

# **SPJST Youth Leader's Handbook**



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## Tips For A Good Youth Leader

The good leader does not do all the planning or all the work. A good leader will assign duties to groups or individuals, then let them do the job assigned. Everyone has certain talents or capabilities that they want to use, so let them. They can be of great benefit to a leader. Be careful not to “over use” anyone but ask them to perform other tasks at different times.

A group or committee should plan all events. A planning committee may serve for one event or a longer period of time, depending on prior arrangements. Plan the event for the expected group according to age, sex and locations. Announce events well in advance. Last minute events are many times unsuccessful because (1) everyone could not be notified, (2) plans were not complete, and (3) you lose the anticipation of an upcoming event.

When an event is scheduled, be sure each member is prepared for his/her job. Several individuals should be involved in leading and each one must know his responsibility. Select the leaders carefully; many excellent leaders are overlooked, whereas others are discouraged by being pushed into situations they are not comfortable with. Do not use all adult leaders where youth are involved; assign some of the leading roles to the youth.

Check list for good leadership:

1. **Show Enthusiasm:** Your enthusiasm is easily contagious. 75 percent of the success of a leader depends on it. Begin with the idea that each person there expects to have a good time and never let down. Make it seem effortless - pep that looks like work won't work.
2. **Plan Ahead:** Know what to do, how to do it, and materials or equipment needed. Begin with something simple and save the best for last. Prepare more than you think you will need. Provide variety and keep the group moving. Spice the entertainment with surprises.
3. **Not Bossy:** A good leader leads not bosses. No matter what happens, keep the situation under control. The youth will only have as much confidence in the leader as the leader has in himself/herself.
4. **Be confident:** Know directions, words, tunes, etc. beforehand. Use notes if you must but refer to them only if you must because this can be distracting. If you are unsure of yourself, practice before a mirror and test for desired reactions from family and friends.
5. **Explain and Demonstrate:** Keep explanations brief, then demonstrate just enough to explain your point. Be careful not to let an embarrassing situation happen if possible. Ask for questions.

6. **Use Your Voice:** Avoid whistles and never yell. Speak clearly with your voice low. If you have trouble getting their attention, remain silent and look directly at the “lead” noise makers. Learn quiet ways of getting attention.
7. **Overlook Mistakes:** Activities are for fun, not perfection. Good sportsmanship is important and we all make mistakes. Be tactful in pointing out errors or making an issue of mistakes.
8. **Have Equipment Ready:** Have all supplies and equipment available and in easy reach. Ask for assistants from the participants. This is a good area to ask assistance from the shy or withdrawn members.
9. **Don’t Do It All Yourself:** Select helpers to assist in setting up, others to lead the games, songs, sports, etc. Let them gain experience while you observe and learn by watching or participating.
10. **Know When to Stop:** Starting on time is important but stopping at the high peak of interest is very important. They may object but you will have little trouble getting their attention next time. Be sure to stop the singing, party games, etc. on a soft slow note. Never let the group leave when they are all keyed up. Always slow the activities before the group leaves.

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Attitude is your most important tool in leadership.

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Here are three types of leadership. Where do you fit, and where would you like to fit?

The **Jug:** You pour in and insist it comes out the way you taught.

The **Molding-Clay:** You aim to manipulate and mold the learner into doing YOUR command and being like YOU want him to be.

The **Growing Plant:** The leader/teacher seeks to help people grow in personal development.

## Guidelines For Youth Leaders

1. A Youth Leader is elected in the annual meeting of the lodge. Section 92 SPJST By-laws and Page 14 of SPJST Youth Club Handbook. The term of office begins January 1 except lodges holding annual meetings in January, in which case such officers take office immediately following election. Lodges also elect or appoint substitute youth leaders and assistants. One assistant for every 10 active youth members, but no more than 4 is recommended.
2. All youth leaders and assistants must have the same interpretation of the point system. They need to work together in completing these forms, so it won't be such a big job for one person.
3. When a new youth leader is elected by the lodge, the former youth leader shall inform the State Fraternal Director of the change. The former youth leader will turn over all books, records, score sheets, program schedules and booklets and material to the new youth leader. This material shall be in good order, up to date, and handed to the youth leader before the February meeting.
4. Youth Leader assistant shall be elected in the annual meeting or appointed by the youth leader with the approval of the local lodge.
5. The youth leader, assistants, substitutes, and youth club officers will work together in planning the youth club activities. It is advisable to discuss youth club socials and activities during the youth club meetings.
6. A good youth leader utilizes all assistant leaders by dividing duties and assigning tasks that suit their talents. Duties should be equal and exchanged from time to time. Don't fail to ask for volunteers for duties.
7. If a youth leader or assistant has any questions, problems, or difficulties, they should contact their District Youth Counselor.
8. The youth leader is a "consultant" during the youth club meetings. It is the duty of the youth club officers to conduct the meetings in an orderly manner according to Robert's Rules of Order. If the presiding officer has difficulty keeping order or for any reason cannot conduct a proper business meeting, then the youth leader may assist.
9. The Youth Leader must report monthly to the mother lodge. Reports to be given are:
  - a. Treasurer's report
  - b. Number attending meeting - new members.

