

# Adult Explorer Leader Basic Training

Self-Study Course





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## Purpose

This self-study course is a program for leaders who cannot attend regular courses.

Group basic training courses and the self-study course are provided so that all Exploring leaders, regardless of their positions, can complete adult Explorer Leader Basic Training.

## Procedure

Your program or service team volunteer will furnish you with a copy of the self-study course. Review the materials list and obtain the recommended literature and videos. Read the purpose of each section of study to determine what knowledge and information you need to gain. Read this course outline carefully and do the recommended reading and assignments (shaded text). Feel free to talk to your program or service team volunteer about any subject you do not understand.

## Certification

The program or service team volunteer must approve the key assignments (shaded text) for course completion. Key assignments include the following:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Understand the purpose of Exploring, page 5.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Understand how the methods of Exploring and the program of emphasis works, page 6.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Identify adolescent developmental issues, page 8.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Understand the structure and function of the post leadership team, page 10, and have updated your post PCI, page 12.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Understand the post program planning process and either have planned the first three months' post program or have updated your current post program for the next three months, pages 12–13.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Prepare for the elected post officers' briefing, page 15.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Complete plans for the post officers' seminar, page 16.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

After your program or service team volunteer has approved your progress, you will receive a training certificate.

Your assigned program or service team volunteer is \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

## Materials Needed

*Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637B  
*Exploring Program Development Guide*, No. 99-266 (See the Appendix.)  
Program Capability Inventory form (PCI) (See the Appendix.)  
Explorer Post New-Advisor kit, No. 99-209

Materials needed for each session are available from your Learning for Life office.

# Session One—Introduction to Exploring

## Purpose

The purpose of this session is to introduce Advisors to the mission of Exploring.

## Materials Needed

*Explorer Leader Handbook*  
*Exploring Program Development Guide* (See the Appendix.)

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## Learning for Life Mission Statement

The mission of Learning for Life is to serve others by helping to instill core values in young people, and in other ways prepare them to make ethical choices throughout their lives so they can achieve their full potential.

Exploring implements this mission by providing opportunities for young adults for interdependency with other young adults and with Advisors like yourself. Through this interdependence as well as the opportunity to be responsible for the post program, Explorers begin to make ethical decisions.

Read the Introduction to the adult leader section in your *Explorer Leader Handbook*. The first paragraph in the righthand column says that the purpose of Exploring “is to provide experiences to help young people . . . become responsible and caring adults.” This self-study guide will provide the building blocks you need to deliver a program that fulfills the mission of Exploring.

## What Is Exploring?

Exploring is part of the Learning for Life career education program for young men and women who are at least 14 years old (and have completed eighth grade) but are not yet 21. The program is operated by participating organizations (local community organizations, businesses, industries, professional organizations, and civic groups) whose program resources match the interests of the young adults.

## Participating Organizations

Participating organizations support their post in three major ways. They provide the following:

- A program capability inventory of adults who are willing to provide program help with careers, hobbies, skills, facilities, and ideas
- Adult leaders who organize the program capability inventory and serve as Advisors to the post’s elected youth leaders
- Meeting facilities

## The Post

The Explorer post is a youth-directed organization that recruits youth participants, elects officers, and plans programs based on the organization’s program capability inventory. Adult Advisors provide training and guidance for the post’s elected officers.

## Learning for Life Committee

Avolunteer Learning for Life committee and professional staff provide the following services for the participating organization's post:

- Leadership training for Advisors and elected officers
- Guidance on how to organize a post and keep the program going successfully
- Methods for recruiting Explorers, including a career interest survey of local high school students
- Regular communication with each post to provide program support
- Use of facilities such as camps and equipment
- Planning districtwide activities that enrich the post's program
- Liability insurance coverage

## Methods of Exploring

These "methods" have been carefully chosen to meet the developmental needs of young adults by providing the basis for voluntary association with responsible adults:

- 1. Voluntary association between youth and adults.** Exploring is voluntary. Youth are receptive to new ideas, experiences, and relationships. For the Explorer, these relationships provide care, a connection to new ways of thinking and acting, and a new identity as a responsible young adult.
- 2. Ethical decision making.** By asking young people to be responsible for themselves, for a program of activity and experiences, and for other people, Exploring provides numerous opportunities for decision making and ethical choices. With the influence of capable adults and structured activities youth learn to make effective and ethical decisions.
- 3. Group activity.** Exploring activities are group experiences. Success or failure is dependent on the cooperation of all.
- 4. Recognition of achievement.** This recognition might come through formal awards, but it also is achieved through the acknowledgment of the young person's competence and ability by peers and adults.
- 5. Democratic process.** Exploring posts provide exposure to democratic ideals and skills that are needed throughout life.
- 6. Exploring is about curiosity, exploration, and adventure.** This happens through new experiences that provide opportunities for new skills and meaningful participation in action-oriented activities.

