



YLA Advisors

Advisor Job Description

Welcome To A Wonderful Opportunity To Help Young People and Your Community!

You are key to the success of YLA in your community. Thank you for sharing your talents, skills, interest, and time with the young people in YLA.

You've got a real job ahead . . . one that doesn't pay anything except the satisfaction of knowing you're helping young people grow into lifelong better citizens of the community.

This YLA Handbook provides much of the information and background material you need. We also provide you this Handbook so that the material will always be available to every member of your YLA.

We do not suggest a complete outline for everything your YLA does. We do give basic principles for developing programs and projects that fulfill the purpose of YLA as they meet the needs of your group.

YLA offers an opportunity for you and your members to be creative, original, and to design a program that fits your situation. Successful YLAs combine an active local program with participation in statewide YLA Youth in Government, Fall Conference, Model United Nations, and YLA Camp at Horseshoe.

Young people find YLA a unique experience that empowers them by involving them in the life and work of their school and community. Teens grow, become better persons, transform classroom lessons into real life, and become committed to lifelong good citizenship.

We're here to help. The YLA Leadership Center is dedicated to extending YLA into every community and for YLA to be a national leader in helping youth develop into lifelong good citizens of the community who work to create better futures for all.

Your willingness to be a part of this important work is appreciated. Thank you for all your efforts on behalf of young people and YLA.

Please let us know how we can be of help to you and your YLA.

Ohio-West Virginia Youth Leadership Association YLA Groups, Youth in Government, 8 th Grade Youth & Government Seminars, Model United Nations, Horseshoe, Cave Lake www.yla-youthleadership.org		
Youth Leadership Association 400 Main Street, P.O. Box 239 Pt. Pleasant, WV 25550 P: 304.675.5899 F: 304.675.5977	Cave Lake Leadership Center 1132 Bell Hollow Road Latham, OH 45646 P: 937.588.3252 F: 937.588.3252	Horseshoe Leadership Center 3309 Horseshoe Run Road Parsons, WV 26287 P: 304.478.2481 F: 304.478.4446



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Motivating Teens To Serve

Every Advisor, at one time or another, asks "How can I motivate my YLA (or a particular member) to be active?" While each Advisor usually develops a particular "style" to achieve this, here are a few "basic ideas" on motivation.

If it is important to you, **that alone**, will help make it important to others. Your actions will show that you believe YLA is worthy of effort, commitment, and action.

If you are a person who volunteers your members will see that. Your example of helping others and important needs in your community will speak louder than any words you can say.

Encourage and enable your members to set **their** goals. Make helpful suggestions; encourage long-range planning and structure regular reflection/review/evaluation of your YLA with your Executive Committee and the total membership.

Be "up front" with your members about your expectations concerning YLA. Always remember to examine yourself to make sure you have not created a set of expectations that "impose" impossible goals on others.

Be positive . . . and . . . be an **Encourager**.

YLA Youth in Government, Fall Conference, Model United Nations, Camp Horseshoe, and others are great motivators. Get your officers and members to them! The benefits to your YLA and to your members will be worth every effort you can make.

Continually **motivate** the leaders and "core group" (the ones you "always depend on") to encourage less-active members to become involved. Expand the circle of those you depend on so that in time every member is involved.

People want to help, to be needed, and to make a difference. Get your members into real situations of need where they are helping real people. They may go to help others but they will return having received more than they gave.

Get to know your members as persons. Do not get so caught up in all the mechanics of YLA that you forget to utilize your most valuable asset . . . one-on-one contact!

You Develop Good members and officers by:

Making Realistic Goals

Causing Commitment



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Questions Most Often Asked by YLA Advisors

What Are My Basic Advisor Responsibilities?

Work with the officers, members, Advisory Committee, and YLA Leadership Center to see that your YLA meets the YLA Standards to achieve the YLA Purpose. Have regular planned meetings that involve the members, do meaningful service that meets real school and community needs, help officers and members learn and practice how to be part of a group and conduct group business, take part in state YLA events.

How Much Time Will It Take?

Much will depend on the effectiveness of your officers and members - and your ability to help them learn to be effective. If they are effective, you can expect to invest 5 - 10 hours a month. Participation in state YLA activities requires more.

Do I Attend Every Conference With My YLA?

While it is not required that you personally attend each conference with your students, these activities provide another avenue for you to strengthen your relationship with your students, other advisors and staff, and to gather many new and exciting resources to strengthen your own local program. For those times you cannot attend, ask parents, Advisory Committee, other teachers or school staff to attend. Summer YLA Camp does not require a local adult to attend because we have a summer staff that live and work with the participants.

How Does YLA Pay For Its Projects and Activities?

Each YLA develops its own budget and plan to secure needed funds. Sources of money include member dues, contributions, local sponsorships, fundraisers, and member paid portion of conference fees. Many local organizations, professional groups, and businesses who have an interest in youth and leadership development will provide sponsorship funds for your YLA to attend Youth in Government, United Nations, Fall Conference, and YLA Camp. Have your members ask and be sure to give follow-up reports and thank-yous.

What About My Expenses?

Help your YLA understand that their budget planning needs to include the cost of adult(s) who take the members to programs and conferences. We try to help by including these costs in sample budgets in the Treasurer's section.

Should YLA Activities Take Place During School Or At Other Times?

You'll probably find your YLA does both. The nature of the activity will determine the location. School policy will be a factor, too. An advantage of varying the location is to give your members exposure to the community and to allow the community to learn about your YLA.



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How Will the Members, The School, The Community, And the Advisor Benefit From YLA?

