

SAYF 2021-2022 Season Information Packet

Dear Parents, Guardians, and adult Friends,

Last year was like no other and SAYF was no exception! We are grateful to those who supported SAYF throughout the year and for your continuing support as we weather the ongoing storm. We're glad that your young Friend is a part of the Southern Appalachian Young Friends [SAYF] community! Below are several important changes to SAYF for 2021-22 year.

Please read this letter completely and reach out with any questions.

This year we anticipate returning to in-person retreats in October.

Our decision to return to in person retreats even amid rising cases of Covid-19 in much of the SAYMA region, is responsive to the health and wellbeing of our teens. Now, and for decades past, SAYF has been a place for young Friends to process relevant cares and concerns of rising into adulthood - many of which are especially relevant today - loneliness and isolation, fears for health and safety, addressing social concerns and the ongoing issues of racial justice. While this vital space has been supported through a year of virtual gathering, we are very aware that the physicality of SAYF is part of its strength and part of the work of this Quaker community.

We believe the benefits outweigh the risks.

We know much more now about Covid-19 than we did at this time last year and while we have developed robust Covid Guidelines for SAYF and are following CDC recommendations, we realize we are not proceeding without some risk. Bringing people together from several different communities with different transmission rates is a challenge especially for the families where younger siblings or other family members are not vaccinated. However, as parents and caregivers of young Friends are aware, we can never mitigate all risks. For example our teens face a statistically higher risk of injury or death from automobile accidents than they do from serious illness or death from Covid-19. The SAYF steering and support committees along with the SAYF nurturers have determined to consider these risks as well as the significant benefits of supporting young Friends' mental health through gathering in person. We ask that you also consider whether your family can accept the risks that would arise if your teen, even though vaccinated, contracts Covid-19 at a retreat.

New Covid Guidelines.

Gathering in person will require some important new guidelines for all members of the SAYF community. Most importantly, the SAYF Steering Committee recognizes that while the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus is more contagious and may cause breakthrough infection in vaccinated individuals, vaccination is still the primary defence against serious illness and death from Covid-19. Therefore **we will require all attendees, with rare exception, to affirm to us they are fully vaccinated.** Please review our [SAYF Covid-19 retreat guidelines](#) (below) and attend one of our SAYF Adult forums in September. You may also contact any of the SAYF Steering Committee members listed on page 3.

SAYF Adult forums

Zoom link for forums: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88109341416>

Meeting ID: 881 0934 1416

Tuesday, September 14, 7:00 pm ET

Sunday, September 19, 3:00 pm ET

Super SAYFers for 2021-22.

For this year only we are inviting young Friends who graduated from high school in the spring of 2021 to continue to participate in SAYF retreats. The request, which came from last year's seniors, expressed a profound sense of loss at missing their final year of in person retreats and SAYF graduation. The steering committee and nurturers agreed that graduates may attend in person retreats following the current SAYF guidelines.

Volunteers needed.

As you may be aware, SAYF runs on the volunteer efforts of adult Friends, most of whom are parents of current or former SAYFers. Last year our adult needs were primarily served by our SAYF steering and support committee Friends (visit awesomesayfers.org to read their bios). As we head into the new year in hopeful anticipation of in-person retreats, we will need more varied adult support just as in years past. Please consider signing up to volunteer at one or more SAYF retreats. You can access the retreat schedule at: <http://awesomesayfers.org/schedule.shtml>

Steps to becoming an adult volunteer:

1. Youth Worker application: If you are new to SAYF volunteering please initiate the process, by filling out this short Youth Worker form:
<https://goo.gl/forms/NLylBc2X015AlwyU2>
2. Background Check: All adult volunteers are required to pass Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association's [SAYMA] background check.
3. FAN Training: All Friendly Adult Nurturers [FANs] are being required to complete a virtual FAN training.

While this may seem like a lot of hoops, we take the safety and wellbeing of our young Friends and the SAYF program very seriously. We know that these steps help us toward that end!

In addition to being a FAN, there are other ways to support the program. You might consider offering snacks, sending a potluck dish, or shopping for groceries, if needed by Lead FAN. If you'd like more ideas for how to help, contact Autumn Woodward, SAYF Program Coordinator at awesomesayfers@gmail.com or the lead FAN of the retreat.