Read "How to Make These Methods Work in Your Post" in the *Exploring Program Development Guide*. (See the Appendix.)

## Program of Emphasis

Sometimes it is difficult to plan a balanced program. Read “How Are the Five Areas of Emphasis Used in the Program Planning Process?” in the *Program Development Guide*. They are used to help the program meet the needs of the whole person.



- Developing potential contacts that may broaden employment options
- Boosting self-confidence and experiencing success at school and work



- Developing physical and mental fitness
- Experiencing positive social interaction



- Encouraging the skill and desire to help others
- Gaining a keen respect for the basic rights of others



- Helping make ethical choices
- Fulfilling one's responsibility to society as a whole



- Developing leadership skills to fulfill our responsibilities in society
- Providing exposure to different leadership traits

## Responsibilities of the Advisor

Chapter 1 of the adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook* lists the responsibilities of an Advisor. The specific responsibilities of an Advisor include

- Fostering and developing a true sense of community within your Explorer post, an environment that encourages growth and responsibility to one another
- Helping youth lead, plan, make decisions, and carry out a program of activities over an extended period of time
- Encouraging participation and support for your Explorer post from your participating organization, associate Advisors, your post committee, the parents, and other adults in the community
- Protecting the young people in your Explorer post from abuse and neglect and emphasizing youth protection

- Ensuring that activities are conducted within safety guidelines and requirements
- Cultivating within yourself and the youth in your post the capacity to enjoy life, to have fun, and to *explore* as you advise

## Youth Protection

As an Explorer leader, you need to have basic knowledge about the potential for abuse of adolescents and the youth protection policies of Learning for Life that are designed to prevent it. Due to the coeducational nature of Exploring, youth protection takes on added dimensions.

It is important to realize that, although child abuse is sometimes thought to be a problem only for young children, it's not unusual for adolescents to be victims of abuse, whether emotional, physical, or sexual. Therefore, Exploring leaders are obliged to be familiar with the Youth Protection emphasis of Learning for Life.

“Youth Protection Guidelines” in chapter 5 of the adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook* lists several considerations that the Explorer leader must remember:

- There must be two-deep leadership on all trips and on all activities, which means that there must be at least two adults at every post event and activity.
- There must be no one-on-one contact with Explorers. Other Explorers or Advisors must be present.
- Respect the privacy of your Explorers.
- Provide separate accommodations for Advisors and Explorers and for males and females on overnight trips.
- Ensure proper preparation for activities, especially those with safety risks.
- Secret organizations are not permitted.
- Hazing and initiation activities are prohibited.
- Appropriate standards for attire should be upheld.
- Proper training, supervision, and monitoring of officers is necessary.

## Adolescent Developmental Issues

As Advisors we can make a real difference in the lives of the young people in our posts if we are aware of the many developmental issues each Explorer is facing. There are five important developmental issues that Explorers are facing:

- 1. Experimentation.** Explorers want to try out life. They want to experience a variety of social roles, responsibilities, values, and personalities.
- 2. Movement from dependence to interdependence.** Explorers are moving away from being dependent on parents, teachers, and other adults (including Advisors), and moving toward becoming interdependent with them.
- 3. Social relationships.** Quality social interaction with others is as important for Explorers' health and well-being as it will be at any other time in their lives. The meaningfulness and significance of their identity and experiences are in large part created by their social relationships.



4. **Physiological changes and sexual maturity.** Explorers are experiencing great physiological changes that influence their relationships with each other and with adults.
5. **Reevaluation of values.** Exploring-age youth are capable of thinking critically and analytically about their personal, family, and social values, making it possible for them to see inconsistencies in our values and leading to the search for opportunities for commitment to new values.

## **What Explorers Need**

Based on the five developmental issues, what Explorers need from adults and from the program are

- Opportunities for participation and experimentation
- Freedom to make choices
- To learn to care for others
- Enjoyment of life
- New skills
- Opportunities for reflection
- Respect
- Acceptance
- Appropriate role models
- Problem-solving skills
- To be listened to

The Exploring program supports the fulfillment of these youth developmental needs through the following characteristics:

- Opportunities to try leadership roles, responsibilities, and career experiences
- Cooperative relationships between adults and youth
- Real and meaningful responsibilities
- Fun and enjoyable experiences
- New career and personal skills
- An emphasis on caring about others

## **Conclusion**

All of the characteristics we have suggested that Explorers need are often true of us, the Advisors, as well. The recognition of how similar we are to Explorers should make it easier to make connections.

# Session Two—Post Organization and Leadership

## **Purpose**

This session will introduce participants to how an Explorer post is organized.

## **Materials Needed**

*Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637B  
Program Capability Inventory form (PCI) (See the Appendix.)

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## **Introduction**

The key to the success of an Explorer post is informed, enthusiastic leaders and an exciting program of interest. This section discusses the program and the organization of leadership.

