

Ongoing FAN Training (for Friendly Adult Nurturers)

Version 3.5, September 2023

Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF)

Three Training Sessions:

- >>1 Philosophy, Structure and Function of SAYF<<
2. Essentials for FANs
3. Transportation of Young Friends (on demand)

Philosophy and Function of Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF)

Mission Statement

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Underlying Philosophy

Young Friends

The Nurturing Committee

The Steering Committee

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SAYF Mission Statement

Around the world, Quaker youth come together under the name of Young Friends. For over a hundred years these groups have offered youth in the Religious Society of Friends an opportunity for community, education, enjoyment, and service to others.

Following this tradition, Southern Appalachian Young Friends (SAYF) is an organization under the care of Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association (SAYMA). SAYF has the express purpose of creating a loving, caring, joyful Quaker spiritual community for teens in the Southeast. In doing this SAYF seeks to foster a safe space for Young Friends to grow and explore Friends testimonies (simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, stewardship), values, process, and spirituality. Through retreats, service projects, business meetings, worship and other activities, SAYF brings Young Friends together as an ongoing Quaker ministry to teens.

Basic Structure

SAYMA Yearly Meeting for Business is ultimately responsible for the nurture and care of SAYF. SAYF was created by the SAYMA Representatives Meeting in winter, 1994, on the recommendation of the Ministry and Nurture Committee. The SAYF Steering Committee, composed of adults who guide the teens in developing policy and in planning and carrying out the program, is a standing committee of SAYMA. Another standing committee, The SAYF Support Committee, works with Steering Committee, arranges for training, deals with some kinds of issues, and fosters inclusion.

The SAYF community is structured, and directed in keeping with Quaker values and Quaker process. Business is carried out in the Young Friends Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business, held twice a year in November and June. The overall spiritual welfare of the community is overseen by the Young Friends Nurturing Committee. Retreats are planned by teen-led Planning Committees with help from the Lead FAN and other adults. A Community Care meeting is formed if a guideline is broken by an adult or teen; the meeting determines what consequences will ensue to heal and maintain the health of the community. Other committees may be formed as needed.

Six SAYF retreats are held during the year on weekends in September, October, November, January, March, and April. A SAYF program with a separate dormitory is part of Yearly Meeting in June. Joint retreats for program planning and policy development are held by the Nurturing Committee, the Steering Committee, and the Support Committee in August and in February each year.

SAYMA: The community within which we work

- SAYMA is the Southern Appalachian Yearly Meeting and Association, our Yearly Meeting.
- Yearly Meeting sessions are held in June each year - SAYF Steering Committee provides a written report to Yearly Meeting and Young Friends give an epistle on the final day of Yearly Meeting.
- SAYMA Representative meetings occur twice per year, in September and March; a SAYF Steering Committee co-clerk usually attends.
- SAYMA financial support pays for the SAYF Administrative Assistant and the Nurturing Committee/Steering Committee Retreats, and helps with other costs of the SAYF program.

SAYF Philosophy

An important goal of the SAYF community is to nurture growth rather than hinder it. We do this by supporting Young Friends in an open and loving environment as they mature into young adults. We support Young Friends, rather than cutting them down, even when they haven't necessarily met society's standards for maturity. We give them time and space to learn. We nurture eccentricities.

SAYF teaches Quaker process and Quaker ideals, especially love, respect, and honesty, and helps teens develop a Quaker identity. FANs serve as Quaker role models and give teens the opportunity to connect with adults at a time in their life when this may be difficult for them.

Teens run the SAYF community, while adults provide a safety net. FANs are available for guidance, to share with and listen to the teens. Members of the Nurturing Committee have special interest in the community and they feel very much as if the community is theirs. Nurturers make many key decisions, and it is important to them to be consulted about issues. Nurturing Committee members often act as disciplinarians and enforcers, rather than leaving this role to FANs.

SAYF is very important to Young Friends; they want to protect and nurture their community. The community guidelines are VERY important. These are formulated by the Nurturing Committee and approved by the Steering Committee and by the SAYF Meeting for Worship with Attention to Business to remind us how we must live in order to have the loving, supportive community we so desire. Guidelines apply to Young Friends and FANs alike from the time the group leaves their home meeting place until the time they return.

Young Friends are a Diverse Group

- Range in age from 12 to 18-19 years (see Appendix 1, Who can be a SAYF "Young Friend")
- Vary widely in maturity, needs, abilities, confidence, etc.
- Come from meetings hundreds of miles apart
- Differ in the extent of their Quaker experience
- Some Young Friends are not Quakers (see Appendix 1)

The guidelines are rooted in the **SPICES**,
and come from the Young Friends themselves

SAYF Community Guidelines

We respect this community because we love each other:

People

Their stuff

Their boundaries - no sex, no drugs, no violence

Their feelings - practice inclusivity, honor confidentiality

Our Environment

Participate in mandatory activities and help clean up

No fires

The Wider Community

Follow the local rules

Be safe and aware of your surroundings

See Appendix 2 for more detailed guidelines

The Nurturing Committee

- is made up of Young Friends.
- experienced volunteers (have attended at least 7 retreats).
 - Some exceptions, e.g., seniors
- usually sign up at Yearly Meeting in June.
- want to work to support the community.
- are willing to deal with issues and problems.
- meets briefly at the start of each SAYF retreat and for two planning weekends each year.
- selects a clerking committee for its own meetings and the SAYF Meeting for Business.