Sincerely,

SAYF Steering and Nurturing Committees

Welcome to the Southern Appalachian Young Friends! For those who are new, here is some background: SAYF is a self directed program of 7th-12th grade teens centered around 6 retreat weekends held throughout the school year, plus a special retreat integrated into our yearly gathering (SAYMA) in June. Most retreats begin on Friday night, end midday Sunday, and gather together teens associated with several regional Quaker meetings. Teens from the host meeting plan their retreats around a theme oriented towards teaching Quaker principles, spirituality and equitable process. Retreats may include activities, service, workshops and worship planned and led by teens and adults, as well as unstructured time to rest and socialize. Young Friends are expected to participate in all planned activities unless excused for a specific reason.

Adult support is critical to SAYF. Most of our Friendly Adult Nurturers (FANs) started out as supportive parents. Throughout the retreat weekends, the goal of our adults is to model and encourage accountability through respect for the SAYF guidelines, and community values. We are a Quaker organization run by volunteers. Parent participation is welcomed and encouraged within the intention to balance awareness of the activities of our Young Friends with their need to feel trusted and independent. It is ultimately up to the individual teen to act responsibly and strive to be a positive element in the community. Parents are welcome to attend our gatherings, when or before their child attends. To attend a SAYF retreat, please contact the Lead-FAN for that retreat so we can best facilitate your presence and role at the retreat weekend.

The SAYF guidelines, including our Covid-19 guidelines and community values are included with this letter. Please be sure you and your child have read and understand these before attending a retreat. If you feel that your child may not be able and willing to uphold these guidelines, consider whether your child should attend retreats at this time. When your Young Friend comes to any retreat during the year, they will indicate by their presence that they are in agreement with the guidelines and will abide by them. Young community members who are experiencing turmoil or extreme stress can still attend, but we request that you consult with the adult facilitators of that retreat or a Steering Committee clerk to allow for preparations. If you feel that your child could be a physical danger to themselves or to others, then they should not attend at this time.

We are not planning any off-site trips for the 2021-22 year due to the current high Covid-19 transmission rates in the SAYMA region, however in the future there will times when retreats include off-site trips or activities where we are not able to maintain the same level of supervision as in a closed setting such as a Meetinghouse. If this concerns you, please contact that retreat's Lead-FAN to discuss your child's situation.

Information about sleeping arrangements is included below as well as the current calendar and contact info for Steering (adult) & Nurturing (teen) Committee members. If you have any changes to your contact information please email to Autumn Woodward, SAYF Program Coordinator, at: awesomesayfers@gmail.com

We continually work to improve parent communications and your thoughtful participation in the conversation is always welcome. If questions or concerns about our program arise, we invite you to call or email any of the Steering Committee members listed below, or fill out our feedback [survey](#). Updated program information is available on an ongoing basis at awesomesayfers.org.

Many thanks, SAYF Steering Committee,
Jennifer Dickie, Clerk

SAYF Steering Committee for 2021-22

Jennifer Dickie, Clerk -- Atlanta Monthly Meeting, GA 404-313-8770 // michaeljen@bellsouth.net

Grace Beavin -- Berea Monthly Meeting, KY via Morehead, KY 859-302-0301 // gemb1997@yahoo.com

Maia Carter Hallward -- Atlanta Monthly Meeting, GA 301-518-3246 // maigrace@yahoo.com

Chris de Beer -- Swannanoa Valley Meeting, NC 828-275-4366 // debeer1@mac.com

Laura Kelley --Atlanta Monthly Meeting via Richmond, IN 770 354 2057 // laura.m.kelley2012@gmail.com

Ian Saderholm -- Berea Monthly Meeting, KY via Chicago, IL 859-358-3427 // ian.saderholm@gmail.com

Robert Sears --Berea Monthly Meeting, KY 541-891-8028 // robertsears29@yahoo.com

~

Autumn Woodward (Program Coordinator) // awesomesayfers@gmail.com

SAYF Nurturing Committee Member

Name		Meeting	Email
Walker	Askins		waskins22@sgis.org
Marissa	Beatty	Berea	moomoo927@icloud.com
David Kelly	Bittenbender	Atlanta	davidsalvage18@gmail.com
Ollie	Bellando	Berea	oliviabellando@gmail.com
Matilda	Chen	Durham	matilda.m.chen@gmail.com
Aslan	Clo	Nashville	aslancllo20@gmail.com
Sadie	de Beer	Swannanoa Valley	sadie.rose934@gmail.com
Lu	Khamela	New Garden Friends	lukhamala@gmail.com
Teo	McGinnis	Atlanta	teomcginnis@gmail.com
David	Myers	Berea	david@bethmyers.net
Nevin	Myers	Berea	nevin@bethmyers.net
Elli	Saderholm	Berea	erinobviously@gmail.com
Julia	Wilton	Berea	julia.punitha@gmail.com
Oliver	Wingate	Nashville	owingate42@gmail.com