## **The Post’s Special Interest**

Every Explorer post has a special interest that is the focus of the program. When the post was started, the participating organization, the Exploring service team, and the adult leaders probably met to choose a special interest. Posts focus on careers such as medicine, law, law enforcement, communications, or fire service.

Some posts avoid a single specialty and give their participants a wide choice of experiences. These posts follow a “specialty” of varied interests. There are three things to remember. First, regardless of specialty, the focus of the program is on action and participation. Engineering posts build things and experiment; medical posts practice first aid or provide needed services; and auto mechanics posts work on cars. Doing things is what makes the program exciting to Explorers.

Second, a balanced program that uses the five areas of program emphasis is our goal.

Third, all of the things we’re about to discuss are designed to implement the mission and values of Exploring discussed in the first session.

## **Adult Leadership Team**

(Locate the “Typical Post Organization Chart” in chapter 3, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.)

When an organization organizes an Explorer post, its leadership agrees to recruit adult volunteer leaders: an Advisor and a post committee of three or more volunteers, one serving as committee chairperson. These leaders must be adult men and women, at least 21 years of age.

## **Post Committee**

The post committee recruits the Advisor and associate Advisors. The committee completes and maintains the PCI, which is discussed later. The committee obtains equipment, approves the post program and helps with fund-raising and financial management. The committee usually meets monthly. Chapter 1 in the youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook* has more information about the committee.

## **Consultants**

Consultants provide technical expertise for the program activities being planned by the Explorer activity committees. They can be one-time-only consultants and are often identified by the PCI. See the index of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*, for more information on consultants.

## **Advisors**

The Advisors are the key to the success of the post. They must match the interests of the Explorers with the program resources of the participating organization. This is achieved by training the post's elected officers to give leadership to their post, and by planning a relevant program guided by the Advisor and post committee. Remember that the word Advisor was chosen carefully. The Advisor is part of a team of adults including associate Advisors, the post committee, and Explorers working to bring about a unique and interesting program. The program will be unsuccessful if it becomes a one-man or one-woman show.

The Advisor does not have to be an expert in the post specialty. He or she must be a good example for youth and be able to train and coach the post's elected officers. He or she must have the full support of the participating organization and there must be one or more associate Advisors and an active committee. There is more information about the Advisor in chapter 1, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.

## **Explorers**

Explorers are young men or women who are at least 14 years of age (and have completed eighth grade) but not yet 21. They pay an annual participation fee and attend regular meetings.

There is a variety of methods for inviting young adults to join Explorer posts. Learning for Life conducts a career interest survey of high school students and provides the names to Explorer post leaders who issue written invitations and follow up by phone. Other methods include securing names from school or community leaders, making school announcements, using recruitment posters, and other typical means of publicity. Eventually, word will get around.

## **Elected Post Officers**

The officers in a post are those Explorers holding elected positions such as those listed in chapter 3, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*. These Explorers are responsible for coordinating the process of planning and implementing the program. There are more complete job descriptions beginning in chapter 1, youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.

## **Activity Chairpersons**

Within the youth participants of the post, activity chairpersons and committees are appointed to carry out specific program activities. This ensures that all post participants are involved in bringing about post program.

## Adult and Explorer Teams

Notice that across the organizational chart there are comparable Explorer and adult positions: The president works closely with the Advisor, the vice presidents work closely with associate Advisors, the Explorer treasurer works closely with the post committee treasurer, and the activity chairperson works closely with consultants. No position is completely independent. Cooperation and teamwork between adults and youth are essential.

## Enrollment Process

Each year your post is asked to enroll. This is an enrollment process in which a fee is charged for each Explorer and for each post. The enrollment process needs to be completed as soon as possible after the first meeting to obtain liability insurance coverage and to receive official information. Enrollment with Learning for Life provides the services and support mentioned earlier in session one.

## Program Capability Inventory

Each Explorer post uses resources from its participating organization and the various adults associated with the post, as well as the surrounding community. The program capability inventory or PCI is a list of information about people who might be helpful in bringing about your program. There is a sample in the Appendix of the adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.

Note that this is only a sample. You should adapt it to your particular needs. Note also that some posts find it helpful to obtain this information through personal conversations rather than allowing people to complete the form themselves. The sample includes their occupation, hobbies, skills, and contacts. When the post is started the PCI information is gathered from the Advisors and other adults associated with the participating organization. The Explorers' parents, people in the community, and even the Explorers themselves can be added later. A participant of the post committee should be assigned to keep the PCI up to date.

## Planning the First Three Months' Program

The PCI is used to plan the first three months' program. A post that is fully operational follows a program planned by the Explorers. If your post is new, there aren't any Explorers to plan the program yet, so you can use the resources from your PCI and devise a program around your post activity and interest area. This program provides some stability in the initial stages of starting a post.

