

SAYF 2022-2023 Information Packet

Dear Parents, Guardians, and adult Friends,

Welcome! We're glad that your young Friend is a part of the Southern Appalachian Young Friends [SAYF] community! At the start of each year we send a letter reminding and updating our adult community about what SAYF is all about!

Good bye Super Seniors! Hello new Friends!

In June at our SAYF at SAYMA retreat at Warren Wilson College we graduated a record number of SAYFers. Our seniors and our *Super Seniors* were celebrated by the community and thanked for their stoic efforts to not just maintain but to build our community up in 2022-23. We are so grateful for all the commitment they showed to SAYF. While we are sad to see them go, we know that they are taking the SAYF values into the world and that it will be a better place for their presence in it! With that said we also had several new young Friends join us last year, and we look forward to continuing to grow as more families return to their Friends Meetings over this year.

Covid is still with us!

It seems clear that Covid-19 and all its iterations are becoming endemic. The virus continues to cause disruption to some elements of our lives and has proven to be as dangerous as ever to the unvaccinated population. In an effort to keep the SAYF community and all those adjacent to SAYF as healthy as possible we continue to require all participants in SAYF events to be fully vaccinated, to take a rapid Covid test prior to attending retreats, and to stay home if they feel ill. We will continuously monitor the CDC recommendations and require masking when community transmission levels are high in the counties where SAYFers reside. You can read our covid guidelines below.

Some new language inspired by young Friends

2021-22 was a growing year for SAYF young Friends and FANs. We grappled with language around gender and identity. Young Friends and FANs worked together to understand how the language we use can sometimes feel rejecting without intention. While we, as a community, intend to always be welcoming, we found that unexamined bias and habits left some feeling excluded. As we each work to recognize our own hidden biases, we will continue to welcome the feedback of Friends to help us be as inclusive as we proclaim to be. To this end we have changed our sleeping arrangements and guidelines to reflect a less binary system for SAYF. Starting this year, SAYF retreats will always designate two sleeping areas: late-night and early-to-bed. We will no longer automatically offer female-only and male-only sleeping areas. At any retreat, if a young Friend or their parent/guardian would prefer, they may sleep in a room with only others who identify with their same gender. In this case FANs and Nurturers will do their best to designate an additional sleeping space. SAYF will continue to follow our policy of having an adult sleep in each room and requiring a minimum of 3 people per room.

Volunteer Progress!

The SAYF Support Committee and Steering Committee dedicated untold hours to revamping our adult volunteer process and initiating a Friendly Adult Nurturer [FAN] Training program. If you haven't had a

chance to check out the training we invite all adult members of the community, including parents and guardians to participate in it. We think it will give you a good sense of what SAYF is all about and how you and other adults can participate in helping us to build and keep the program strong and safe for young Friends. We welcome parents and guardians to become FANs. The steps to do so are below. There are other ways to support the program as well. You might consider being a night shepherd, providing snacks, sending a potluck dish, shopping for groceries or making a donation. 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.

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/NLylBc2X0l5AlwyU2>
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 required to complete a 2-part virtual FAN training (4 hours total).
 - a. **Fall SAYF FAN Training (parents welcome)**
Zoom link for forums: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88109341416>
Meeting ID: 881 0934 1416
Thursday, September 29, 6:30-8:30pm EDT and
Sunday, October 2, 3:30-5:30pm EDT.

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!

Sincerely,
SAYF Steering and Nurturing Committees

Attachments

1. New SAYFers Background Letter (p. 3)
2. Contacts for SAYF Steering and Nurturing Committee (p. 4)
3. SAYF Calendar 2022-23 (p. 5)
4. SAYF Community Values and Sleeping Arrangements (Updated 8/22) (p. 6)
5. SAYF Community Guidelines (p. 7-8)
6. SAYF Covid-19 Guidelines (updated 3/22) (p. 9-11)

Welcome New Friends to SAYF!

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.

