

ADENDUM 1

Program Plan for AMC Chapter Youth Programs As Amended Through May 7, 2010

(Highlighted changes represent modifications to the policy approved by AMC Board of Directors on May 7, 2010)

Overview

This document describes the Chapters Committee's requirements for Chapter Youth Programs (CYPs) including program operation and oversight, procedures for approving youth group agencies and youth program trips, the content of Sponsorship Agreements between the AMC and youth group agencies, leadership requirements, leadership training standards, and a process for resolving incidents arising from youth program trips. These requirements and guidelines are to be met in addition to the Leadership Requirements and Guidelines established by the Outdoor Leadership Development Committee (OLDC), which became mandatory on October 1, 2004.

These requirements and recommendations apply to programs designed for youth agency participants principally in the 6-18 age group. These programs are a collaboration between a sponsoring youth group agency (such as the YMCA) and the AMC in which AMC volunteers share their skills with youth agency participants and attendant staff for outdoor experiences.

Program Operation and Oversight

AMC Chapter Youth Program Roles

CYP activities will report to a Chapter Youth Program Team. The AMC CYP Team is a standing committee consisting of AMC CYP Coordinators, an AMC staff member, and possibly others as needed. The team's responsibilities include monitoring trips for compliance, working with chapters to support youth programs and resolve problems, coordinating as needed with AMC's Outdoor Leadership Development Committee (OLDC), and providing periodic reports as deemed appropriate. This team will foster cooperation between volunteers and staff, will ensure significant volunteer involvement in the management of chapter youth programs, and will allow the full range of the club's risk management and program expertise to be brought to bear in support of chapter youth programs. During its initial phase this team should focus exclusively on volunteer-led youth programs. The AMC CYP Chair will perform most of the team's activities. The AMC staff member will monitor the work of the team and serve as a resource and liaison.

The Chapter Youth Program Coordinator is a chapter volunteer who oversees AMC volunteer-led youth programs within the chapter. All chapters that wish to take part in the CYP must have a designated CYP Coordinator. The CYP Coordinator will provide appropriate documentation to the AMC's Youth Opportunities Program Director for review of new Youth Group Agencies. The AMC's Risk Management Department will oversee sponsorship agreement forms, maintain valid certificates of insurance from sponsoring agencies, and act as the initial point of contact for resolving problems. The Chapter Youth Program Coordinator

will be approved by the AMC PRESIDENT or his/her designee. THE PRESIDENT OF AMC IS THE FINAL AUTHORITY WITH RESPECT TO INTERPRETATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL CYP POLICIES AND PROGRAMS.

The CYP Agency and Trip Approval Process

Youth Group Agency Approval Process

CYP trips are “sponsored” by the youth agencies, not the AMC or an AMC chapter. This means that the youth agencies are primarily responsible for the trips, the conduct of the participants, and any decisions made. The Chapter (and the AMC) participates only as an outdoor leadership advisor. While the AMC/Chapter may assist the sponsor in planning and conducting the trip, the sponsor must be ultimately responsible for the trip.

1. No activities may be initiated with an agency until the agency is approved by the AMC's Youth Opportunities Program Director. The AMC Executive Director or his/her designee retains final authority to approve or disapprove an agency. Such approvals are valid for one year.
2. Once an agency is approved, a Sponsorship Agreement Form must be signed by both the CYP Coordinator and an authorized Youth Group Agency representative for each trip. This agreement establishes the relationship of the parties and acknowledges the limited role played by the AMC/Chapter and cannot be altered by either the Chapter or the Youth Agency.
3. For each trip, the Youth Group Agency signs the sponsorship agreement and returns it to the CYP Coordinator.
4. The CYP Coordinator submits copies of the signed Sponsorship Agreement to the AMC CYP Team chair and AMC's Risk Management Department.
5. The original Sponsorship Agreement is held by the CYP Coordinator.

Youth Group Agency Termination Process

The relationship between the AMC and the Youth Group Agency may be terminated at any time by an authorized representative of the Youth Group Agency, the Chapter Chair, the CYP Coordinator, or an authorized AMC representative. A provision to this effect should be included in all Sponsorship Agreements.

A letter detailing the reasons for termination and signed by the revoking person should be sent to the Youth Group Agency, the Chapter Chair, the CYP Coordinator, and the AMC CYP Team and staff representative. Once a relationship between the AMC and the Youth Group Agency has been terminated, no further activities should be permitted even if already scheduled.

Trip Approval Process

CYP Trips are hiking based (including snowshoeing), short term activities and stewardship projects. Any chapter seeking to conduct activities outside the definition must receive approval from AMC's Risk Management Manager. Criteria considered prior to additional approvals include chapter training requirements and industry standard related to the proposed activity and leader qualification standards.