Exploring has developed several program guides. These guides (at [www.learning-for-life.org](http://www.learning-for-life.org)) are designed to be a catalyst and to spark your thought process as you think about the kinds of things that the youth in your post might be interested in doing. Remember, program guides are not the program itself. They are only thought-provoking ideas and activities.

Review and conduct the following program planning process.

## Program Planning Process

**Program capability inventory.** This inventory should be conducted by the post committee and adult Advisors. (See sample PCI in the Appendix of the adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.) List as many people as possible who are associated with the post. Find out their vocations, hobbies, skills, interests, and contacts.

**Activity interest survey.** The PCI shows what a post can do. Now, find out what the youth participants want to do. Survey the youth participants at a post meeting and tally the results. The post officers should design this survey. (See Explorer Activity Interest Survey, chapter 2, youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.)

**Brainstorm.** Brainstorm to bring out ideas that might not be on the survey. (See “How to Brainstorm” in chapter 5, youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.) Sometimes the most creative activities are suggested this way. The brainstorming should involve the total post participation.

**Match activity interests with resources.** Match the Explorer activity interest survey results with the program capability inventory. (See Program Planning Form for PCI Recap in the Appendix of the adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.) Where a suggested Explorer activity matches a resource from the PCI, you have a possible program. The post committee will need to recruit other resources for the remainder of the Explorer activity interests.

**Fill in the gaps.** The post officers might feel that an activity should be included to better balance the post program. These can now be added.

**Schedule the activities.** List each activity on the post’s calendar. Watch out for possible conflicts with other dates.

**Select Explorer chairpersons and adult consultants.** An interested and capable Explorer is appointed to serve as chairperson for each activity and is assisted by an adult consultant from the PCI. (See “Role of the Activity Chair,” chapter 4, youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.)

**Follow-up is vital! Assume nothing!**

# Session Three—Program Planning and Officer Training

## Purpose

This session will teach participants how to train post officers, plan a year's program, and set up procedures for carrying out the program.

## Materials Needed

*Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637B  
Explorer Post New-Advisor kit, No. 99-209

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## Introduction

In the last session we discussed the post organization and initial planning steps. In this session we will discuss how the post organization is used to establish a post and create a program of activities. Remember that we have established a post committee and have selected Advisors. The main activities of the post have been selected, the PCI has been completed, and the first three months of program have been planned. We have also collected a list of possible Explorers.

To organize a post or continue the operation of an existing post, several activities must be accomplished each year:

- The first meeting—exposure to the post for new Explorers
- Election and training of new officers
- Adjustment and planning of post program
- Implementation of post program

## The Open House

Each year, to recruit Explorers in your post, you will want to conduct an open house for new youth participants. This meeting is devoted to showing your post to prospective participants and getting them to join.

Explorers are invited to the open house by letter (sample letter in chapter 3, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*), by phone call, or by personal invitation from friends.

There is a suggested agenda in chapter 3, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*. The open house should tell the prospective participants what the Explorer post is all about, what they can do in your post, how it operates, and how they can join. Remember that hands-on activities are better than lectures. Prospective Explorers should leave the open house with an idea of upcoming events, post meetings, times, and locations.

## Election of Officers

When you are establishing a post, select temporary officers at the open house. These officers will run the post until permanent officers are elected. Some posts elect permanent officers each fall while others hold elections in January. The process starts with the announcement of the election, its procedures, and appointment of three or four post participants as a nominating committee. Their task is to interview prospects and

prepare a slate of officers for nomination. This ensures that nominees are able and willing to serve.

The Advisor reviews the task of each officer with the post, stressing the need for commitment and attendance at all meetings. Post participants interested in running for office are encouraged to contact the nominating committee.

Usually the nominating committee nominates one person for each office. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. If they are seconded, and the person agrees to serve, they are placed on the ballot.

Each nominee may give a short talk on his or her qualifications and desire to serve. The president requests a motion to approve the report of the nominating committee, thus electing those nominated to office. If there are two or more nominees to an office, voting is done by secret ballot.

Those elected take office at the first post meeting the next month. The Advisor conducts a simple installation ceremony, gives them an *Explorer Leader Handbook*, and sets up a time for a post officers' briefing.

## Post Officers' Briefing

As soon as possible after the election, conduct the post officers' briefing. The briefing is the first step in getting a trained, competent group of officers. This is a quick immersion into some of the responsibilities of being an officer. A sample agenda is in chapter 3, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*. Briefly review it before moving on.

Also, the records held by previous officers may be passed on to the new officers at this time.

The officers' briefing is the time to establish the climate and values that you think are important, like the emphasis on being in partnership with the officers, enthusiasm and fun, trust and responsibility. It is also the time to get officers involved in implementing the first three months' program.