- c. Socials and activities planned - dates, times, and places.
- 10. Youth leader or assistant must attend all district meetings.
- 11. Youth leader should encourage youth club members to attend and participate in district youth functions at these district meetings.
- 12. Youth leaders must attend and assist at District YAD.
- 13. Youth leaders should hold at least one meeting a month.
- 14. It is important for the youth leader to attend State YAD, Youth Leader Workshop, and District Youth Leader Training.
- 15. It is the duty of the youth leader to send in all forms and reports to the District Youth Counselor or State Fraternal Director on or before the due dates. These duties may be assigned to an assistant, but the youth leader is responsible for them being mailed on time.

**Reports mailed to your District Youth Counselor:**

YAD Entry Cards - 20 days before your Dist. YAD  
Camp Application – May 31

**Reports to State Fraternal Director:**

**Quarterly Reports**

Report No. 1 due April. 15  
Report No. 2 due July 15  
Report No. 3 due October 15  
Report No. 4 due January 15

Only those reports received by the due date will be entitled to the youth club's reimbursement check from the Supreme Lodge. Youth clubs with less than 5 members present each month are not eligible for a check. The checks will be mailed to the youth leader.

- 16. The State Fraternal Director and District Youth Counselor will conduct one-day training classes in each district during the spring. These classes will cover any changes in the youth program, plans for their district YAD and camp. This is a time for craft exchange and perhaps a craft demonstration and participation. It is very important that youth leaders and assistants attend these classes. If the youth leader cannot attend and an assistant comes instead, the same monetary reimbursement will be paid to that assistant.

17. Once a year there will be a statewide Youth Leaders' Workshop held. This is a one-day seminar where all phases of the youth department are discussed. Outside instructors will be invited to conduct classes or training sessions on subjects relating to the youth program. Craft ideas are either exchanged or taught. Youth leaders, assistants and their spouses are urged to attend this retreat. Dates and locations will be published and announced in advance.
18. Youth Leaders will verify eligibility of each contestant from their lodge who competes in the district Youth Achievement Day. Refer to "Eligibility" in the Youth Handbook.
  1. Be a member (policy holder) of the SPJST by January 31.
  2. Attend a majority of the monthly meetings either in an organized youth club or adult meeting if there is not a youth club.
  3. Ages completed kindergarten to high school senior.
19. Youth Leaders must submit at least one audit report annually. All audit reports will be forwarded to the DYC.

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## **Fund Raising Plans**

Any organization that progresses and offers interesting programs and projects for its members must have money to operate. Children as a rule are good salesman. The youth clubs that have activities planned at least once a month have a better chance of keeping the youth interested and participating in all phases of the SPJST. These socials should be planned and announced at the monthly meetings with those attending the meeting having a part in the planning. When the membership wishes to make a trip, party, etc. that cost more money that the treasurer can afford, let them plan a fund-raising project to earn the money needed for their plan.

**Following are suggestions that have proven to be interesting for some of the youth clubs:**

**Dinners:** Chicken, turkey, stew, hamburger, etc. Donations for the food may be solicited.

**Basket Lunches:** Sell chances on the baskets. They can be picnic lunches, wiener roasts, etc. This is a good project when you plan to honor the fathers or mothers to the youth club members.

**Raffles:** This is a good summer project. Almost anything can be included in a raffle. Merchants in the community can be solicited for donations.

**Bingo & Penny Carnivals:** Popular in all seasons and in all communities.

**Bakery, Rummage, & White Elephant:** These are always a quick source of income. They are more popular during the fall and winter months.

Some youth clubs plan one big project during the year while others have small Projects during the year. Any fundraising project takes some planning and a lot of participation from the members. You will have better participation if you let the youth members make the decision on what they want to plan to raise their money and how they want to spend it. Don't let the money stay in the treasurer too long. This will discourage the youth in earning the money the next time.

