New Parent Packet

Trail Life®

Adventure › Character › Leadership

Welcome to Trail Life!

Trail Life USA is a Church-Based, Christ-Centered, Boy-Focused mentoring and discipleship journey that speaks to the heart of a boy. With over 42,000 boys engaged in more than 1,400 Troops nationwide, male mentors guide boys through a character-building experience from Kindergarten to 12th grade. Established on timeless values derived from the Bible and set in the context of outdoor adventure, our objective is to help boys grow in character, understand their purpose, serve their community, and develop practical leadership skills to carry out the mission for which they were created.

Adventure is the heart of the Trail Life USA program. Acknowledging boys' love for hiking, camping, fishing, tree-climbing, story-telling, and s'mores around campfires, weekly meetings are held outside whenever possible and are designed to delight the raucous, rowdy, unruly nature of a boy. Trailmen engage in hands-on experiences that develop character, deepen faith, and hone practical skills.

Trail Life Distinctives

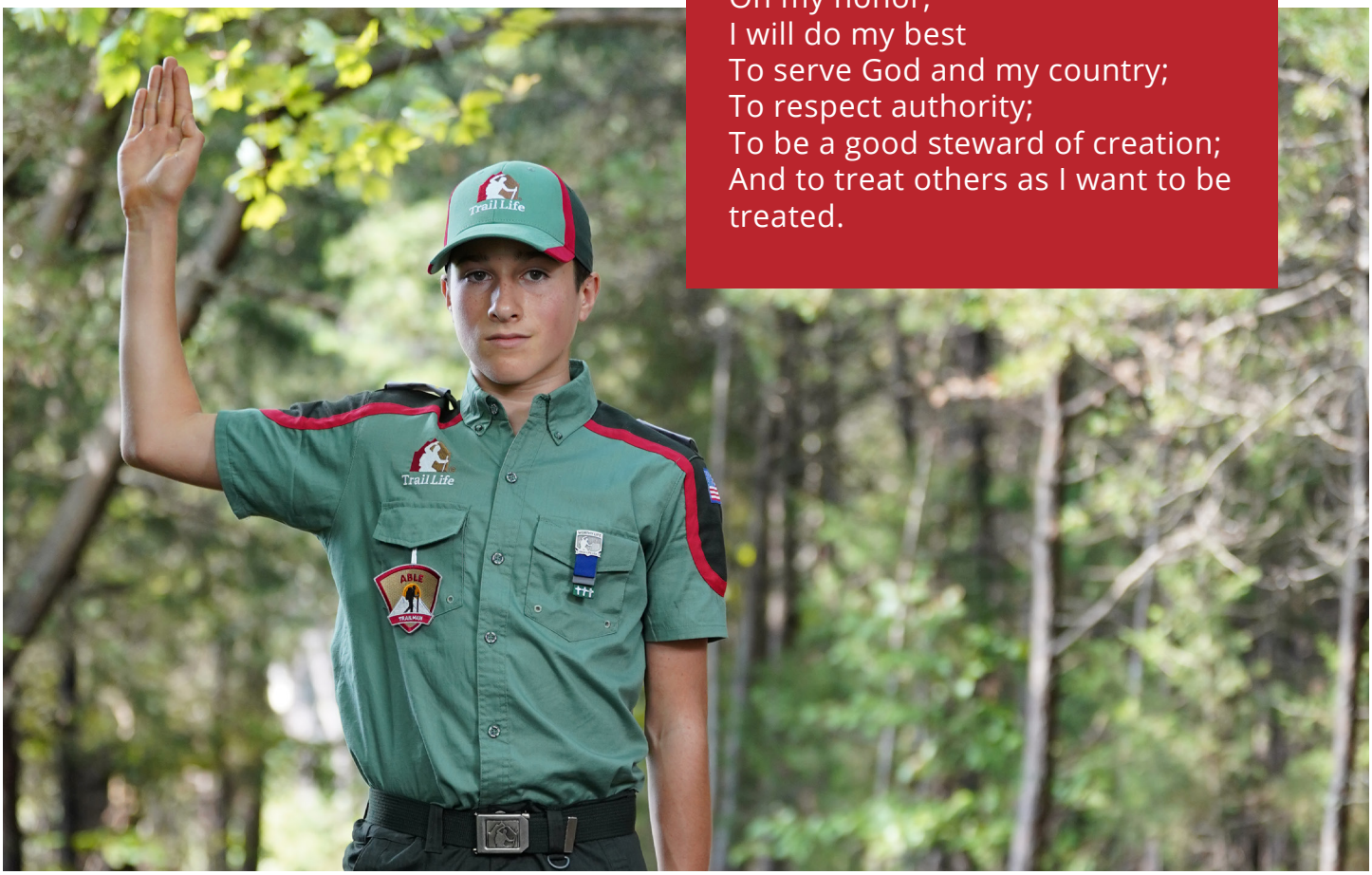
Vision
Our vision is to be the premier national character development organization for young men which produces godly and responsible husbands, fathers, and citizens.

