Encourage hosts to be responsible for the craft, this will insure each circle meeting has a craft ready. Fill-in circle duties rotation schedule to be copied for first circle meeting. Tell that it is the responsibility of the navigator to check one or two days before the meeting that everyone has his portion of the program prepared. A good second meeting craft is name tags for the necklace.
20. Pass out YMCA Program Manuals or CD's for those who have paid for them and have not received them yet.
21. End on time.

III. FIRST CIRCLE MEETING:

Supplies Needed for First Circle Meeting:

1. Coup Stick, and other program gear.
2. Roster of circle and rotation schedule of circle duties.

3. Name tags and marking pens.
4. Extra YMCA program registration cards.

First circle Meeting Agenda:

1. Vest (optional)
2. Names
3. Treasure dues (50 cents)
4. Family calendar / plans
5. ENTHUSIASM & FUN

As a Meshenewa, you and your son/daughter will be the most important person at the first circle meeting. All the boys/girls will be awed by you both. You have previously provided your expertise with the dads, but now is the time to really **ham** it up. This first meeting is for the little explorers/princesses/papooses and for them alone. Except for the refreshments the meeting is yours alone.

The way you run this meeting will have a lot to do with the way the circle will run in the future. They're in your hands.

You may use the sample meeting agenda as a guide for the first circle meeting. Above all, do not forget to **ham** it up. The following is a list of the things you should cover or consider during the first meeting:

1. Place name tags on everyone with their program names in big letters.
2. Have the dads sit on the floor with the boys/girls in front of them.
3. Talk only to boys/girls and use their program names.
4. Have your son/daughter beat the Tom-Tom once for each little explorers/princesses at the meeting. Describe this ceremony to the little explorers/princesses.
5. Give an opening prayer in Great Creator sign language or at least with a theme.
6. Form the circle of unity, recite aims, pledge and slogan.
7. Explain that the council meeting is now in order and all little explorers/princesses must use the sign of the buffalo to speak.
8. Have each explorer/princess/papoose introduce himself/herself and dad, telling their program names only, with your son/daughter starting.
9. Tell the boys/girls the circle name and get them to repeat it loudly. ("What did you say your circle name was?")
10. Introduce the circle Officers. (Again say, "What's the Circle Name?")
11. Explain the Treasure and have each boy/girl tell how she earned it or how he/she will earn it.
12. Sing a song. You are the expert, **ham** it up.
13. Let your son/daughter display their coup stick, necklace or vest. Tell everyone how they will earn their beads or patches. They should learn their aims first and recite them within the first 2 months to the whole circle. (Dad should spend extra time teaching the aims, this is a good first lesson in memorization. Dad will have to recite them as well to earn his beads.)
14. Watch your time, if it is within the timing, tell a story. If you do, make sure you know it and **ham** it up. See story "Indian and the Cricket."

15. Explain that the circle meeting is over and it is time to do the craft and to play a game. The game should get the dads physically on the boys/girls level. A suggested game is in this manual.
16. Do the craft. Ideas for crafts can be found in the manual of on the following webpage at http://www.ymca.net/programs/adv_guides/index.html
17. Watch your time carefully and cut off the game and craft in time for refreshments and still end the meeting on time. Ask the host to serve refreshments. Make sure that the boys/girls and dads stay together during this time. This is the time you can visit with the boys/girls individually and is another time you can **ham** it up, get them really enthused. You might ask them if they know any riddles.
18. As soon as refreshments are over, have the closing ceremony. A suggested way is to have the circle form an actual circle, kids in front of Dad's and perform the closing ceremony included in this manual, although you may use the one you use in your circle meetings.
19. Encourage the group to leave as soon as the meeting is over.
20. Be sure that the group has decided on a system of meeting dates.

NOTE: The Meshenewa's example of conducting the ritual, games, stories, crafts and business will set a pattern for the new circles. Use zip and enthusiasm!

First Circle Meeting Agenda

Before the Meeting:

1. Remind host about invitations
2. Take along props to add color
3. Check with host to see that refreshments will be served
4. Arrive early so you can greet fathers and son/daughters as they arrive

7:00 - 7:08	Opening ritual, tom-tom, prayer, Circle of Unity, aims and slogan
7:08 - 7:11	Introductions, sign of Buffalo
7:11 - 7:16	Explain vest and patches
7:16 - 7:20	Introduce officers and collect treasure
7:20 - 7:24	Sing song
7:24 - 7:28	Explain award system, Honor Circle, how they earn beads
7:28 - 7:38	Story
7:38 - 7:45	Craft -
7:45 - 7:58	Refreshments. Play game if time
7:58 - 8:00	Closing ceremony
8:00	Leave for home

IV. FOLLOW THROUGH THE NEXT FEW MEETINGS:

Check that the new Navigator has an agenda prepared for the second circle meeting and that he knows what he is going to do. Also, the new Navigator should fill the circle in on the information obtained from the basecamp Officers meeting.