## Post Officers' Meetings

The officers usually meet once a month. The meeting is conducted by the president and the agenda includes

1. Review of plans for next month
2. Any business items related to membership, finance, or post operation
3. Activity chairpersons' report
4. Minutes of last meeting
5. Financial report
6. Review of youth participants—contacting those who are not coming or recruiting new youth participants
7. Reviewing the calendar for the next three months
8. Advisor's comments

Remember you are an Advisor, not the director. Your job is to coach the officers through these experiences. Try to think about what is going through their minds—they might be nervous, scared, or just unsure of what to do. Help prepare them ahead of time so they are confident.

## **Determining Activity Interests**

The major assignment of the vice president for program, with the help of an associate Advisor, is to determine the interests of post participants. This can be done in a small post by simply asking them. In other posts, a survey is done using a questionnaire written by the officers or post participants. There is an example of one possible Explorer Activity Interest Survey in chapter 2, youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*. It is important to adapt this to your post.

The vice president for program builds an activity file that includes activity ideas from past programs, ideas from post participants, Exploring literature, and other sources. These are used at the officers' seminar along with the PCI.

## **Post Officers' Seminar**

Shortly after the officers' briefing, Advisors, with their newly elected officers, conduct the post officers' seminar. The seminar is usually held on a Saturday, although some posts take a whole weekend. The purpose is to train the post officers in their responsibilities, get them working as a leadership team, and plan the post program for the coming year. The agenda is found in chapter 3, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*. Take a close look at this agenda before going on.

Once the schedule is in draft form it should be reviewed with the Explorer post participants and the post committee for approval. Copies can then be printed for all post participants.

## **Now What? Do It!**

Now your post has youth participants, officers, a committee, and a program. What you need is a way to get from a program to actually doing the activities. Remember, the organizational chart discussed in the last session is outlined in chapter 3, adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.

For each activity, the officers and Advisors should select a youth activity chairperson as well as an adult consultant who will assist the activity chairperson in bringing the event about. Then individuals can be selected from within the post who will help the activity chairperson. It is the responsibility of the officers to train the activity chairperson and his or her assistants and to monitor the progress of each activity. Activity chairpersons will often be invited to officers' meetings to report on their progress.

In chapter 4, youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*, there is a process to guide activity chairpersons through planning any activity. Remember that the vice president for program and the consultant should work closely with activity chairpersons to make sure that they understand everything that needs to be done and to make it possible for them to be successful.



## Post Meetings

The most common number of post meetings is two per month, although some posts meet every week. Regular post meetings consist of two parts—an activity and whatever business is necessary. Posts often put all business into one meeting a month, leaving the other meeting completely free for program.

Usually post activities and meetings are opened and led by the post president but turned over to the activity chairperson. Guests should be introduced and made to feel welcome. Activity chairpersons for coming events should be given a minute to explain and promote their activity. Post officers should keep the post informed about decisions and planning.

## Superactivity

The highlight of your post's program year will be a *superactivity*, a major project or trip requiring extensive planning and preparation. It serves as a long-range goal to retain youth participants' interest and will generate publicity and interest in your post.

Using the same process that led to a post program, select a superactivity that all post participants want to do and then make a commitment to do it. The money, equipment, leadership, and transportation seem less challenging once the commitment is made.

There is a how-to guide for planning a superactivity in chapter 5, youth leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*. Be sure to check all these items before considering a superactivity. Note that these kinds of activities require a parental permission slip. A sample is in the Appendix of the adult leader section of the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.

The superactivity is planned using the same process that works for everything else. A planning committee of officers, Advisors, and post participants will have to work together to make it happen.

## Supplemental Activities and Helps

**Character education activities.** You can encourage ethical thinking in Exploring by planning character education forums and character education activities into your yearly program.

A *character education forum* is a post meeting devoted to learning about the values, norms, and ethical standards that govern the profession or career interest area of your post. Many posts do this by inviting an expert to speak to the post. He or she could discuss the standards that are adhered to by the professional organizations, his or her own personal standards, and the consequences for breaking the rules.

*Character education activities* is a program activity in which character dilemmas are used to provoke Explorers into deeper thought about the profession or career interest area. Every character dilemma involves a conflict between at least two different moral principles. In a character education activity, Explorers are assigned one of the two positions and debate the merits of the position with someone else who takes the opposite side. After the initial debate, they switch positions and debate it again. Eventually they try to come to a consensus.

This fun, semicompetitive process encourages a natural enthusiasm for thought about character issues. It also helps develop empathy and understanding of the ideas and thoughts of other people.

See the Programs for Explorer Posts CD-ROM in the Explorer Post New-Advisor kit.

## **Volunteer and Professional Staff**

Your post has a service team volunteer and professional Exploring staff to serve you. They will contact you.

## **Post Leader Workshop**

After this self-study course, the next step is the Post Leader Workshop. This hands-on workshop for Advisors and officers helps adults and youth think about their working relationship with each other and what they can do to make it successful. It also gives you experience in *reflection*, a process that can encourage responsibility, thoughtfulness, interpersonal understanding, and commitment in your post. Finally, you will discuss the basics of some leadership skills that make Exploring successful.

