

The Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation



New Masonic Youth Group Start-Up Outline

Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation
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This Masonic Youth Group Start-Up Outline is designed to assist you in following a logical, proven, step-by-step process, resulting in a successful, new Rainbow Assembly, DeMolay Chapter or Job's Daughters Bethel. More detailed information can be provided by the statewide adult leaders of these organizations.

There are five crucial components of a successful Masonic Youth Group program: the Adult Leaders, Administration, Programs, Membership, and State-wide Events.

You are probably anxious to get started; however, understanding these five areas of activity will help you plan to build a successful Masonic youth group.

GETTING STARTED: BASIC INFORMATION

Adult Leadership: The most important part of an ongoing, successful Masonic Youth Group is the Adult Leadership Team. This is a group of qualified, dedicated and trained adults who will supervise the youth group. In DeMolay it is called an Advisory Council. In Rainbow it is an Advisory Board, and in Job's Daughters it is a Bethel Guardian Council.

- 1. Sponsor:* The Sponsoring Body of a Masonic Youth Group provides the basic needs including a place to meet, adult leadership, finances and moral support. The most successful youth groups maintain a strong relationship with their Sponsoring Body. Technically, Job's Daughters do not have official sponsoring groups, but in practice, every Bethel falls under the supporting arm of one or more fraternal organizations.
- 2. Recruitment:* The Advisory Leadership Team is made up of Masons, parents, and any upstanding adult who is interested in working with youth. Some restrictions apply in each group.
- 3. Training:* Each Masonic Youth Group has some kind of a training program for adult leaders. DeMolay International's training program is mandatory for all who wish to serve as advisors. It is a review of policy, procedure, and best practices in the operation of a DeMolay Chapter. The female groups also have training but nothing that is currently mandatory.
- 4. Adult Leadership Team Meetings:* Every Adult Leadership Team is required to meet monthly to discuss the operation of their youth group, review past and future events, oversee the budget, and review risk management procedures relating to all activities.

Administration: The proper administration of a Masonic Youth Group is vital. A smooth-running youth group, with every person fulfilling their role, advising the youth as they execute their plans for activities, assures success.

1. *Financial Administration:* It is the responsibility of the Adult Leadership Team to see that proper financial procedures are followed. Each Masonic Youth Group has its own standards and procedures to follow.

2. *Risk Management:* Each adult involved with a Masonic Youth Group should become familiar with the principles of Risk Management to assure the safety of the members. Each Masonic Youth Group provides a *secondary* medical insurance policy and a liability insurance policy for all approved activities. Additionally, each adult working in DeMolay is required to receive annual training in youth protection. The training is presently optional in Rainbow and Job's Daughters.

3. *Rules and Regulations:* Each Masonic Youth Group has its own bylaws and rules and regulations.

4. *Membership Reports:* Constant recruiting of both adults and members is a necessary step in the membership growth process.

Jurisdictional Programs: Each Masonic Youth Group is divided into jurisdictions (usually States in the United States). The individual in charge of the jurisdiction is known by different titles—the Executive Officer for DeMolay, the Grand Guardian for Job's Daughters, and the Supreme Deputy or Supreme Inspector for Rainbow. They are the chief administrators of your jurisdiction and, with their appointed staff, can serve as a wealth of resources and information to assist you.

1. *Communications:* Each Masonic Youth Group has a publication to promote their activities across the state. Each also has a web page, hosted by the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, and all are accessible from www.pagrandlodge.org/pmyf

2. *Jurisdictional Activities:* Each Masonic Youth Group sponsors special events such as an annual convention, athletic tournaments, leadership training programs, membership class initiations, etc, to supplement the local youth group program.

3. *Policies and Procedures:* Each Masonic Youth Group has its own policies, rules, and regulations. While they are similar, there are distinct differences in the governance of each group. Copies of these regulations are available from the statewide leader in charge of the group.

Membership: Obtaining new members is the way we share Masonic teachings with young people, as well as showing fraternalism and fun!

1. *Sources of New Members:* Friends of members, Masonic references, teachers, clergy, and the other Masonic Youth Groups are all sources of prospective members.

Prospect Parties are a proven method of introducing young people to the Masonic Youth Groups. Good recruitment is a one-on-one approach: members must ask their friends to join. A Masonic relationship is required to join Job's Daughters, but not for DeMolay or Rainbow.

2. *Fees:* Membership fees differ greatly in each youth group. While Rainbow and Job's Daughters use an annual enrollment program to collect dues, DeMolay uses a life-membership program. DeMolay does not have dues and the membership fee is a one-time charge.

3. *Ceremony of Induction (also known as the Initiation):* It is the responsibility of the Adult Leadership Team to see that each application (also known as a petition) for membership is received, treated fairly, and properly balloted on. Each approved applicant will be inducted or initiated either at the local youth group, or at a state or regional event.

4. *Orientation:* New members go through an orientation program designed to educate them about their youth group, the initiation ceremonies, protocol, history, etc.

Program of Activities: To help maintain a youth program, there are several key programs that must be included in your plans.

1. *Activities:* Each Masonic Youth Group needs to have a well-rounded program of social, athletic, and service activities. Use of the Masonic Conference Center supports each group's goals and objectives.

2. *Ritual:* Ritual, the presentation of the ceremonies of induction (or initiation) is an important part of the Masonic Youth Group experience, and builds confidence while teaching public speaking skills. It is what distinguishes these groups from other youth programs and uniquely ties them to the Masonic Fraternity.

3. *Fund-raising:* Masonic Youth Groups should generally be self-sufficient, not relying on the donations of organizations and individuals for its activity expenses. A well-designed fund-raising program can supply the needs of a Masonic Youth Group as well as afford a charitable outreach by the members.

4. *Communications:* Communicating to members and parents in writing is the key to the success of any Masonic Youth Group, and you should publish calendars, newsletters, and even a website to keep them aware of events, activities, etc.

5. *Recognition:* There are awards, scholarships, and leadership advancement opportunities for all youth.