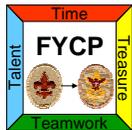
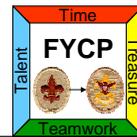


Designing an Amazing First Year Camper Program

NER Outdoor Program Seminar

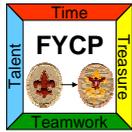
Andrew Miller

Chair, NER First Year Camper Program Task Force
amiller [at] pioneeringprojects.org



Outline

- Purpose/Mission
- Customers
- Four Keys to FYCPs
- Guiding Principles
- Resources
- Group Discussion

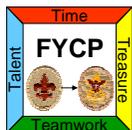


Purpose

- Why First Year Camper Programs?
- *The Purpose of the First Year Camper Program is to provide Scouts with a fun, exciting program that instills in them the Ideals of Scouting, prepares them to be an active member of their troop, and gives them the opportunity to advance in rank.*

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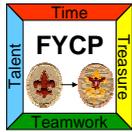


Customers

- Scoutmaster
 - Responsible for advancement and well-being of Scouts
- Parent
 - Wants best possible experience for son
- Scout
 - Wants to have *fun*
- Council
 - Wants to increase retention rates

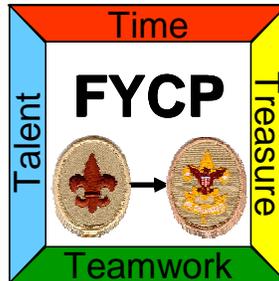
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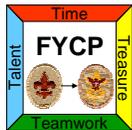
Keys to Success

Time—Talent—Treasure—Teamwork



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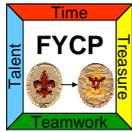


Keys to Success: Time

- How do you fill the time?
 - Rank Requirements
 - Merit Badges
 - Ideals
 - Methods
 - Camp Lore
 - Camp Program Areas
- What time do you have to fill?
 - Mornings
 - Afternoons
 - Combination

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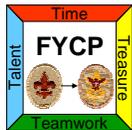


Rank Requirements

- “Meat and Potatoes” of FYCPs
- Grouped into broad topics
 - Citizenship
 - Camping
 - Cooking
 - Woods Tools
 - Map and Compass
 - Knots and Lashings
 - First Aid
 - Aquatics

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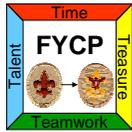


Merit Badges

- Age-appropriate
 - Yes: Swimming, Handicrafts, Nature
 - No: First Aid, Wilderness Survival, Pioneering
- Sense of accomplishment

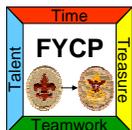
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Ideals

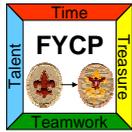
- Oath, Law, Motto, Slogan
- Teach “covertly”



Methods

- Patrol Method, Uniform, etc.
- Teach by example

- Also, think Leave No Trace

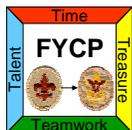


Camp History/Lore

- What makes your camp great?
- Special areas of camp

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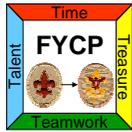


Camp Program Areas

- Learn more about the activities offered at camp
- What can each area offer the First Year Campers?
- Why should they want to return for a second year? What cool stuff can they do? Third year? Fourth year? CIT? Staff?

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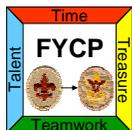


Keys to Success: Talent

- Staff
 - Camper:Staff ratio (10:1)
 - Qualifications/experience
- Training
 - Pre-camp
 - Staff week

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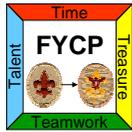


Keys to Success: Treasure

- Program Materials
 - Proper quantity
 - Proper quality
- Training
 - NER FYCP NCS: Camp Resolute

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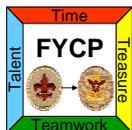
Keys to Success: Teamwork

- First Year Camper *Experience*
- Retention is everybody's job
- Interaction between program areas