## **Learning for Life Leadership Workshop**

Also available to all Explorer posts and senior high school Learning for Life groups is the Learning for Life Post Leadership Workshop series of sessions that are designed to provide high school students with exposure to leadership life skills, personal management skills, and group leadership skills. In addition, the students are exposed to real-life leadership situations.

Each session is designed to be presented by a teacher, post Advisor, or other qualified trainer. Atypical lesson plan is designed to fit into a 50–60 minute hands-on time period.

Each student is recognized for completion of the leadership workshop program upon completing the following requirements during the workshop:

- Complete the Introduction to Leadership session.
- Complete two of the five sessions in the Personal Skills module.
- Complete two of the five sessions in the Group Skills module.
- Complete one session of the Cultural Diversity module.
- Complete one session of the Character Attributes module.
- Complete the Planning module.

The recognition is the Leadership Workshop Certificate.

# Appendix

Program Capability Inventory  
Exploring Program Development Guide

# PROGRAM CAPABILITY INVENTORY (PCI)

Explorer Post No. \_\_\_\_\_ Business/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions**  
 Each year our Explorers, young men and women aged 14 to 20, need adult volunteers to serve as Advisors, program consultants, and helpers with transportation, chaperoning, counseling, and planning.  
 We would like to know in which areas of career interests, hobbies, or contacts you would be willing to help our Explorers.

If they decide to call on you for help, an appointment will be made with you well in advance.  
 Thank you for your willingness to assist our Explorers and please return this PCI form to: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

(Please complete.)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ (business) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes! I would be willing to help in the areas designated below:**

### Hobbies AND SKILLS

- |                   |                  |                       |                    |                       |                    |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Backpacking _____ | Canoeing _____   | Fishing _____         | PROMOTING _____    | Snow Skiing _____     | SURVEYING _____    |
| Basketball _____  | COACHING _____   | Gourmet Cooking _____ | Sailing _____      | Swimming _____        | TRAINING _____     |
| Bicycling _____   | COUNSELING _____ | Marksmanship _____    | Scuba Diving _____ | PUBLIC SPEAKING _____ | Water Skiing _____ |
| Bowling _____     | CREATING _____   | ORGANIZING _____      | Softball _____     | Surfing _____         | Others _____       |
| Camping _____     | Diving _____     | Photography _____     |                    |                       |                    |

### MEMBERSHIPS

Please list your clubs, associations, fraternal groups, etc.:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### CONTACTS

Please list people that you would be willing to ask to share their careers, hobbies, or skills:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### SPECIAL PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>___ I have a station wagon ___ van ___ or truck ___.</p> <p>___ I have a workshop.</p> <p>___ I have family camping gear ___ RV ___ or pop-up camper ___.</p> <p>___ I can make contacts for special trips and activities.</p> <p>___ I have access to a cottage ___ or camping property ___.</p> <p>___ I have access to a boat ___ or airplane ___.</p> | <p>___ I can help with leadership skills.</p> <p>___ I can help with _____<br/>(Career information)</p> <p>___ I can help with _____<br/>(Vocational information)</p> <p>___ I can help with community service projects.</p> <p>___ I can help with fundraising projects.</p> |
|--|---|

# EXPLORING

## PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GUIDE



# *Exploring is part of the Learning for Life career education program for youth ages 14 (and have completed the eighth grade) or 15 through 20. The program matches the interests of youth with adult expertise and the program resources of the participating organization.*

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Exploring program is to provide experiences to help young people mature and to prepare them to become responsible and caring adults. Explorers are ready to explore the meaning of interdependence in their personal relationships and in their communities.

## **Exploring Methods**

To achieve the mission and purpose of Learning for Life, the Exploring program is designed to meet the developmental needs of young adults by bringing them into **voluntary association** with responsible adults (Advisors).

Young adults learn **ethical decision making** through positive social interaction, leadership development, hands-on experience, refining problem-solving skills, service to others, and career exploration activities.

Exploring offers many opportunities to use experiences to promote the conditions that are necessary for the growth and development of adolescents. For example, there are planned **group activities** to give youth in a post the opportunity to interact with their peers and to experience a sense of belonging. Planning the year's program of activities and **individual activities** should involve Explorers in decision making. Engaging in activities that are challenging and fun encourages them to cultivate a capacity to enjoy life. By participating in the activities and the operation of an Explorer post, youth will have a chance to discover more about their identity, to relate to adults and peers, and to experiment with ideas and roles without having to commit themselves irrevocably.

Youth have a strong desire to be a part of a group, doing things together, and working as a group toward a common goal. Youth reach out for responsibility. They need to have input into shaping their destiny; the **democratic processes** and election of post youth leadership are important.

When young adults do well, **recognition of achievement** is important. A clear expectation of good behavior causes young adults to rise to and exceed our expectations.

When each of these methods is used by responsible adults in a safe environment for youth, Exploring can be a positive influence on the growth and development of young adults.

