



## **Middle Kingdom Youth Policy**

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**Seneschal of the Middle Kingdom**

- 1) ***General Policy:*** *The purpose of Youth Programs within the Middle Kingdom is to encourage the education of youth about the SCA and Medieval and Renaissance history. To establish methods through which the youth of the SCA can become more fully involved in SCA activities appropriate to their age and ability. To coordinate with Autocrats and their volunteers in order to provide planned, age-appropriate, historically relevant activities without providing “baby-sitting” or “day-care” services.*

*Participation in Children’s Activities, Page School and Youth Activities is based on the cooperative relationship between the Coordinator, the participating youth and that youth’s parent/legal guardian. Participation is not a right but a privilege that is extended and must be respected by all parties.*

*No adult may be alone with a child at any time during an organized activity for children or young people. Older minors are not to be left unsupervised with younger minors at organized youth activities.*

*It is, at all times the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian of a minor to determine the safety, suitability and appropriateness of an activity to their dependant children.*

***Inappropriate behavior of any sort by any party involved in Children’s or Youth Activities will be dealt with in the manner deemed most appropriate in accordance with modern, corporate or kingdom law as applicable.***

a) Responsibilities of the Minister Youth:

- i) To establish and oversee Kingdom Youth activities outside of martial endeavors. These policies and procedures are reserved to the martialate.
- ii) To keep local officers and the Seneschallate notified of relevant changes to the office, and facilitate communications between all other youth oriented offices.
- iii) To be responsible for all official Midrealm youth-related web sites in the Midrealm.
- iv) To maintain the Midrealm Page School
- v) To oversee and aid local group offices for Activities for Minors
  - (1) For all groups without a local youth officer, the office of the Seneschal(e) shall be responsible for duties and policies of this office.

b) Policies regarding Children’s Activities (ages 4 through 8)

- i) A ‘Coordinator’ is the volunteer selected by the autocrat to run Children’s Activities at a specific event. This individual shall be at least 18 years of age

and shall wear a name tag or other item that clearly identifies them as the Coordinator. The Coordinator shall communicate with the Minister of Youth to be sure they know and understand the current policies of the office regarding Children's Activities and kingdom law regarding minors are carried out at the event.

- ii) Coordinators must have one adult or helper to every five (5) children attending a youth activity. If Coordinators cannot get the help they need they must not provide Children's Activities, or they must otherwise limit participation until enough help is present (i.e., if you have two adults you limit child participation to ten children until you get the help of another adult). Exceptions can be made for group sports in which children are playing on a team that requires more people. These helpers must be at least 14 years old. Helpers can not be left in charge of Children's Activities. All helpers need to wear identifying name tags or other items that clearly identify them as being associated with helping at Children's Activities.
- iii) Minors under the age of 14 are not suitable helpers.
- iv) No adult/older teen can ever be alone with a single child (so bathroom runs, if you do them, need to have either two adults and one child, or two children and one adult, or everyone will need to go). If children go to the bathroom on their own, they need to sign in and out (and parents need to be aware that their children will be going by themselves to the bathroom by signing in and out). No four- or five-year-old can go the bathroom by him or herself.
- v) Children can never be left unattended by an adult when the children are participating in a Youth Activity.
- vi) Children under the age of four may participate at age appropriate Children's Activities at the Coordinator's discretion, but must have their parent/legal guardian present at that activity at all times. Children ages four through eight must have their parents check in periodically.
- vii) Children must wear nametags with their names and that of their parents/legal guardian clearly printed on it.
- viii) Coordinators and their staff may not strike or yell at a child even if a child is a discipline problem (disruptive, sulky, crying or abusive), even if the parent verbally told you this is 'okay'. The second adult helper will simply return the child immediately to the child's parent or legal guardian and the child is not to return until the child agrees to behave. If a child is endangering him or herself or others or is engaged in a disruptive or abusive behavior, the child's parent or legal guardian will be approached and expected to handle the situation immediately. If problems persist with a child after the parent or legal guardian has been notified, the matter must be handled by the appropriate group seneschal and/or autocrat.
- ix) If a child is badly hurt or bleeding, the Coordinator or other volunteer must obtain first aid first, and then get the parent (unless there is an extra adult to send, then this can be done simultaneously). If the child is only mildly hurt (a bruise or bump and the crying is for attention) the Coordinator or helper must take the child to the parent for treatment.