SAYF Community Values

Love and respect the boundaries of the community and its individuals by:

- ◆ Respecting people and their stuff.
- ◆ Being inclusive.
- ◆ Maintaining confidentiality.
- ◆ Attending mandatory activities.
- ◆ Refraining from using generally offensive or derogatory language.
- ◆ Avoiding the expression of violence, including the possession of weapons of any kind.
- ◆ Never bringing or using alcohol, drugs or other restricted substances.
- ◆ Abstaining from sexual activity and inappropriate physical contact.
- ◆ Respecting people's gender identity.
- ◆ Love and respect yourself by being safe and aware of your surroundings.
- ◆ Love and respect the environment by helping with clean-up, only using fire during designated activities, and following local rules

SAYF Retreat Sleeping Arrangements*

Our community strives to be considerate of every individual's gender identity and we provide at least 3 designated sleeping areas at retreats: all male, all female, and coed. Adults are assigned to all sleeping areas. An adult volunteer is awake and available for assistance throughout the night, and there is a designated Nurturer to help them address guideline concerns. Young Friends are required to be in their own sleeping bag/bedroll, and SAYF Guidelines apply at night as they do in the daytime. Immediate separation will occur and an accountability process may result from violating the guidelines. We encourage parents to discuss with their child any sleeping requirements or concerns they have. If you have specific instructions about the sleeping arrangements of your Young Friend, please discuss it with your child and verbally inform the Lead-FAN for the specific retreat, and include a note on the registration form. Unless the Lead-FAN is notified by the parent or guardian, Young Friends are allowed to choose their sleeping area based on their own personal comfort levels and leadings.

*Additional for 2021-22 - As indicated in the SAYF Covid Guidelines (pp 6-7) participants will not be required to wear masks while sleeping. Young Friends may be required to physically distance during sleep based on CDC guidance.

SAYF Covid-19 Guidelines for in person retreats

Approved 8/17/21

The following guidelines were developed understanding the evolving circumstances and science surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. SAYF Covid-19 guidelines will be adjusted to meet changing safety standards as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control. SAYF respects local Friend's rules and expectations within Friend's Meetinghouses. These guidelines therefore will also be responsive to local Friend's Meeting's expectations for use of Meetinghouse space during SAYF retreats.

SAYF Steering Committee recognizes that vaccination is the primary defense against severe illness and death from Covid-19 and encourages all members of the SAYF community who are able to be vaccinated. While the Delta variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus is more contagious and may cause breakthrough infection in vaccinated individuals, vaccination is still the primary defense against serious illness and death from Covid-19. Therefore:

1. All participants of SAYF retreats, young Friends and adults are required to have been fully vaccinated* prior to attendance. This includes but is not limited to, Friendly Adult Nurturees [FANs], drivers [FADs], and night shepherds. Full vaccination is considered:
 - a. 2 weeks after a second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
 - b. 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine
2. All attendees of SAYF retreats will follow [CDC guidance for day or overnight camps where everyone is vaccinated](#). Given the current substantial to high spread of COVID in the SAYF region, retreats will follow the recommendation to require masks inside, regardless of vaccination status except when eating/drinking or sleeping.
 - a. Eating should comply with local meeting protocols. In the absence of Covid-related protocols eating should occur outside if possible, or physically distanced inside.
3. All attendees of SAYF retreats will follow local Friend's Meeting Covid-19 protocols for groups visiting the Meetinghouse while in and around the Meetinghouse.
 - a. The SAYF program coordinator will procure the guidelines prior to the retreat.
 - b. These guidelines will be shared with the Lead FAN and YF planning committee and other FANs attending, prior to the retreat.
 - c. If any of the local rules are unduly burdensome or in conflict with the [CDC guidance for day or overnight camps where everyone is vaccinated](#), the lead FAN, in consultation with the clerk of SAYF Steering Committee, may request from the local meeting, that the rule be adjusted or waived for the SAYF retreat. If such an adjustment is not allowed, then the lead FAN and SAYF SC clerk will determine if a different venue is required.
 - d. The lead FAN is responsible for sharing the applicable local meeting Covid-19 guidelines with nurturees and adult volunteers at the retreat.