YLA enables everyone to learn and to grow, to translate ideas into action, to make a lasting difference for good, and to learn how to work together. The community gains a new generation of leaders committed to service. Advisors have a positive relationship with young people, see the results of their effort, expand their contacts with youth and adults, and enhance their own skills, too.

What Training Is Available?

There is time at YLA Fall Conference and other conferences for Advisors to meet and to learn. Occasionally there are YLA Advisor Weekends at Horseshoe and Cave Lake for personal and professional growth experience.

The annual YLA Leadership Camps at Horseshoe give officers, members, and those interested in joining or starting a new YLA training in YLA purpose, program, and organization. Advisors are welcome to attend all or part of YLA Camp.

I'm Interested But I Don't Know How To Do All This. How Do I Get Started?

Just do it. In YLA the Advisors and members learn together. Your job is not to know the answers but to help the members engage in the process. Along the way you'll learn the specifics. What's important is that you can be a supportive and encouraging adult who your members can work with, share with, and learn together.

The YLA Leadership Center is your resource for materials, staff help, advice, and training. Call and we'll help!

"Tips" on Being an Effective Advisor

When starting on a trip to a place we've never been, we often get ideas or "tips" from those who have been there before. Well, here they are . . . ideas or "tips" from years of experience in YLA from those who "have been there".

You've been selected for your interest in young people, the future, your skill in working with youth, and your belief in YLA's purpose. If this describes you, then the following "tips" will fall into place.

Here they are. Most are **BASIC** and worth stating.

1. Meet regularly with your YLA. Your members need you, your guidance, and your support.
2. See that each meeting is planned ahead of time.



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3. Encourage (you may have to teach it first) a little parliamentary procedure. Help your members learn how groups make decisions in a democracy. You'll find your YLA will make better decisions, everyone will know what was decided, and you'll see an improvement in all student groups in your school.
4. Do not do all the talking and do not make all the decisions. Your job is to help involve all members in discussion, decision-making, and planning.
5. Study this YLA Handbook . . . and the annual Yearbook we send you.
6. Keep this Handbook up-to-date. As we send you new or revised materials, add them.
7. Be sure your YLA has a Constitution. A Constitution lays out how your YLA is governed and is to operate. A sample Constitution is in this Handbook.
8. Be sure your YLA Treasurer and Finance Committee have budgeted money to pay Advisor and/or other adult costs for their participation in YLA events and conferences. We've tried to help with this by listing it as an item in the budget in the Treasurer's Section.
9. Explain that YLA is a program of the YLA Leadership Center, operated by the Ohio-West Virginia YLA. YLA means Youth Leadership Association.
10. Mail and Deadlines - Be sure the YLA Leadership Center has the accurate names, addresses, phone numbers of your members and officers (and yours, too!)

Have your YLA's annual Affiliation in to the Leadership Center by October 20.

Secretary reports are due by the 7th of the following month. You'll find other deadlines for conferences and camps, too.

11. Help the members recognize and accept responsibility for their decisions and their actions.

Take time for your YLA to reflect on their actions and to reach consensus on what to do better.

We spend time planning, time doing, it is equally important to spend time reflecting or reviewing.

Make your strategy . . . "Plan, Do, Review"

12. **Encourage!** That's right. **Encourage!** That's the name of the game. **Encourage** members to grow . . . to grow in responsibility . . . to grow into better citizens . . . **Encourage** each person to become a better person . . . **Encourage** each person and your YLA to make service their top priority . . . **Encourage** everyone to make a lasting difference for good!
13. Be sure "Tip" #12 describes you.



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Advisor's Monthly Checklist

Each YLA creates their own Checklist. Use this as an example of things to include. It is best for all YLAs to elect officers in the spring And have them attend YLA Camp at Horseshoe.

August

_____ Meet with officers to make program and organizational plans, to prepare a budget, appoint committees, review what was learned at YLA Camp and Advisor's Weekend.

_____ Attend YLA Advisor Weekend at Horseshoe . . . you're welcome to bring spouse, children, grandchildren, friend, someone you want to interest in YLA, or - of course - to attend by yourself.

Every Month See That

_____ Executive Committee meets

_____ Standing and Special Committees meet to do their work

_____ Help President set up Agenda

_____ Be sure schedule of meetings is set and announced

_____ Confirm program plans with Vice President

_____ See that your secretary has sent monthly report to the YLA Leadership Center

_____ Announce dates of special events, projects, conferences, etc.

_____ Involve members in meaningful service to the school and community

_____ Submit registrations/materials/fees for YLA Conferences (Youth in Government, Fall Conference, Model United Nations, Horseshoe, etc.)

_____ Take time with officers and the total membership to reflect/review/evaluate with a focus on taking what experience has taught and determining what the group will do differently in the future.



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May

_____ Hold officer elections for next year and send new officer roster to YLA Leadership Center no later than May 20

_____ Send Missions, Honor Application, Annual Reports to YLA Leadership Center by May 20

_____ Submit registration for June's YLA Leadership Summit at Horseshoe

June

_____ Be sure your YLA is represented at YLA Leadership Summit.

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September

_____ See that the Secretary and Membership Committee plan the membership drive (unless done at another time in the year)

_____ Arrange for a member of the YLA Leadership Center staff to meet with you, the members, and the officers

_____ Submit to membership for approval:

year calendar

budget

YLA Missions Goals

plan to achieve Honor Status

membership plan

_____ Announce committee assignments

_____ See that calendar, budget, mission goals, and meeting reports are sent to the YLA Leadership Center

_____ Hold membership drive, new member orientation, current member re-commitment, and officer induction (unless done at another time of the year)

October

_____ See that dues are paid

_____ Submit annual YLA Affiliation and roster to the YLA Leadership Center by October 20

March

_____ Participate in YLA Week

April

_____ See that the President appoints the nominating committee