- x) Coordinators must use a sign-in/out sheet for children. No child can participate without having their parent/legal guardian signing them in and out.
- xi) Coordinators cannot leave until all the children are returned to their parents. The location of the parent must be indicated on the Sign In/Out Form.
- xii) If a Coordinator has any concerns whatsoever about the ability of a child to play appropriately or behave themselves they may, at their discretion, refuse to admit a child into Children's Activities or require the presence of the child's parent/legal guardian at all times for the youth to participate.
- xiii) No alcohol of any sort may be present at Children's Activities.
- xiv) The following policies shall be posted prominently at sites offering Children's Activities:

***Age:** Children's Activities are primarily intended for children ages four (4) through eight (8).*

*Children must be toilet-trained and able to dress themselves. Younger or less-able children must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian at all times. (Minors under the age of fourteen are not suitable for child minders for younger children.)*

***Registration:** At public events, such as demonstrations, the parent/legal guardian must remain in attendance at all times. Participants must be signed in./out by a parent or legal guardian and must be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the posted close of the Activity. Children must be attired in simple garb, have minor waivers on file with event registration and must be properly identified with their name and the name of their parents or legal guardian on their person at all times. You must sign-in on the appropriate sign-in sheet, including where you will be on-site. Children must not bring personal articles with them while attending Supervised Children's Activities and the Coordinator will not be responsible for lost, broken or stolen items.*

***Behavior:** Children must be checked on periodically by the parents or legal guardians to ensure their safety and suitable behavior. Parents will be responsible for disciplining their children. Children who are disruptive of the programmed activity will receive one verbal request to stop the specific behavior. Continued disruption will result in the child being returned to the parent. The child may not return to programmed activities without the parent or legal guardian present.*

***Support:** It is requested that parents contribute volunteer hours to Children's Activities. We remind parents that Children's Activities are not a 'child-care' service and is provided as a courtesy to event participants. Children whose parents consistently refuse to assist at Children's Activities may be denied participation in Children's Activities.*

- xv) No lunch or snacks will be provided.

- xvi) Daycare services will not be offered by groups.
  - xvii) Groups will not provide 'overnight' activities unless the child's parent or legal guardian is, at all times, present on site.
- c) Children's Activities at Demos
- i) All policies for Youth Activities must be followed in addition to the following:
  - ii) Non-SCA children must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian at all times
  - iii) Parents of non-SCA children must take them on bathroom runs.
- d) Page School
- i) The policies and procedures for Page School will be outlined in the Page School Charter.
  - ii) The Page School will be administered by the Dean of Pages who will be a deputy of the Minister of Youth.
- e) Policies regarding Youth Activities (ages 9 through 17)
- i) A 'Coordinator' is the volunteer selected by the autocrat to run Youth Activities at a specific event. This individual shall be at least 21 years of age and shall wear a name tag or other item that clearly identifies them as the Coordinator. The Coordinator shall communicate with the Minister of Youth to be sure they know and understand the current policies of the office regarding Youth Activities and kingdom law regarding minors are carried out at the event.
  - ii) Coordinators must have one adult or helper attending a Youth Activity. For groups larger than 10 an addition helper must be present. If Coordinators cannot get the help they need they must not provide Youth Activities, or they must otherwise limit participation until enough help is present (i.e., if you have two adults you limit child participation to ten young people until you get the help of another adult). Exceptions can be made for group sports in which children are playing on a team that requires more people. These helpers must be at least 18 years old. All helpers need to wear identifying name tags or other items that clearly identify them as being associated with helping at Youth Activities.
  - iii) No adult/older teen can ever be alone with a single child during Youth Activities.
  - iv) No alcohol of any sort may be present at any Youth Activity.