There will be 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 2022-23

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

Kelly Askins -- Memphis Friends Meeting, TN 901-240-9819 // rhodes.askins@me.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

SAYF Nurturing Committee Members

| Name | | Meeting | Email |
|--------|-----------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Aslan | Clo | Nashville | aslanclo20@gmail.com |
| Sadie | de Beer | Swannanoa Valley | sadie.rose934@gmail.com |
| Teo | McGinnis | Atlanta | teomcginnis@gmail.com |
| Nevin | Myers | Berea | nevin@bethmyers.net |
| Elli | Saderholm | Berea | erinobviously@gmail.com |
| Oliver | Wingate | Nashville | owingate42@gmail.com |

Tentative SAYF CALENDAR 2022-2023

Updated August 29, 2022 – Information subject to change.

Please check awesomesayfers.org for calendar updates.

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|----------------------------|---|
| Aug. 19-21, 2022 | Nurturing and Steering Committee Mtg. Swannanoa Valley Meetinghouse Lead FAN: Jennifer Dickie |
| Sept. 23-25, 2022 | SAYF Retreat Atlanta Friends Meeting, Atlanta, GA Lead FAN: Jennifer Dickie Planners: Atlanta Young Friends |
| October 21-23, 2022 | SAYF Retreat Swannanoa Valley Friends Meetinghouse Lead FAN: Beth Myers Planners: Berea Young Friends |
| Nov. 11-13, 2022 | SAYF Retreat Asheville Friends Meetinghouse Lead FAN: Chris De Beer Planners: Swannanoa Valley Young Friends |
| Jan. 13-15, 2023 | SAYF Retreat Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse Lead FAN: Asa Kramer-Dickie Planners: Atlanta Young Friends |
| *Feb. 17-19 | Nurturing and Steering Committee Mtg. West Knoxville Friends Meetinghouse Lead FANs: |
| *March 24-26 | SAYF Retreat Arthur Morgan School, Celo, NC (tentative) Lead FAN: Mari Ohta |
| *April 14-16 | SAYF Retreat Asheville (tentative) Lead FANs: |
| *June 2023 | Yearly Meeting (SAYMA), Warren Wilson College |

* dates & locations are not yet confirmed

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*

There are two designated sleeping areas: late-night and early-to-bed. Additional sleeping areas will be arranged by FANs and Nurtures at any retreat at the request of young Friends or parents/guardians. Adults are assigned to all sleeping areas. An adult volunteer is awake and available for assistance throughout the night. 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 tell a FAN or contact the Lead FAN for the specific retreat. Unless the Lead FAN is notified by the parent or guardian (i.e. a note on the registration form), Young Friends are allowed to choose their sleeping area based on their own personal comfort levels and leadings.

* See parent letter above for changes to the SAYF Retreat Sleeping Arrangements Policy.

SAYF Community Guidelines

Approved, August 2012, Amended August 2013, 2014, 2017 2019, Updated & Affirmed 2022

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:

Practice self advocacy. Self advocacy is the ability to communicate your individual needs when you are comfortable. Our guidelines are written to embody the needs of the whole SAYF community, however, if a group or individual requires accommodations then advocating for yourself or the group is appropriate and necessary.

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-identity, 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 sleeping arrangements that allow us to sleep in community - not separated by gender or other identities. 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 Covid-19 Guidelines for in person retreats (version 3)

Approved March 20, 2022

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 and receive a booster when available and recommended. While new variants of the SARS-CoV-2 virus may be 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* and have received a booster, when available and recommended, prior to attendance. This includes but is not limited to, Friendly Adult Nurturers [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 must take a rapid [self-test](#) the day of departure** for a SAYF retreat.
 - a. If your self-test has a positive result, stay home or isolate for 10 days, wear a mask if you have contact with others, and call your healthcare provider.
3. All attendees of SAYF retreats will follow the most up to date [CDC guidance](#). Masks at SAYF retreats will be optional for indoor activities when all counties from which young Friends will be traveling are measuring low or medium based on the [CDC Covid-19 Community Levels](#). If any county is high/red we will maintain indoor masking during waking hours, for the retreat.
4. 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 CDC guidance, 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 nurturers 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 and these SAYF guidelines will be posted during the retreat for all to reference as needed.
5. 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
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

**Friends should plan in advance to have an over the counter rapid tests to available the day of departure. If financial support for purchasing a rapid-test is needed, please contact the SAYF program coordinator, Autumn Woodward.