Mission
Our mission is to guide generations of courageous young men to honor God, lead with integrity, serve others, and experience outdoor adventure.

Motto
"Walk Worthy"
Colossians 1:10 "...that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;..."

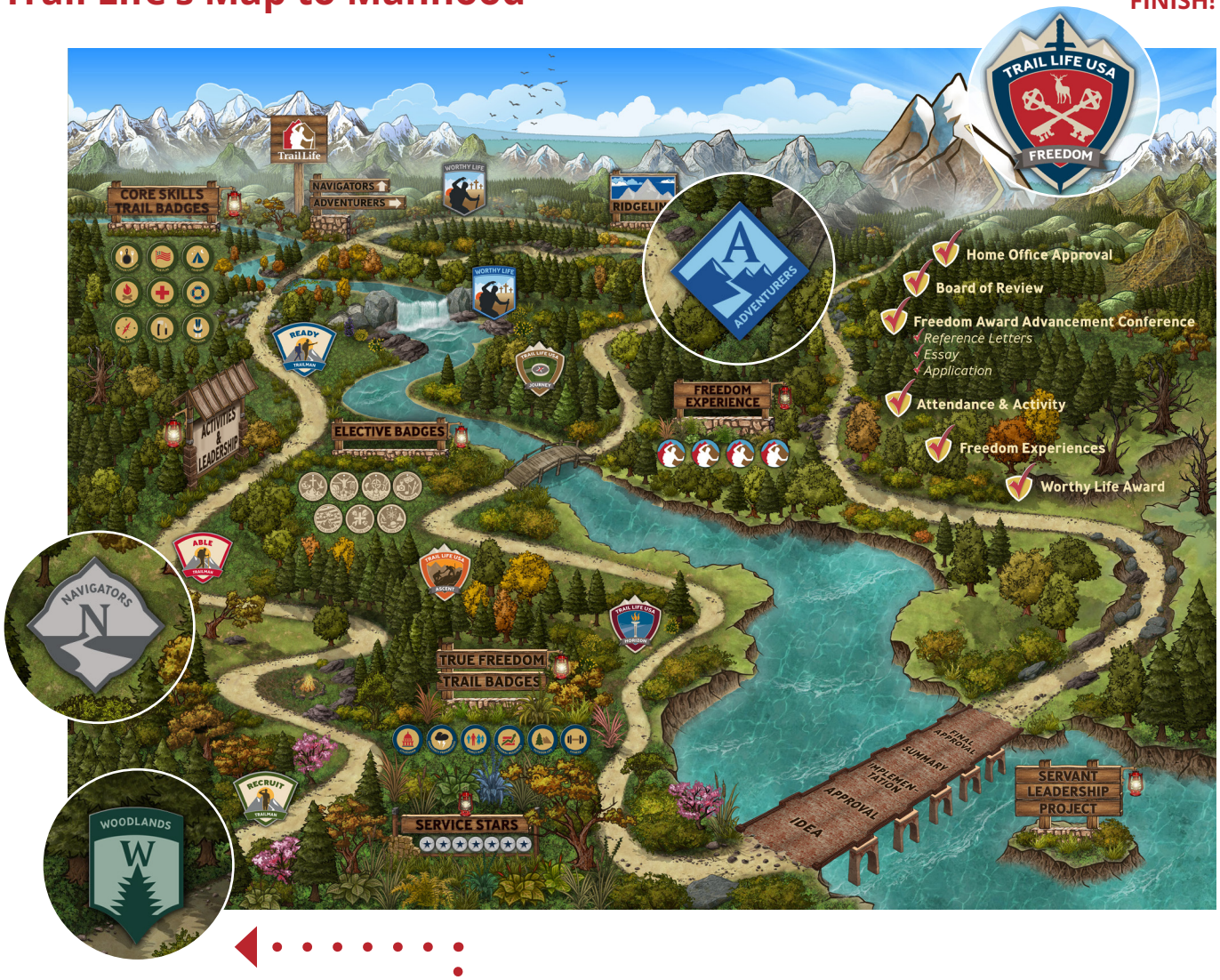
Trailman Oath

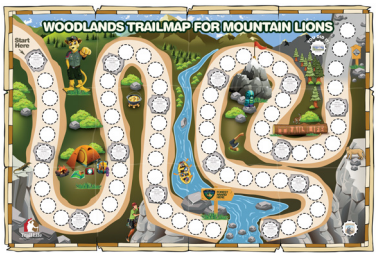
On my honor,
I will do my best
To serve God and my country;
To respect authority;
To be a good steward of creation;
And to treat others as I want to be treated.