You should attend the next meeting or two and help, if needed. Let the new navigator and host do the program and be there only to help. Since the song is probably the hardest thing for anyone to do, you should volunteer to do this.

Encourage a dad's meeting during the first two months and attend the meeting so you can help them with their long-range planning. Some help will usually be needed in planning for the first camp-out. Updated rosters with program names and duties (officers) should be noted.

“THANKS”

Your help with this circle will do a great deal in the lives of the fathers and sons/daughters involved. We, at the Coppell Family YMCA, the basecamp and the circle members are very appreciative of your time and help. Thanks!
Tell the Dads the following:

Factors for circle success:

1. Circles with one or two enthusiastic leaders seem to have no trouble.
2. Circles that meet regularly, at least twice a month, and follow the program do well.
3. A circle should have 6 - 9 father/child teams. If you lose one, recruit another.
4. The fathers are responsible for the success of the circle.
5. Some participation by mothers, brothers and sisters help - such as at picnics, entertainment, etc.
6. Urge them to take part in all activities and projects of their circle and the federation. A definitive yearly program should be outlined in advance, this we have done with the federation Calendar, plan circle activities around it.
7. Projects should be designed for the boys/girls to reflect their age and ability. The program must change as they grow and mature.
8. Those who do not or cannot keep up should be replaced.
9. The circle should seek out their own special awards and incentives for work done on invitations, crafts, and individual effort.

Factors for failure:

1. No invitations are made or distributed.
2. No attendance at federation events.
3. Too much done by one man, the navigator.
4. Fathers begin to send kids to meetings alone, this is strictly forbidden.
5. Program does not keep up with age level.
6. Too often doing the same thing time after time, no creativity or imagination.

YMCA Explorers/Princess/Papoose Circle Induction Ceremony
performed by the Meshenewa at the second meeting.

Have all little explorers/princesses stand in a row - shoulder to shoulder - in front of the Meshenewa.

Meshenewa: **“Little explorers/princesses, tonight you will become official members of the YMCA Adventure Guides program and the Mighty _____ Circle. Each one of you will become eternal blood brothers/sisters and as a little explorer/princess of the _____ Circle, you will be expected to live up to and practice the aims, slogan, and purpose of YMCA Adventure Guides.**

“Now, little explorers/princesses, let us all pray to the great creator. (Meshenewa and little explorers/princesses raise hands and look up.)

(Meshenewa prays) **“Oh Great Creator, come down among these little explorers/princesses, help them so that each day they will do those things that are pleasing to you. Help them grow strong in body and mind and guide the circle to a rich and fun year. Amen.**

“Now little explorers/princesses, you have been inducted into the Mighty _____ circle, but you will not be a true member of the Wichita federation until you are inducted into the federation at your first camp-out.”

Suggested Song:

“Do Your Ears Hang Low”
Do your ears hang low?

Do they wobble to and fro?
Can you time them in a knot?
Can you tie them in a bow?
Can you sling 'em over your shoulder?
Like a continental soldier?
Do your ears hand low?

Coppell Family YMCA
Meshenewa Check List

School Recruitment Meeting:

- _____ Have dad's complete fully the registration cards
- _____ Select night for dad's meeting, time and person's home
- _____ Fill out both rosters and return one to the YMCA Program Director
- _____ Ask if any questions about "Who we are and what we do?"
- _____ Select night for first circle meeting, time and person's home
- _____ Select Circle name
- _____ Tell dads they need to select a name by first circle mtg.

Dads Meeting:

- _____ Collect any unpaid dues and registration cards
- _____ Discuss the following points as to how a circle operates.
 1. Autonomous
 2. Explain officer duties: Navigator etc...
 3. Meeting rotation and roster
 4. Invitations and duties of host, again encouraging responsibility for craft
 5. Attendance at meetings
 6. Wearing of circle T-shirts, vests and necklaces
 7. Circle meeting format
 8. Treasure bead
 9. Awards and necklaces. Honor circle system
 10. Circle property: Drum, treasure pouch, war paint, etc.
 11. Discuss dads' meetings, their importance
 12. Smoke Signal
 13. Basecamp Meeting - Refer to calendar in Smoke Signal
 14. Discuss camps and Federation Calendar

The Indian and the Cricket

One day an Indian left his home to visit a white man with whom he had become friendly. Being in a city, with its noises and its crowds was a new experience for the Indian, and he was fascinated by it.

The Indian and the white man were walking down the street when suddenly the Indian touched his friend's shoulder and said quietly: "Stop! Do you hear what I hear?"

His friend paused, listened, smiled and said: "All I hear is the tooting of car horns, the noise of the streetcars, and the voices of people. Just the regular noises of the city. What is it you hear?"