The protection of youth from child abuse is a great concern of Learning for Life. Resource materials are available to design a post program and activities that can create an

awareness on the part of youth. (See Youth Protection in the *Explorer Leader Handbook*.)

## **How to Make These Methods Work in Your Post**

First, let's define a post. A post is a group of young adults who have been brought together because of a common interest. A post is made up of **people working and playing together**, enjoying and learning from one another. A post and its participants share common goals and basic ideals. They move together with the same purpose and commitment. A post is most successful when it meets the needs and interests of its participants. An effective post is the result of close cooperation between youth and adult leaders. If leaders are sensitive to post participants and respond with positive support, program, and activities that Explorers enjoy, success is assured. The post is the vehicle whereby young people will learn values, standards, and the discipline that will help them become good citizens and productive adults.

## **Quality Control**

How do you know when your post is successful? Exploring has a built in quality control system. **It's the youth participants themselves.** If they don't like the program, they simply don't participate in the activities or attend the meetings. Stable and growing participation is a sign of success. (See chapter 4, Explorer Advisor Section, *Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637B.)

## **Key Elements to Program Planning and Development**

Exploring is a **sharing experience** as responsible adults provide an environment whereby the developmental needs of youth are met. Post program design, planning, and implementation are critical. Youth participation is just as important.

Exploring is based on a unique and dynamic relationship between youth and the organizations in their communities. Local community organizations initiate a specific Explorer post by matching their people and program resources to the interests of young people in the community. The result is a program of activities that helps youth pursue their special interests, grow, and develop.

Explorer posts can specialize in a variety of career skills. Exploring programs are based upon five areas of emphasis:



- Developing potential contacts that may broaden employment options
- Boosting self-confidence and experiencing success at school and work



- Developing physical and mental fitness
- Experiencing positive social interaction



- Encouraging the skill and desire to help others
- Gaining a keen respect for the basic rights of others



- Helping make ethical choices
- Fulfilling one's responsibility to society as a whole



- Developing leadership skills to fulfill our responsibilities in society
- Providing exposure to different leadership traits

Young adults in Exploring should be given the opportunity to participate in the program planning and implementation process. However, the **Advisor has the responsibility to generate enthusiasm** on the part of post participants about the potential of their experiences and activities in Exploring. Emphasis should be placed on **youth running the post**.

## How Are the Five Areas of Emphasis Used in the Program Planning Process?

### Life Skills

Positive life skill interaction may take the form of a formal event such as a dance, banquet, or party. Life skill activities can be informal gatherings, too, such as simple horseplay, a small caucus held before the meeting to deal with post business, or just talking about what's happening at school or in the community. Youth must be allowed time for formal and informal social interaction. To be successful, a post must establish and maintain relationships between group participants. A group is not successful if its participants do not like one another or continually put one another down. A group or post is successful when its participants enjoy one another's company, are committed to one another's success, and work cooperatively together. The cooperative games in the *Explorer Leader Handbook* appendix are excellent exercises that can be used to bring post participants together.

Formal and informal social gatherings or activities that cause all participants to interact should be a natural part of the post program.

## Leadership Experience

The post theoretically is run by Explorers. The training and development of youth officers and/or the post leaders is critical. Leadership development can take the form of formalized training provided by the adult post leaders using the post officers' seminar. The post can also conduct training on an ongoing basis using the outline in chapter 3, *Explorer Leader Handbook*, Explorer Advisor Section.

Leadership is developed when each Explorer has an opportunity to experience being a leader. Leadership development in Exploring is action; a post officer learns about leadership by holding office in the post and by performing the duties and responsibilities of that office, or by leading an activity.

Leadership in Exploring is anything that a group participant does that helps the group accomplish a task or maintain relationships; leadership is also service to others in the post. A congratulatory remark, a pat on the back, and recognition for individual accomplishments and performance of assigned tasks are considered methods of leadership because they help to create quality, caring relationships within the group. Every participant in the group can experience leadership through the assignment of simple to sophisticated tasks that will result in a successful experience for the group.

Everyone in a post can be a leader. The climate must be created in the post whereby each participant will have an opportunity to experience leadership without the pressures of being an officer. (See chapter 3, Youth Leader Section, *Explorer Leader Handbook*.)

The Advisor's role is to ensure that power and responsibility are shared by all participants of the post. Post participants should be committed to one another's success and needs, as well as the goals of the post. For this to happen, all participants must have input and influence on group decisions and some control over group resources such as money or supplies.

An understanding of the leadership development process is very important. (See *Explorer Leader Handbook*, Initiative Games.)

## Character Education

Program and activities that require manipulative as well as intellectual skills should be incorporated in the post program. Exploring is hands-on learning.

Learning for Life has developed a series of character education activities that allow Explorers to investigate and explore several ethical dilemmas. These exercises will help develop positive decision-making skills in regard to the ethical and moral decisions they encounter daily. (See *Explorer Leader Handbook*, or use character education activities.)