- e. All Nurturers, FANs and other adult volunteers must be familiar with the local meeting Covid-19 guidelines as well as these SAYF guidelines and assist in compliance.
 - f. The local meeting Covid-19 guidelines will be posted during the retreat for all to reference as needed.
4. Attendees of a SAYF retreat will not be required to wear masks while sleeping.
- a. physical distance during sleep may be required depending on CDC guidance or local Friend's Meeting requirements.
 - b. In the absence of more stringent guidance, during times of substantial or high transmission as tracked by the CDC (<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>) sleeping bags should be oriented head-to-toe, with space between rows of sleeping bags
5. Anyone planning to attend a retreat who has been in close contact with someone who tests positive for Covid-19 must not attend unless a negative Covid-19 test taken 3-5 days following exposure can be provided to the lead FAN.
6. In the event that a participant displays symptoms of Covid-19, the following protocols will be enacted:
- a. The person will be immediately separated from the group.
 - b. An adult volunteer will check on the person while wearing a mask. Adult volunteers will maintain 6' physical distance as care and safety allow.
 - c. All rooms and equipment used by an infected person will be cleaned and disinfected according to CDC guidelines.
 - d. The family of the infected individual will be contacted immediately.
 - i. If the affected individual is a local resident they will return home immediately.
 - ii. If the affected individual is a young Friend who has traveled from a distance their return home will be negotiated in consultation with their parents.
 - iii. If the affected individual is a FAN or FAD they will arrange transportation home separate from young Friends.
 - iv. In the case that a FAN or FAD must leave the retreat early, transportation home for young Friends who traveled with them will be negotiated with their parents and other FANs.
7. In the event that a participant tests positive for Covid-19 (with or without symptoms) in the week following a retreat, the following protocols will be enacted:
- a. The infected participant will notify the lead FAN of the retreat immediately.
 - b. The lead FAN with the support of the SAYF program coordinator will alert all participants and parents/guardians that a participant tested positive for Covid-19.
 - c. The lead FAN will alert the clerk of the host meeting that a participant at the SAYF retreat tested positive for Covid-19.
 - d. To ensure privacy, no representative of SAYF will share the identity of the participant who tested positive.

*Young Friends or Adults with medical conditions that prevent vaccination may request this requirement be waived. Requests must be made to the SAYF Steering Committee Clerk in advance of the retreat and waiver will be determined in consultation with Lead FAN of that retreat.

SAYF Community Guidelines

Approved, August 2012, Amended August 2013, 2014, 2017 & 2019

Introduction:

SAYF guidelines were created by fellow members of the community because we feel that these specific things are important to keeping SAYF a strong, thriving, loving community. They are not rules, but we ask you to respect them and use responsible judgment because infractions of these guidelines could potentially put you or others in danger, and damage the community as a whole.

So the community asks that you:

Don't bring or use restricted substances at SAYF, and don't come with them in your system. This includes alcohol, tobacco products, and drugs. (If you bring medication, use it responsibly and only for its intended use.

- These substances can hinder the reactions and behaviors of their users. This is bad for SAYF because we want all members to be physically and mentally aware of the community. These substances may also be illegal and not be in the comfort zone of many community members. Using restricted substances at SAYF creates a divide in the community.

Don't bring weapons of any kind to SAYF. Do not commit any violent act towards others in the community, including harming them physically, or using violent language to harm them emotionally. Please remember, words are weapons too.

- Nonviolence is a very important testimony that is not only important to us, but to Quaker communities around the world. This is a community that stands as a safe place for many people and we don't want to endanger that.
- Violent language isn't fun or funny and doesn't have a place in the community either. Humor and language that is rooted in means of oppression are not welcome, for example slurs that pertain to gender, race, sexuality, ability, etc.

Don't engage in sexual conduct at SAYF. This includes sex, making out, inappropriate touching, and anything else that could potentially cause others to feel uncomfortable.

- We are given the privilege of having co-ed sleeping arrangements. Please respect this and don't negatively take advantage of it.
- Coupling off sexually creates divisions in the community, and we want to be welcoming to all

Don't climb trees or buildings. Everyone's physical safety is of the utmost importance. While one may know their own physical limits, others may not and will follow suit and so it is important to set a good example.

Respect that mandatory activities are mandatory! Go to them AND participate.

- Attending activities and actively being a part of them is a large part of a SAYF retreat. It is not fun for anyone to have people who decide that they don't want to be a part of community activities. The activities are planned by fellow SAYFers because they want the retreat to be fun and spiritual for everyone. (If you feel that you really cannot participate in a particular activity or event, you may ask to be excused from that specific event by a FAN.)