The Indian replied: "I hear a cricket chirping somewhere near by."

Again, his friend listened, but shook his head. "You must be mistaken," he said, "I hear no cricket. And even if there was a cricket near by, his chirping would be drowned out by all these other noises."

The Indian would not be dissuaded. After a moment he motioned to his friend, and walking a few steps up the sidewalk they came to a vine growing alongside one of the buildings. He pushed the leaves aside, and there, to the

amazement of his friend, a tiny cricket was revealed, chirping its loudest. Now that he saw the cricket and was close to it, the white man could hear its call.

As they proceeded on their way, he said to his Indian friend: "Of course, you heard the cricket because your hearing is much better than mine. All Indians can hear better than white people."

The Indian smiled, shook his head, and replied: "No, that is not true. The Indian's hearing is no better than that of the white man. Watch! I'll prove it to you."

He reached into his pocket and found a fifty-cent piece, which he tossed on the sidewalk. As it clinked against the cement, people from several yards around stopped, turned, and looked. Finally, one of them picked up the piece, pocketed it, and went on his way.

"You see," said the Indian, "the noise made by the fifty-cent piece was no louder than that made by the cricket, yet many of your white people heard the noise the money made, stopped, and paid attention to it, although they paid no heed to the noise made by the cricket. The reason is not a difference in our hearing. It is a difference in what we have learned to listen for, a difference in the things we turn our attention toward."

Many things are said and done to us and by us as we journey in life, and the things that will count are the things that we have our minds and our hearts tuned toward. Living will be better and happier if we learn to tune our minds and our hearts to see, hear, and know the good things rather than the bad. We can carry only so much. Let's be sure that the things we carry are good and not evil.

Opening Ceremony For Council Meeting

Promptly at the appointed hour the Navigator signals for the time keeper (host little explorers/princess) to strike twelve beats on the tom-tom. All talking ceases and explorers take their places, forming a circle. If out of doors, they may form a circle around a campfire.

The Navigator orders all explorers/princesses to stand, raising hands and eyes to the Great Creator in thanks for the preservation of the beauties of his work in forest, field, and stream. A typical prayer might be: "**Great Creator, as we gather around this council, dwell among us and guide us. Give us wisdom and understanding that we may do those things which are pleasing to you. We offer thanks to you for the (Circle Name). O' Great Creator, hear our words.**"

Navigator announces: "**Explorers/Princesses, the council is open. Assume the position of circle unity.**" Princesses/Little explorers stand facing dads in a double circle. Each princess/explorer places his/her left hand on the shoulder of the little guide to his/her left. Dads assume the same position, clasping right hands with their child.

The Navigator then leads the circle in reciting in unison:

1. The pledge of YMCA Explorers / Princesses: "**We, father and son/daughter, through friendly services to each other, to our family, to this circle, to our community, and country, seek a world pleasing to the eye of the Great Creator.**"
2. The six aims: "**To be clean in body and pure in heart; to be "Pals Forever/Friends Always" with my dad/son/daughter; to love the sacred circle of my family; to be attentive while others speak; to love my neighbor as myself; to seek and preserve the beauty of the Great Creator's work in forest, field, and stream.**"
3. The YMCA Explorers slogan: "**Friends Forever, Dad/Son.**"
The YMCA Princess slogan: "**Friends Forever, Dad/Daughter.**"

A Big "YA-TA-HEY" ends the opening ceremony - the circle then sits back down and continues its meeting.

Suggested Closing Ceremony

And now (finger pointing to the ground), **may the Great Spirit** (fingers circling up, imitating smoke) **of all great spirits** (arms out-stretched, slightly elevated) **be with** (arms in close) **you** (finger pointing across the circle) **now** (fingers pointing down) **and forever more** (action of shooting bow and arrow).

Crossing The Brook (Game)

To play "Crossing the Brook" you will need a couple of squares of paper or cardboard about 14 inches on a side. First, place one of the squares on the floor and step on it. Place the other square a little ahead and step on that. Now, without removing your foot from the second square, lift up your foot from the first "stone" (square) and without losing your balance, reach down, remove the square, and place it ahead of the second. Keep doing this until you have "Crossed the Brook" (Finish Line). If you lose your balance and remove your foot, you have lost, because you have "Fallen into the Brook".

Suggestions for Invitations

Canoe Invitation

Fold a piece of cloth, paper or any suitable material (1" x 4") in half. Cut in the shape of a canoe. Sew, glue or staple the ends. On the inside of the canoe, give the time and location of the meeting.

Scroll Invitation

Cut 2 twigs about six or seven inches in length. Secure a piece of leather, paper, cloth or suitable material to the twigs. On the material, give the time and location of your meeting.

Shield Invitation

Take a small circle of paste board about 2" in diameter and paint designs such as might be found on a shield and add small fluffs to outside. Glue on.