Provided the approval for the specific trip is granted the task force recommends that these steps be followed for approving a CYP trip:

1. The trip proposal is developed by approved CYP leaders and an approved Youth Group Agency.
2. The leader submits the trip proposal to the CYP Coordinator.
3. The CYP Coordinator reviews and makes a decision about whether or not to approve the trip proposal. The coordinator should review the proposal for compliance with this document and any additional chapter restrictions. If approval is denied, the leader(s) should be contacted for discussion.
4. The CYP Coordinator submits approved descriptions to the AMC CYP Team for its records. The chair(s) of the team and/or AMC's Risk Management staff should review the trip for compliance with this document. The task force envisions that the CYP Team will monitor all proposals for compliance, but will not be part of the initial approval process.

Sponsorship Agreements

Agreements between CYPs and local youth organizations are required before any trips are scheduled. These agreements should be arranged with the appropriate program director in the branch with which the chapter makes contact. The form of agreement, including the AMC Volunteer Release Agreement is specified by the AMC and cannot be modified by any party. The agreement also outlines the trip or event details.

Examples of specific “event details” to include in the Sponsorship Agreement:

- Establish safety as the primary concern in all outings, and inform about risks
- Define what equipment AMC can and cannot supply
- Agree upon the appropriate number of youth agency staff people to attend the trip so that adult/youth ratios is at least 1:8 (or the chapter can define a higher ratio of adults to children such as 1:4)
- Arrange upon the maximum number and the appropriate ages of potential participants
- Provide a pre-trip planning information sheet for participants and their parents/guardians as well as youth workers which should include dates, location of trip, what to bring, food information, weather considerations, difficulty level, what to expect, rules, and risk
- Clear instructions about cancellation (weather related or otherwise)
- Define contacts for both the Chapter and the Youth Agency

CYP Leaders and Non-Contact Roles

AMC Volunteers may serve CYPs in a variety of roles that can be defined in terms of whether or not the individual volunteer has direct contact with youth.

Non-Contact Roles:

These are defined as volunteer positions where the volunteer **never** comes in contact with youth. For example, someone who takes on administrative tasks like logistical planning, fund raising, or initial outreach to youth agencies. Volunteers in these roles need only have the qualifications of their specific role, and they must never have contact with youth.

Leadership Roles (Volunteer has contact with Youth)

CYP Leaders

CYP leaders must meet the following requirements in addition to those outlined in AMC's Leadership Requirements and Guidelines:

1. Leaders must BE in good standing. Any leader whose leadership status has been rescinded by any Club unit for safety and/or quality problems must be reviewed by OLDC prior to reinstatement as a leader in the same or any other AMC unit.
2. Leaders must be currently certified in appropriate CPR and must provide a copy of their CPR certification to their chapter CYP Coordinator.
3. Leaders must be currently certified in appropriate First Aid and must provide a copy of their First Aid certification to their chapter CYP Coordinator.
4. Leaders must complete initial training in working with youth as described below and consistent with training provided for leaders of staff-run youth programs. Leaders must participate in refresher training every two years thereafter.
5. Leaders must serve an apprenticeship or demonstrate equivalent experience before leading any chapter youth programs. All prospective leaders must serve as a co-leader on at least three other youth trips before taking on the primary leadership role. In chapters establishing a new CYP Program, Risk Management staff and the CYP Coordinator will work to establish a mechanism to qualify first time CYP Leaders.
6. Leaders must satisfy industry-standard requirements for criminal background checks.
7. Leaders must participate in an interview and provide 2 references.
8. Leaders must be trained in acting as mandatory reporters of abuse or neglect.

Leader Helper Role (Has Contact with Children)

Volunteers in this role are not qualified to take youth on excursions without a fully qualified leader present. They may be in training to become a leader, or may just prefer the "Helper" role. Each chapter will determine the complete qualifications a leader helper will need to have in addition to the following required qualifications:

Any volunteer who has contact with youth as part of a CYP must:

1. Be accompanied by a qualified CYP Leader.
2. Have undergone and passed a Criminal Background Check.
3. Have completed AMC's CYP Leader Training (described below).

Leadership Training

The objective of CYP leadership training is to ensure that AMC volunteer leaders, program planners, and others who come in contact with youth are adequately trained in specific leadership skills, specialized requirements for working with youth, and a general understanding of CYP objectives. This training will be organized through CYP committee leaders and AMC staff and will be based on and use the best practices of current AMC youth program training programs.