Trail Life's Map to Manhood

FINISH!





START

An essential component of the Trail Life USA program is the provision of a clear Trail map for a boy to manhood. Through weekly meetings, monthly Hit the Trail events, and annual rites of passage award ceremonies, both boys and parents find intentional guidance. The program ensures that boys grow in faith, acquire skills, and cultivate character traits essential for earning the Freedom Award; the pinnacle Trail Life award. Upon completing the Trail Life program, a boy emerges as a leader in his Troop, a contributor to his community, and a vital member of his church, having undergone intentional mentorship with his father and men in his Troop. He gains an understanding of biblical masculinity and is well-prepared for life, acknowledging that true freedom comes through surrender, with a recognition that Christ paid the ultimate price.

Trail Life Advancement

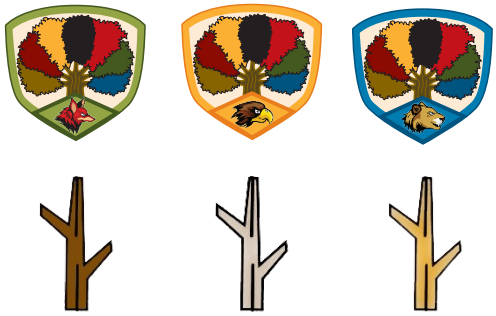
Woodlands Trail *Ages 5-10*

The program begins in the lush forests on the Woodlands Trail. Broken into three groups boys age 5-10 acquire knowledge about outdoor skills, citizenship, character, friendship, and faith through enjoyable activities, awards, and skill instruction. Boys earn pins to add to their group patch as they participate in the program.

Fox: Ages 5-6

Hawk: Ages 7-8

Mountain Lion: Ages 9-10



Joining Branch Patches and Branch Pins (Year 1)

Forest Award Patches and Sylvan Stars (Year 2)

Navigators *Ages 11-13*

As boys progress along the trail, they transition from the lush green forest floor to the challenges of the grey rocky crags as Navigators (ages 11-13). Under the guidance of godly male role models, they explore values and beliefs, demonstrating responsibility in outdoor adventures, as well as in their home and school life. Advancement is marked by earning Ranks and Trail Badges.

Core Skills Ranks

Adventurers *Ages 14-17*

As Adventurers (ages 14-17), young men mature in wisdom and faith by tackling more difficult challenges and assuming leadership roles. Christian men provide guidance as they plan and lead outdoor events, undertake large projects, and mentor younger Trailmen. This comprehensive journey prepares them for the responsibilities of adulthood, instilling a deep understanding that true freedom is a result of surrender, which Christ modeled with the ultimate sacrifice.

True Freedom Ranks

Example badges for Navigators & Adventurers

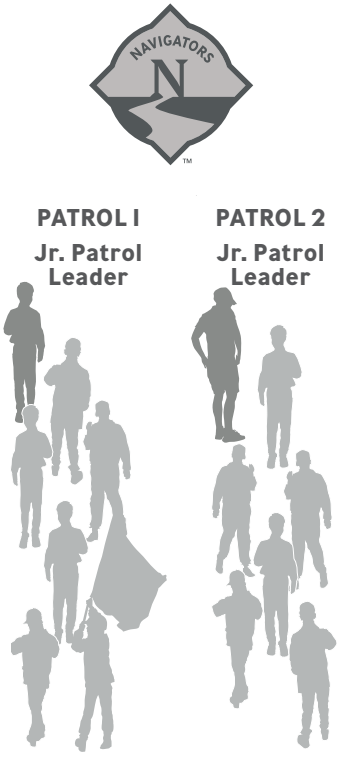
Faith and Leadership Opportunities for Trailmen

Worthy Life Award

At each program level, Trailmen will have the opportunity to earn the Worthy Life Award. This special award provides your son the opportunity to learn more about the Christian Faith and Christian Life. Each unique award is represented by a cross that is affixed to the appropriate program colored ribbon.

The Patrol Method

The Patrol Method is leadership practiced during meetings. The Patrol Method splits a Troop into small groups that explore the theory and practice of leadership, while using the gifts of individuals to build group wellbeing. A patrol is ideally 6-8 Trailmen of the same program level. Trailmen elect a peer leader to serve as their Patrol Leader or Jr. Patrol Leader. The patrols provide opportunities for Trailmen to practice leading others as well as following others. Patrols will do all activities together whenever possible.