Roles for the Nurturing Committee

- Provides the primary leadership within the community - reflect on this, it is profound!
- Promotes a Friendly spiritual atmosphere of love, support, and fun in the Young Friends Community
- Functions like the Ministry and Nurture Committee of a Monthly Meeting
- Provides the clerking committee for Young Friends Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business

The SAYF Steering Committee

- made up of adults.
- a standing committee of SAYMA.
- new members are recruited by SAYMA Nominating Committee and approved, usually at the annual Yearly Meeting for Business.
- responsible to SAYMA for conduct of the SAYF program.
- functions best when each Monthly Meeting that regularly sends YFs to SAYF is represented.
- must be FANs or immediately start the FAN application process.

Responsibilities of Steering Committee Members

- attend the two joint NC/SC/SC retreats held on weekends in August and February
- stay abreast of developments in the SAYF community and participate in discernment processes as needed
- help care for SAYF during Yearly Meeting
- facilitate communication between SAYF and the member's Monthly Meeting

Responsibilities of the Steering Committee

- Care for spiritual life and Quaker process in SAYF
- Provide guidance to the Nurturing Committee in developing policy and planning programs
- Responsible to SAYMA for safety and financial integrity of SAYF programs
- Oversee the work of the SAYF Administrative Assistant; report annually to Personnel Committee
- Report annually in writing to the Yearly Meeting Business Session and, as needed, to Rep. Meeting

The SAYF Support Committee

- A SAYMA standing committee
- Supports SAYF program
- Provides conduit for concerns and needs
- Works with Steering Committee on guidelines, policies, and adult recruitment
- Deals with serious behavior issues, with goal of restorative justice
- Arranges training for adult volunteers
- Fosters inclusion within SAYF

SAYF is a community composed of teens and adults, based in mutual respect and honest communication, a community where growth - spiritual, emotional, and physical - is the only constant. In SAYF, we rediscover every year the wonders that love can do.

Appendix 1: Who can be a SAYF "Young Friend"?

SAYF serves 12- to 19-year-old Friends who have not graduated from high school. Rising 7th-graders may attend SAYF at the Yearly Meeting if they wish or attend Junior Yearly Meeting if they feel more comfortable there. Young Friends must be at least 12 years old before they attend SAYF weekend retreats.

Young Friends may attend SAYF until the Yearly Meeting immediately after they graduate high school (or the graduation equivalent if they are home schooled), except that no one may attend as a Young Friend past their 19th birthday. Following graduation from SAYF, Friends are encouraged to join Young Adult Friends and/or to become FANs for SAYF.

Young Friends occasionally want to bring a non-Quaker-affiliated friend with them to SAYF retreats. This is permitted, but we encourage them to take the friend first to their Quaker meeting for First Day School and/or Meeting for Worship, and to be sure that the friend understands and accepts the SAYF Community Guidelines. A local FAN or Steering Committee member should also contact the parents.

Appendix 2:

The SAYF Community Guidelines

are created by the community to keep SAYF a strong, thriving, loving community. They are not rules, but we ask you to respect them because infractions could put you or others in danger, and damage the community as a whole.

Most importantly, respect the spiritual community, including:

- Property... of community members and of the meetinghouse you are in;
- Other members of the community... by being mindful of your actions and language. ASK! if you think your actions and language might be uncomfortable to others;
- Needs of the community... cleaning up after yourself and participating in community chores;
- The wider community... by being responsible for your actions;
- And yourself... don't do things that will make you uncomfortable or cause you harm.

Appendix 2, continued

Practice self advocacy, the ability to communicate your needs. Guidelines are written to embody the needs of the whole community; if a group or individual requires accommodations, advocating for yourself or the group is appropriate and necessary.

Don't bring or use restricted substances, or come with them in your system: includes alcohol, tobacco products, and drugs. If you need medicine, use it responsibly as intended.

Do not commit violence towards others, including physical harm or violent language. Don't bring weapons of any kind to SAYF. Humor and language rooted in oppression are not welcome (for example, slurs that pertain to gender, race, sexuality, ability, etc.)

Don't engage in sexual conduct: includes sex, making out, and inappropriate touching.

Don't climb trees or buildings.

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

Be where you are supposed to be. Don't wander off.

Do not use fire in non-designated activities.

Be consistently and consciously inclusive and welcoming.

Honor confidentiality (unless you hear that someone might be planning to harm themselves or someone else. In that case, immediately contact a FAN or a Nurturer.)

Abstracted from http://awesomesayfers.org/_forms/SAYF_guidelines-rev201708.pdf