1. Risk Management Skills (minimum requirements):
 - A discussion on weighing an activity's risk vs. the program's mission
 - A discussion on informed consent, what that means and how do you accomplish it with minors
 - Communicating to participants behavioral expectations, risks, itinerary, expected conditions
 - Communicating lost and alone procedures
 - Procedures for lightning
 - How to provide an opportunity for participants to ask questions about forms and/or the trip
 - Training on an emergency action plan
 - Training on all minimum standards set by the CYP (leader gear, participant gear, specific activity requirements, etc.)
 - Use of forms and their confidentiality (liability and emergency) – post program form storage
 - Review of Drug and Alcohol policies with minors
 - Review Protection and recognition of Abuse
 - Simple record keeping for Sponsorship Agreements, incident reports, etc.
2. Overall Leadership Skills:
 - Communicating, especially learning to listen
 - Giving and receiving feedback, with particular focus on young people
 - Valuing people and leveraging diversity
 - Coaching and mentoring young people
 - Developing teams, with particular focus on the outdoors
 - Situational leadership, with particular focus on outdoor situations
 - Managing conflict and change
 - Celebrating success
 - Supervising specialized activities
 - Handling disciplinary situations
 - Project planning and problem solving
3. Training in Special Skills Needed to Work with Youth Protection Policies:
 - No isolated one-to-one contact with children (i.e., never be alone with a child)
 - Respect for privacy
 - Proper preparation

- Proper attire
- Constructive discipline (what you can and can't do...should and shouldn't do)
- Hazing, no secret organizations
- Special overnight situations including separate accommodations and two-day leadership situations
- Responding to disclosures
- Parental involvement
- Special skills for leading children

Recognition of Abuse:

- Definition and typology of abuse
- Signs of physical abuse
- Signs of neglect
- Signs of sexual abuse or molestation
- Reporting mechanisms

4. General CYP Program and Specific Activity Training
 - How does the group move through the woods? How many participants are appropriate? Are there guidelines for hiking distance and pace?
 - How do you maintain order? How will different age groups interact internally and with other age groups?
 - What safety precautions should be taken?
 - How do you handle emergencies?
 - What equipment should the leader carry?
 - What equipment is the child expected to have? Water? Special boots? Clothing? Warmth? Raingear?
 - What will the requirements be for food?
 - How can "Leave No Trace" concepts be included?
 - How can an educational component be included in the hike? Conservation principles? Naturalist observation? Getting kids to think outside their comfort zones?

5. CYP Program Start-up Training
 - Working with outside agencies
 - Managing costs and expenses
 - Arranging transportation
 - Understanding legal issues
 - Procuring and developing leaders
 - Working with AMC staff
 - Performing background checks
 - Understanding specific reporting requirements
 - Developing Sponsorship Agreements

Process for Resolving Incidents

The task force recommends the following minimum steps for resolving incidents:

1. All incidents should be reported immediately and confidentially to the CYP Coordinator who should follow AMC's prescribed emergency response and incident reporting procedures.

2. The CYP Coordinator should obtain reports from both the CYP leader who ran the trip and the associated agency. All reported incidents should be documented using the *AMC Incident Report Form*.
3. The CYP Coordinator, the Chapter Chair, and the AMC staff representative to the CYP Team should jointly determine whether or not the incident should be resolved at the chapter level. For incidents to be resolved at the chapter level, the CYP Coordinator shall keep the AMC staff representative to the CYP Team continually updated on proposed actions, progress, final resolution, *etc.* The Executive Director or his/her designee retains final authority to determine who is to resolve an incident.
4. For incidents not able to be resolved at the chapter level, the Chapter Youth Program Coordinator should provide a report to the AMC CYP Team, including:
 - The initial report,
 - The reports from the CYP leader and the Youth Group Agency, and
 - The details of any proposed resolution.
5. The AMC CYP Team should then determine an appropriate resolution.

Provision of Essential Equipment

It is the responsibility of the Youth Group Agency and trip participants to provide essential equipment. AMC leaders of a CYP trip shall advise the agency of what equipment is considered essential for the trip. AMC leaders may withdraw from a trip at any time before the start of the trip if, in their opinion, the equipment provided by the agency or brought by the participants is inadequate or inappropriate and compromises the safety of the trip.

ADDENDUM 2

June 16, 2010

Proposed changes related to cases of suspected abuse or neglect to the

Program Plan for AMC Chapter Youth Programs

First section to be changed:

CYP Leaders

CYP leaders must meet the following requirements in addition to those outlined in AMC's Leadership Requirements and Guidelines:

8. Leaders must be trained in acting as mandatory reporters of abuse or neglect. It is AMC's policy that leaders will report all cases of suspected abuse whether or not there is a statutory requirement to do so.

Second section to be changed:

3. Training in Special Skills Needed to Work with Youth

Recognition of and response to suspected abuse:

- Overview of types of abuse
- Expectations of AMC Volunteers as mandatory reporters
- Reporting mechanisms