- FYCP Models:
 - Self-contained
 - Fully-matrixed
 - Hybrid

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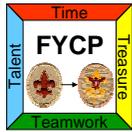


Guiding Principles

- Time/Talent/Treasure/Teamwork is useful, but how do we structure what we do?
 - There's not enough time to do everything!
- Using our Purpose, we construct Guiding Principles that form the basis of our program
 - Purpose recap:
 - *Fun, exciting program*
 - *Instills in them the Ideals of Scouting*
 - *Prepares them to be an active member of their troop*
 - *Gives them the opportunity to advance in rank.*

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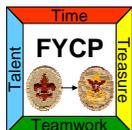


Guiding Principles: Defining

- What are Guiding Principles?
 - Guiding Principles are statements of value that allow us to create a FYCP based on what we believe is important (i.e., value).
- Examples
 - *The purpose of the First Year Camper Program is to prepare a Scout to be an active participant in the activities of his troop.*
 - *“The patrol system is not one method in which Scouting for boys can be carried on. It is the only method.” –Sir Robert Baden-Powell*
 - *The purpose of summer camp is to supplement, not replace, the Troop’s advancement program.*
 - *First Aid is a truly important skill.*
 - *Cooking is an integral part of camping and need not be difficult.*
 - *Swimming is a critical skill for boys at this age.*
 - *Scouts need to have a sense of accomplishment.*
 - *Scouts need to have fun!*

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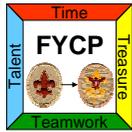


Guiding Principles: Describing

- We need to explain what our sound-bite principles mean
 - *The purpose of the First Year Camper Program is to prepare a Scout to be an active participant in the activities of his troop.*
 - The First Year Camper Program focuses on more than just rank requirements; it teaches the Scout about the structure of a Troop and the Patrol Method as well. Every day begins with a Troop Meeting, in which the Scout is part of a model troop.
 - *Swimming is a critical skill for boys at this age.*
 - Every scout should be a swimmer (or a better swimmer) by the end of his first week of Boy Scout summer camp. An hour of swimming instruction is a key part of the daily schedule for each patrol. Scouts who complete the swimmer test upon arrival at camp are enrolled in a swimming merit badge period. Others are enrolled in an instructional swim session. The First Year Camper Program troop guide coordinates with the camp’s aquatics staff to support the daily swim period for his patrol.

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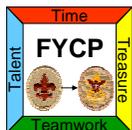
Guiding Principles: Building Blocks

From brief description to program definition:

- *The purpose of summer camp is to supplement, not replace, the Troop's advancement program.*
 - This “guiding principle” has implications for the rank requirements that the program teaches.
 - The FYCP should avoid requirements that a Troop can easily do on its own, such as an overnigher or showing up properly outfitted for a camping trip.
 - The FYCP should concentrate on requirements that are more difficult for the Troop to cover, such as a five-mile hike with map and compass, sharpening an ax, and a one-mile orienteering course.
 - The big point, though, is that the First Year Camper Program *does not* need to cover all rank requirements. Some don't make sense in a Summer Camp setting, others are done by a normal Troop during the course of their regular program (e.g., an overnigher).
 - **You have a limited amount of time in which to teach skills; teach the skills that provide the greatest value to the Troop.**

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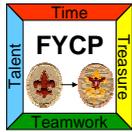


Guiding Principles: Personalizing

- What Guiding Principles fit your camp and council?
- Planning your program based on Guiding Principles allows for a rational discussion about your FYCP
 - An end to “this is how we've always done it”

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Resources

- NER FYCP NCS Section: April 20-22, 2007—Camp Resolute
- NER FYCP Website:
<http://www.pioneeringprojects.org/NCS/>
- First Year Camper Program Guide (162 pages, free):
<http://ajm.pioneeringprojects.org/FYCPG.htm>
- National First-Time Camper Program Guide: #33498A (restricted)

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Questions? Comments?

(Those interested in joining the NER
FYCP Task Force should contact
Andrew Miller or Doug Fullman)