Plan some of your socials to include invited guests. Let the youth club members invite their friends. They are good prospects for membership.

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## **Ways To Increase Interest And Participation**

1. Provide plenty of variety in programs so everyone can participate at least once during each event. Consider films. (Many are available at no cost on almost any subject).
2. Plan activities interesting to the age, sex, and suitability of the location. (out of doors, inside, available space, etc.).
3. Avoid activities that could embarrass anyone.
4. Introduce all newcomers; make them welcome.
5. Have a plan to get everyone into a group.
6. Devices to find partners or parts in skits.
7. Start with the easy and familiar.
8. Always explain fully, demonstrate, and go through the action. Ask for questions. Fear and insecurity can keep people from joining in.



9. Don't stay on one thing after the group loses interest. Waiting too long for the next event will also lose interest.
10. Have equipment and instructions ready for the next event to prevent a delay in activities.
11. Competitive and challenging activities add interest but don't plan every activity to be very active. Alternate quiet activities with the more competitive games. Never end any kind of activity with active participation. Always end with a quiet game or event.
12. When an activity is not holding the interest of most of the group, change immediately and go into something else.
13. Be sure to invite non-participating members into the activities but do not force them. When they do join in, encourage them and include them in the activities.
14. Start all events on time and end on time.

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For a Youth Club to function properly it is necessary to keep increasing the membership. Plan activities occasionally that will include invited schoolmates, friends and pals of the youth club members. When a visitor attends the youth leader should personally greet each one, introduce him/her to the members and make them feel welcome.

In some cases, a child who has heard of the youth club's activities and programs will ask to join. The youth leader should ask them to join the youth club and explain how they can become a member. If it requires a talk with the parents, plan for a sales representative to call on them after you have talked to the parents. Encourage them to become a member.

### **Six Ways to Make People Like You**

1. Have an interest in the other fellow's interest.
2. Smile and listen.
3. Remember that a person's name is important to him/her.
4. Be genuinely interested in other people.
5. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves.
6. Make others feel important, sincerely.

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## **Plan a Party**

Plan a party that will start with the simple games and progress to more difficult participation without tiring the players too soon.

**PRE-PARTY GAMES:** Should begin as soon as the first guests arrived. This starts the spirit and sets the mood of the occasion at the first.

**WARM-UP or GET ACQUAINTED:** Helps people to learn names and start talking. If the group is already acquainted, this helps them get in the partying spirit. A circle is the best arrangement because: (1) All can see each other; (2) It unites the group together; (3) Everyone has an equal place in the circle. Keep the circle close, being sure that everyone (even the leader) is using the same seating arrangement; do not have some in chairs and others on the floor.

**CIRCLE GAMES:** Several games can be played in the circle formation. Alternate quiet and active games but avoid constant changing formation.

**ACTIVE ACTIVITIES:** After active games the players will need rest, but do not let the party break up. Use games that require little organization and may not have all players participating at one time. Examples of quiet games are seated relays, mastery games, singing, team games, creative dramatics, and refreshments.

**HIGH POINT GAMES:** Active and progressive games, singing and folk games, special events and surprises are used at the climax of the party. If squares are used, they should be saved till the last since they are harder to learn and tend to break the group down rather than keep it together.

**ENDING:** Plan a definite ending for the party so that the group will know when it is time to go home.

## WHERE DO YOU RATE YOUR YOUTH CLUB?

1. Is there a committee that plans activities in detail in advance?
2. Are there special events when all the family is included? Examples: picnics, dinners, parties, fund-raising events.
3. Do the meetings and socials offer a variety of activities?
4. Are you satisfied to just have a short monthly meeting or are socials and other activities planned during the month?
5. Are there youth club members who can lead a variety of activities? Is leadership being taught and encouraged?
6. Does the youth leader encourage leadership from the youth?
7. Does the youth club have a voice in selecting and arranging special events and socials?
8. Are Youth Club Officers given the chance to conduct the meetings? Are they encouraged to hold the business part of the meeting?
9. Do some of the activities include other SPJST you clubs?

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## GENERAL HINTS:

Recreation is fun – Do not regiment it or create an attitude of perfection or orderliness which takes away the fun.

Always be part of the group – Stay with the group, but you will be able to observe what is happening and be a better leader if you do not play the game you are leading.

Good planning – Is the secret of good successful recreation.