

Middle Kingdom

**Youth
Interpretive**



**Program
Guide**

and

Minister of Youth

Handbook

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Forward

From the Kingdom Seneschal

From the Midrealm Minister of Youth

Greetings to all who are supporting Youth Programs in the Midrealm.

This handbook is intended to provide a greater understanding of what the Youth Policy requires for the implementation of non-combat related programs. It provides guidance in planning youth and children's activities for events and other group functions. In no case does this document supercede the Youth Policy, it supplements it. A large portion of the Youth policy is contained in this text, broken out in a topical fashion.

The handbook also provides instructions for Ministers of Youth throughout the Kingdom to carryout their office (or Seneschals where there is no Minister of Youth). At the end you will find the forms required for use at events.

I hope you find this Implementation Guide and Handbook useful. Please contact me if you have questions on the Youth Programs.

In Service,

Nicholaa Halden, Midrealm Minister of Youth
August 6, 2004

2. Middle Kingdom Youth Programs Policies

General Policy: The purpose of Youth Programs within the Middle Kingdom is;

- a) To encourage the education of youth about the SCA and Medieval and Renaissance history.
- b) To establish methods through which the youth of the SCA can become more fully involved in SCA activities appropriate to their age and ability.
- c) 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.
- d) 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.
- e) No alcohol of any sort may be present at any Youth /Children’s Activities.
- f) *Participation in Youth and Children’s Activities and Page School 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.*
- g) *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.*
- h) ***Inappropriate behavior of any sort by any party involved in Youth or Children’s Activities will be dealt with in the manner deemed most appropriate in accordance with modern, corporate or kingdom law as applicable.***

Scope

This policy applies to all designated activities for minors sponsored at an official Midrealm SCA event, meeting or otherwise listed activity.

3. Officer, Parent and Minors Responsibilities

1. **Midrealm Minister of Youth:**

- a. To establish and oversee Kingdom Youth activities outside of martial endeavors. Youth Combat policies and procedures are reserved to the martiallate.
- b. To keep local officers and the Seneschalate notified of relevant changes to the office, and facilitate communications between all other youth oriented offices.
- c. To be responsible for official SCA youth-related web sites in the Midrealm.
- d. To maintain the Midrealm Page School
- e. To oversee and aid Regional/local group officers for Activities for Minors.
- f. Reports to the Kingdom Seneschal as a special deputy.

2. Local Officers, Other Youth Officers, Event Staff

- a. The local groups are not required to have a local MOY, it is however strongly recommended for groups with significant numbers of children.
- b. For all groups without a local youth officer, the office of the Seneschal(s) shall be responsible for the duties of the office. (See section 12 on Local and Regional Minister of Youth)
- c. Youth combat activities (archery, boffer, armored & rapier) are under the jurisdiction of the office of Earl Marshall and designated Special Deputies.
- d. Group and Event Staff -Are encouraged to incorporate youth activities in event planning and other group activities. When planning youth activities the requirements of the Youth Policy must be met.

3. Parents

- a. **Parents are first, most and last, responsible for the supervision, care and well being of their children attending SCA activities.**
- b. Shall complete minor waivers as required for their minor children attending events.
- c. Are responsible at all times for their minor's behavior at events and other SCA activities.
- d. May not leave their minor children unattended at an event. (I.E as in leaving an event site with out their minor(s) and there is no other designated adult supervision provided by the parent(s)).

Discipline Problems

Coordinators and their staff may not strike or yell at a child even if a child is a discipline problem (disruptive, sulky, crying, 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 himself 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.

Support: *It is requested that parents contribute volunteer hours to Youth/Children's Activities. We remind parents that Youth/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 Youth/Children's Activities may be denied participation in Youth/Children's Activities.*

4. Minors

- a. Minors shall not attend events without adult supervision. If a minor is attending an event with an adult not their parent or legal guardian, the SCA Medical Authorization for Minors form must be completed, notarized and presented at the event along with a completed Minor Waiver.
- b. Are encouraged to participate in any or all age appropriate SCA education, service, combat and related activities.
- c. Will exhibit appropriate behavior at all times and will be respectful both of adults providing supervision, training and education as well as fellow youth members.
- d. If old enough to be without immediate parental supervision they shall be able to tell an other adult their parent(s) SCA name, Legal name, who is responsible for supervising them and where they can be found.

Behavior:

- a) *Children must be checked on periodically by the parents or legal guardians to ensure their safety and suitable behavior.*
- b) *Parents will be responsible for disciplining their children.*
- c) *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.*

4. Page School

1. The policies and procedures for Page School will be outlined in the Page School Charter.
2. The Page School will be administered by the Dean of Pages who will be a deputy of the Midrealm Minister of Youth.