## Service Learning

Leadership is service. To be a good leader one must learn how to give of oneself to and on behalf of others. Developing and participating in service projects is one way the post can ensure that service is an integral part of its program and activities. The post participants may come up with their own service project that will benefit the community or the post's participating organization. (See Youth Leader Section, *Explorer Leader Handbook*, How to Develop Service Projects.)

## Career Opportunities

Opportunities for young adults to interact with business leaders is an important feature of the Exploring program. The use of consultants within the participating organization is a good way to expand this aspect of the post program. Giving youth an opportunity to visit and try out careers will provide invaluable information that can help them in choosing their careers.

## How to Develop a Quality Post Program

The *Explorer Leader Handbook* includes information on planning a quality post first meeting and post programs. Also, there is a how-to section in your new *Explorer Leader Handbook*, chapter 5, Youth Leader section:

- How to Earn Money
- How to Generate Publicity
- How to Brainstorm
- How to Develop Service Projects
- How to Plan Your Superactivity

These sections are important. Be sure to become proficient in these exercises. They can prove invaluable as you help the youth in your post become efficient and successful leaders.

## Problem-Solving Skills for Explorers

A post Advisor's and post youth leader's ability to solve problems and involve every post participant in the planning and implementation of quality activities is a challenge. Positive relationships must be established with participants of the post. These relationships should develop trust and openness.

### Problem-Solving Process

Every individual and every group faces problems that must be solved. People working to plan and develop projects face new problems all the time as they draw input from group participants. The following simple process shows one way to solve problems that arise during post meetings:

- Step 1:** Define the problem. This includes understanding the problem thoroughly by finding out all the facts about it. Once those facts are clear, decide on the goal or goals to be reached. As you do so, state the values that are implied by the goal as the post or group defines it.
- Step 2:** State all possible ways to reach the goal. Rather than stating only one way, put down as many as possible, even though some of them might not seem very practical. If the post works through a number of committees, several proposed solutions will probably develop automatically. You might divide the post into small groups and assign small parts of the problem to each for solutions and recommendations.
- Step 3:** Evaluate the possible effects of each of the proposed solutions. Take each proposal in turn. Then say, "If we do that, what will happen?" Trace the probable effect of each proposed action as carefully as possible. Solicit responses from participants who are not very outgoing or vocal.

- Step 4:** Choose the policy or solution that seems most likely to achieve the goals that the post has set. These goals should be the consensus of the group.

Additional problem-solving processes are found in your *Explorer Leader Handbook* appendix.

## Program Development Resources

There are numerous publications available through Learning for Life.

The post's program possibilities are limited only by a post leadership unwilling to be adventurous and innovative. The keys to a successful post are a well-planned program and fun activities.

### The Explorer Leader Handbook

The *Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637B, serves as a storehouse of information for the Advisor and youth leaders. It is divided into two sections; the first describes the Advisor's roles and responsibilities, and the second provides an overview of essential information youth leaders need to run their post.

### Exploring Literature

Learning for Life publishes Exploring literature that can help inspire your post adult leaders and youth participants to develop a quality, exciting post program. You can order these items through your local Learning for Life office: *Adult Explorer Leader Basic Training, self-study course*,

- No. 99-214
- \*Career Achievement Award Program (CD-ROM)
- \*Character Education Activity Scenarios (CD-ROM)
- \*Character Education in Exploring (CD-ROM)
- \*Congressional Award Program (CD-ROM)
- Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637B
- \**Explorer Post New Advisor Kit* (includes all items marked with an asterisk), No. 99-209
- Explorer Post Program Guides for arts and humanities, aviation, business, communications, engineering, fire and emergency services, health, law and government, law enforcement, science, skilled trades, and social services career clusters: [www.learning-for-life.org](http://www.learning-for-life.org).
- \**Exploring Program Development Guide*
- Facts Every Teen Should Know About Sexual Abuse*, No. 99-249
- \*Instructions for Character Education Activity and Forum (CD-ROM)
- \*Law Enforcement Proficiency Awards (CD-ROM)
- \*Leadership Award (CD-ROM)
- Learning for Life Web site*, [www.learning-for-life.org](http://www.learning-for-life.org)
- \**New Posts Start-Up Orientation (Advisor Fast Start)*
- \*Russell Hill Award (CD-ROM)
- Scholarships for Explorers in aviation, fire and emergency services, health, law enforcement, and skill trades career clusters* (CD-ROM and on [www.learning-for-life.org](http://www.learning-for-life.org))
- \**What's In It for Youth? Exploring*
- \*William Spurgeon III Award (CD-ROM)
- \*Young American Award (CD-ROM)
- "Youth Protection Guidelines" in Chapter 5 of the Advisor section, *Explorer Leader Handbook*, No. 34637B

\*Included in the *Explorer Post New-Advisor Kit*, No. 99-209