Be where you are supposed to be, especially during lights out. Don't wander off.

- Leaving the meetinghouse without permission, going into places that have been put off limits, or wandering off during activities is not allowed. It leaves you in a position where FANs do not know where you are, and possibly in a situation where you could get lost or hurt. Remember that all of the guidelines are for the safety of all SAYFers and the community as a whole.

SAYFers are not to go off site unless it's a designated activity. It becomes very stressful for the adults who are responsible for young friends to keep track of SAYFers who are not with the rest of the group

- If it's for an emergency, speak with a FAN or a Nurturer and something can be arranged

Do not use fire in non-designated activities. There are activities, like opening circle, when fire is allowed. Don't

have fire during other times of the day. This includes lighters. They will not be needed at retreats, so if you have one, don't bring it out.

- It could be possibly destructive and unsafe.

Be consistently and consciously inclusive and welcoming. Everyone being and feeling that they are a part of the community is very important to SAYF and its members. Don't be a passive bystander to those feeling excluded.

- Being inclusive is an easy way to help everyone feel more like they belong or just to make them have a better experience. It is also a great way to widen the community and make fantastic friends.

Honor confidentiality. Part of SAYF is being able to love and trust everyone in the community. Confidentiality is really important to our community. It keeps people feeling that they are in a comfortable and loving space so that they are able to freely share anything.

- This is held to be true unless you hear that someone might be planning to harm themselves or someone else, at which point you immediately contact a FAN or a Nurturer. In addition, if you have been hurt emotionally and/or physically, you may also alert a FAN or Nurturer. The situation may be brought to the wider SAYF community or parents, if needed for adequate support.

Most importantly, respect the spiritual community, including:

Property

- Of both members of the community and of the meetinghouse or space that you are in.

Other members of the community

- By being especially mindful of your actions and language because of the spectrum of comfort levels, ages, identities and beliefs in the community.
- If you think your actions and language might be uncomfortable to others, ASK! It shouldn't have to be awkward to ask if someone wants to hug or cuddle.

Needs of the community...

- By cleaning up after yourself and participating in other community chores. Make sure that no member of the community is left with a disproportionate work load, and make sure to listen when people are asking for help.

The wider community...

- By being responsible for your actions and remember that we represent Quaker youth and that our actions reflect upon us and the wider Quaker community.

And yourself...

- Don't do things that will make you uncomfortable or cause you harm. Remember that if you don't respect yourself, it then becomes harder for others to respect you and take you seriously.
- Remember to also respect yourself physically-- FANS have extra hygiene products (toothbrush, deodorant, etc.) upon request.

Respect and uphold the Friends Testimonies (SPICES): –

Simplicity – Keep things as simple as possible and have a minimal environmental impact.

Peace – Behave and speak non-violently.

Integrity – Act by your moral compass.

Community – Work with others in a loving, productive and efficient manner.

Equality – Value each person's beliefs and identity the same.

Stewardship – Give back to the community, and help further the unfolding experience.

Conclusion:

Although there are many guidelines, they should be easy to follow by remembering to use common sense and not do stupid things. We should all be here to bring each other up, and with the intention of growing as both individuals and as a community. Have fun and make the most out of each retreat, while also respecting the needs of the people and the blossoming community around you.

SAYF CALENDAR 2021-2022

Updated 08/14/2021

*NCSC = Nurturing Committee and Steering Committee Retreat

**August 14, 2021
(NCSCSC*)**

**Nurturing and Steering Committee Mtg.
Virtual**

Lead FAN: Jennifer Dickie

October 22-24, 2021

SAYF Retreat: Atlanta

Lead FAN: Aaron Ruschetta

Planners: Nurturers

November 12-14, 2021

SAYF Retreat: Berea

Lead FAN: Beth Myers

Planners: Berea YF

January 14-16, 2021

SAYF Retreat: Atlanta, GA

Lead FAN: Jennifer Dickie

Planners: TBD

**February 2022 TBD
(NCSCSC)**

**Nurturing and Steering Committee Mtg.
Swannanoa, NC (pending confirmation)**

Lead FAN: Jennifer Dickie

March, 2022 (dates TBD)

April, 2022 (dates TBD)

June, 2022 (dates TBD)

**SAYF at SAYMA Sessions & Retreat
Warren Wilson College, Swannanoa, NC**

Lead FAN: TBD

Co-Lead FAN: TBD

Please also watch the SAYF website awesomesayfers.org for calendar updates.