Youth Protection Essentials

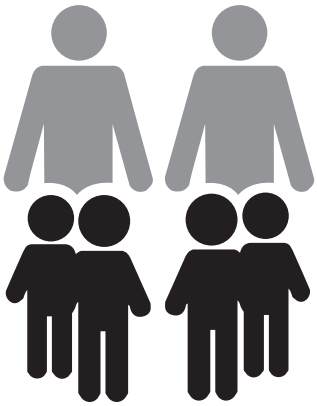
It's as Simple as 1-2-3

No 1-on-One

The no one-on-one rule is in place for youth protection so no boy is ever alone with an adult. This is for both the protection of the boy and the adult.

2 Deep Leadership

The two-deep rule is in place for safety so there is always a minimum of two Registered Adults in proximity to provide backup and oversight.



Buddy System of 3

The buddy system of three helps keep youth safe from abusive youth when out of sight of adult leadership. Buddies must be of the same program level.

Complete Child Safety Youth Protection policies and additional guidelines are found in the current version of the Health and Safety Guide.

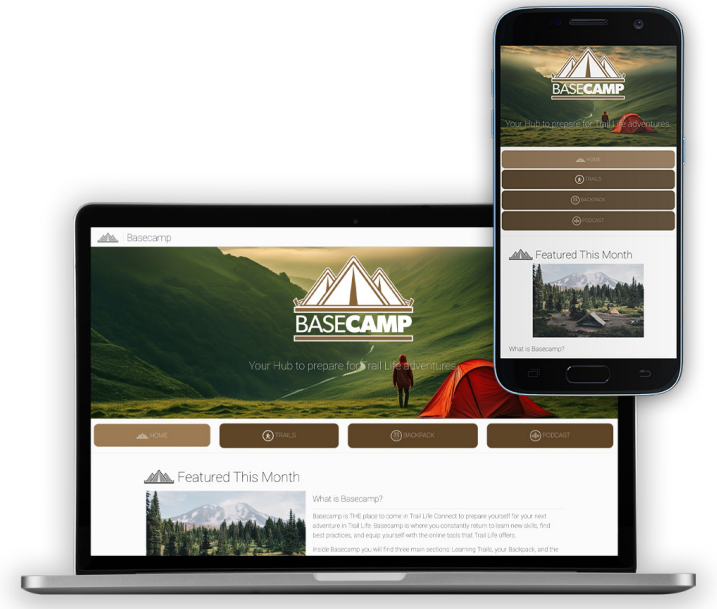
Trail Life Connect

Trail Life Connect (TLC) is our Troop management platform designed to keep you, your Trailman, and Troop leadership all on the same page. Within TLC, you'll find your Troop's event calendar, your son's advancement progress, and built-in messaging tools for easy communication with Troop leadership and other families. It's your go-to hub for program details and answers to common questions.

TLC also includes **Basecamp**—an interactive online learning platform with role-specific Learning Treks to help you grow alongside your son. Learn new skills, discover best practices, and equip yourself for the journey ahead, one adventure at a time.

To access TLC, download the app or visit **www.TrailLifeConnect.com**, and log in using the username and password you created during registration. If you haven't registered yet, your Troop leaders can help you get started.

Trail Life Connect



Basecamp

Try the TLC app! Search Trail Life Connect or scan below.

App Store

Google Play Store

TLC app

Get Started!

How can I get involved as a Parent?

• Trail Life encourages parents to take an active role in their son's journey through the program. The easiest way to do that is for parents and guardians to join in with their sons at weekly meetings, Hit The Trail activities, and campouts. Instead of watching from the sidelines, you can be a part of the action with Trail Life! Check out **Welcome to Trail Life** in TLC to learn more.

Welcome to Trail Life

• Parents are encouraged to stay engaged with their son's advancement progress and support skill-building at home when needed. Check out **Basecamp** in TLC for specific training Trails for parents and guardians.

• Shop the Trail Life Store for Youth Handbooks, Parent and Leader Guides, and apparel to better understand the program and look the part!

Trail Life Store

• Speak with your Troop Leaders about unique skills you may have that you can share with Trailmen. For example, your expertise as a mechanic may make you the ideal person to teach the boys about how to do an oil change.

• At some point, you may be invited to take on more responsibility in your Troop—even a leadership role. This requires becoming a Registered Adult, which includes Trail Life USA membership, a background check, and completion of Trail Life's child safety and youth protection training to participate in Two-Deep Leadership.

Our Troop

Trail Life®

Troop AA-0000

Troop Number: _____

Meeting Place: _____

Day: _____

Time: _____

Troopmaster: _____

My Son's Trail Guide: _____

Contact Information: _____

Notes: _____

_____

_____

_____

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