5. Youth and Children's Activities at Demos

All policies for Youth/Children's Activities must be followed in addition to the following:

1. Non-SCA children must be accompanied by a parent/legal guardian at all times
2. Parents of non-SCA children must take them on bathroom runs.

6. Youth and Children's Classes

This section applies to formal classroom settings (i.e. RUM, etc)

1. There will be at least two adults present in each classroom conducting formal classes. (Where there are only two adults present they shall not be members of the same legal family.)
2. One adult can be the instructor. (Note- instructors can be minors)
3. A coordinator does not need to be present in each classroom. The coordinator must periodically check on the classroom activities.

4. Where the number of students present exceeds the number of children per adult/helper ratio for the age group, the coordinator must otherwise limit participation until enough help is present or additional helpers/parents need to be present.

7. First Aid

If a child is ill, 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.

8. Day Care

1. There is to be no day care provided at any official Midrealm events or activities. This is the policy due to laws and regulations. There will be no exceptions.
2. Parents are free to engage babysitters for their own children.
3. Event staff can set aside a children's area and encourage parents to form a co-op to watch children. A parents' co-op is unofficial and up to the parents to maintain.

9. Policies regarding Children's Activities (ages 4 through 8)

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

- a) 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.
- b) *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/helpers for younger children.)*

2. Registration:

- a) *At public events, such as demonstrations, the parent/legal guardian must remain in attendance at all times.*
- b) *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.*
- c) *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.*
 - a. Note- Nametags do not need to be visible if there is a concern over others knowing the name of the child. The name tag can be folded in half with the information on the inside of the tag, the

tag can be pinned inside a sleeve, etc., or other similar token with the information can be provided. The important thing is that the child and their parents/guardian be readily identified in case of an emergency or other issues where the parents need to be contacted.

- d) *Parents must sign-in on the appropriate sign-in sheet, including where parents will be on-site.*
- e) *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.*

3. Activities --*The following policies shall be followed and posted prominently at sites offering Children's Activities:*

- a) Coordinators must have one adult or helper to every five (5) children attending a youth activity with a minimum of two adults. (Where there are only two adults present they shall not be members of the same legal family.) 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 where children are playing on a team that requires more people. These helpers must be at least 14 years old. Helpers cannot be left in charge of Children's Activities. All helpers need to wear identifying nametags or other items that clearly identify them as being associated with helping at Children's Activities.
- b) Minors under the age of 14 are not suitable helpers.
- c) 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.
- d) Children can never be left unattended by an adult when the children are participating in a Children's Activity.
- e) Children must wear nametags with their names and that of their parents/legal guardian clearly printed on it.
- f) 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.
- g) 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.

- h) Coordinators and their staff may not strike or yell at a child even if a child is a discipline problem (disruptive, sulky, crying, abusive), even if the parent verbally told you this is 'okay'.
- i) If a Coordinator has any concerns what so ever 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 child to participate.
- j) It is not the responsibility of any activity to provide lunch or snacks. For those activities that involve food such as Children's Feasts or crafts with food it is the parent's responsibility to determine whether or not the child can participate.

10. Policies regarding Youth Activities (ages 9 through 17)

1. Registration:

- a) *At public events, such as demonstrations, the parent/legal guardian must remain in attendance at all times.*
- b) Coordinators must use a sign-in sheet for youth activities. No child can participate without having their parent/legal guardian signing them in.

2. Activities

- a) Coordinators must have one additional adult attending a Youth Activity. (Where there are only two adults present they shall not be members of the same legal family.) For groups larger than 10 additional helpers 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.
- b) Coordinators and their staff may not strike or yell at a child even if a child is a discipline problem (disruptive, sulky, crying, abusive), even if the parent verbally told you this is 'okay'.
- c) If a Coordinator has any concerns what so ever about the ability of a child to play appropriately or behave themselves they may, at their discretion, refuse to admit a child into Youth Activities or require the presence of the child's parent/legal guardian at all times for the youth to participate.
- d) No adult/older teen can ever be alone with a single child during Youth Activities.
- e) It is not the responsibility of the activity to provide lunch or snacks. For those activities that involve food such as Children's Feasts or crafts with food it is the parent's responsibility to determine whether or not the child can participate.

11. Web Sites

1. Official Midrealm Youth Web Sites must be approved by the Midrealm MOY and will be checked periodically for content.
2. Official Youth related web sites will not contain contact information for members under the age of 18.
3. The Midrealm Youth Web Site is;
<http://www.midrealm.org/mkyouth/index.html> This site contains contact information for Youth officers, the Midrealm Youth Policy (full text), resources and other youth related information.

