

SAYF Community Guidelines

Approved, August 2012, Amended August 2013, 2014, 2017, 2019, 2022, Updated & Affirmed 2023

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. FANs are responsible for the safety of young Friends while they are at retreats. If a SAYFer leaves without permission it creates a safety issue for the community, and interferes in normal retreat activities, and may have long term consequences for SAYF.

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:

We trust you will be able to follow these by remembering they are for the safety of you and the community, and we hope you come to us with any questions. 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.