12. Ministers of Youth- Regional & Local

The Minister of Youth is not a required office at the local level. Where there are a significant number of young people in the local group and/or attending events hosted by the local group this position is highly recommended.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) Ministers of Youth (MOY) are charged with the encouragement, promotion and development of youth programs in the area under their jurisdiction.
- b) Provide resources, suggestions and assistance to those individuals providing youth/children's activities.
- c) Communicate and coordinate with other youth and group officers concerning youth/children's issues and activities.
- d) Be familiar with the Midrealm Youth Policy and Midrealm Youth Website.

2. Reporting

- a) Local and Regional MOY are required to report to their superior officer twice yearly as directed by the Midrealm MOY.
- b) Reporting schedule is posted on the MOY Web Site.
- c) Local MOY report to their regional officer, Regional to the Midrealm MOY.
- d) Basic reporting information should include; name of reporting officer, contact information, Youth activities and awards for the reporting period, issues and concerns relating to the office, planned future activities. Regional officers will incorporate information in the local reports in their reports.
- e) Reports can be sent either paper copy or e-mail. Copies of the MOY reports should also be provided to the your local or regional Seneschal.

3. Officer Changes

- a) Incoming local MOY officers should provide a copy of the Officers Change form to the Regional MOY when they take office (forms are available from your seneschal)
- b) Regional officers are selected through an application process. Position openings will be posted in the Pale in the Seneschal and/or MOY letters. Letters of interest and qualifications will be accepted. The Kingdom Seneschal and Midrealm MOY will make selection of the new regional MOY jointly.

13. Definitions

Adult – Individual 18 years or older.

Autocrat – Person or persons in charge of running an event. May also be referred to as the Event Steward.

Combat Activities - Youth Combat includes Archery/Thrown Weapon, Boffer & Youth Heavy Combat and Rapier.

Coordinator - A 'Coordinator' is the volunteer selected by the autocrat to run Youth Activities at a specific event. This individual shall be at least 18 years of age to supervise children 8 and younger and 21 years of age to supervise those children 9 and older. They shall wear a nametag or other item that clearly identifies them as the Coordinator. The Coordinator shall communicate with the Local, Regional or Midrealm Minister of Youth, as appropriate, 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.

Helpers – Assist coordinators of youth activities. Minors under the age of 14 are not suitable helpers. Helpers cannot be left in charge of Children's Activities. All helpers need to wear identifying nametags or other items that clearly identify them as being associated with helping at Children's Activities. Helpers for non-combat related youth activities are required to be 18 years old.

In attendance – on site at the event.

Minors – All individuals below the age of 18 years.

MOY – Minister of Youth

Non-SCA children – Children of parents who are not members in a local or regional SCA group.

14. Forms

Forms

The following forms are for use at Official Midrealm events and activities for Youth and Children's activities.

1. The Poster must be provided and posted in a conspicuous location, usually at Troll or activity sign in and at the location for Youth/Children's activities.
2. The sign in sheet and nametags are provided for your convenience. If you choose to use different forms they need to contain the same information. At the end of the event or activity the forms must be turned in to the Autocrat or Local Seneschal.

Children's Activities EVENT Poster

The following policies shall be posted prominently at sites offering Children's Activities:

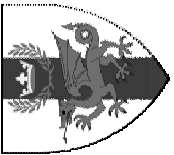
Age: *Children's Activities are primarily intended for children ages four (4) through eight (8).*

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.)

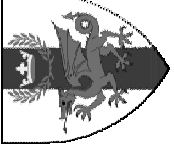
Registration: *At public events, such as demonstrations, the parent/legal guardian must remain in attendance at all times. Participants must be signed in./out by a parent or legal guardian and must be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the posted close of the Activity. Children must be attired 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.*















Midrealm Youth/Children's Activity Sign in Sheet



Event Name _____ Group Name _____
 Event Location _____ City _____ County _____ State _____ Date _____
 Activity Coordinator _____ Adult Helper _____
 Additional Helpers (as/if Required) _____

	Child's Name	Age	Allergies/ Medical Conditions	Parent(s) Name	Parent's Location on site
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					

Nametags

<p>YOUTH/CHILDREN ACTIVITIES</p>  <p>Coordinator</p>	<p>ADULT HELPER</p>  <p>YOUTH/CHILDREN ACTIVITIES</p>	<p>ADULT HELPER</p>  <p>YOUTH/CHILDREN ACTIVITIES</p>
<p>YOUTH/CHILDREN HELPER</p>  <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>	<p>YOUTH/CHILDREN HELPER</p>  <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>	<p>YOUTH/CHILDREN HELPER</p>  <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>
 <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>	 <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>	 <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>
 <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>	 <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>	 <p>CHILD'S NAME</p> <p>PARENT(S) NAME</p>