



**JOIN
THE ADVENTURE!**

Recruiting Guide



WHY RECRUIT?

Recruiting is the reward for all your planning in Parts I-4

A well-planned program year leads to a great recruiting season. "Join the Adventure!" **recruiting furthers the great**

commission, an opportunity to meet new Trailmen where they are, and to grow them into godly young men. Discipleship requires multiplication! Recruiting brings in potential new leaders, new experiences, new faces, and new friends to the Troop. Welcoming new families develops skills in hospitality, kindness, and member orientation. Very often, new members add new outdoor opportunities, new leadership development, and servant's hearts that grow with the experience.



BUT HOW?

“ AN OLD ADAGE SAYS, ‘IF YOU’RE GIVEN AN HOUR TO CHOP DOWN A TREE, SPEND 45 MINUTES SHARPENING THE AX.’ THE SAME CAN BE SAID OF PLANNING YOUR ‘JOIN THE ADVENTURE!’ JOINING EXPERIENCE. ”



Steps to Plan Your *Join the Adventure!* Joining Experience & Activities

STEP ONE:

Determine date/time and promote your *Join the Adventure!* joining experience. (See pages 4-5)

STEP TWO:

Determine responsibilities. (See pages 6-7)

STEP THREE:

Set-up your *Joining Experience*. (See pages 8-9)

STEP FOUR:

Follow up with new recruit's families. (See pages 10-11)

Throughout this resource, items with a * indicate further resources available at TrailLifeConnect.com, including a full array of promotional items like posters, banners, yard signs, flyers, media blurbs, Facebook promotions. Additional free *Join the Adventure!* resources can be found at <https://www.trail-lifeconnect.com/page/jta>.



STEP ONE

Determine Date/Time and Promote Your *Join the Adventure!* Event

Scheduled for ____ / ____ / ____



BEST PRACTICES FOR "JOIN THE ADVENTURE!" SUCCESS

BEST Promotions

- Prayer
- Personal Invitation from Trailmen's parents to their friends
- Personal Invitation from Trailmen to their friends
- Announcements/video at your church
- Contact all Find-a-Troop inquiries in your TLC "member prospects" tile

BETTER Promotions

- Announcement on church marquee and bulletins
- Flyers handed out at school / homeschool groups
- Flyers handed out at local churches
- Social Media Promotion
- Join the Adventure! event date submitted to online community calendars or newspapers
- Post messages to Homeschool Co-op or School media and email threads

GOOD Promotions

- Adventure Zone Booth at school/church open house/fall festival/homeschool groups
- Yard signs at intersections or in neighborhoods
- Radio Public Service Announcements
- Recruiting events (bowling, camping, airsoft tournament, etc.)

* Additional free resources available on TrailLifeConnect.com "Trail Life Resources" menu and at <https://www.traillifeconnect.com/page/jta>

Now take the promotions you chose on page 4 and list them here along with who will be coordinating each one.

JULY

What	When (Date)	Who
Set <i>Join the Adventure!</i> Event Date		

AUGUST

What	When (Date)	Who
Start Social Media Promotion		

SEPTEMBER

What	When (Date)	Who
Call all Find-a-Troop inquiries		



STEP TWO

Don't just "Sign them up" ... create a **Joining Experience!**

Boys love to be outside. A constrained school environment is boring, and hard for them to fit into. So why would we make joining Trail Life feel like classroom instruction? Let's make this year's Open House a joining **experience**—where they actually get a real taste of the Trail Life!

It starts the moment new families arrive. The first "station" at your **Joining Experience** is for gathering everyone together—all parents and boys under a big tarp. Ask one parent of each youth to scan the QR "sign in" code. This info is captured by your Troop (just like a pen-and-ink sign in sheet—except that it's legible, and won't need to be re-entered later).

Then tell everyone what they will do tonight... experience what Trail Life is like...and send them off to the next stations! 3 or 4 stations should be enough—but more may be needed if a big crowd is expected. Use the [Adventure Zone materials here](#). Send them through the stations round-robin style—in smaller groups, "learning by doing" and having fun: shooting at targets with bows and arrows, slingshots, or rubber band guns; making rope or tying knots; testing their strength at tug-o-war or with pugil sticks. How you split the groups, or

which groups go where, doesn't really matter. But have a "join now" QR code card to fill out the new member application available at each station, so those who need to leave early can still sign up.

After allowing the groups 30-35 minutes to go thru the stations (oh, yeah—make sure there's one with S'mores and a small campfire), then invite everyone into the "Q&A station". This one is manned by the Troopmaster and at least one experienced Trail Life mom (to answer "mom questions"). Also, have one good "closer" who, after all Q's are answered, will convince them to register their sons—plus any dads who are ready to apply. Make sure all scan the "join now" QR code and register if they haven't already!

This action-oriented plan should make joining enjoyable—and that's the goal. Save the details for later! Finally, make sure parents understand the next steps. "Come to next Tuesday night's 7pm Troop meeting at First Baptist for your New Parent Onboarding. There you will meet current leaders and connect with other new families as you start your year of fun and adventure!"

STEP THREE

Determine Agenda and Responsibilities for *Join the Adventure!* Event



JOINING EXPERIENCE AGENDA (all outdoors) Key Points & Goals/Person(s) Responsible

30-40 minutes

Flag Ceremony (conducted by Trailmen) | Who _____

Prayer (conducted by Troop Chaplain or Trailman) | Who _____

Oath (conducted by Trailman) | Who _____

Parents and sons enjoy round-robin activities.

Get Everyone Back Together

One key leader convinces all parents, who have just experienced a taste of Trail Life, to join.

It's ok to answer a few questions, but save the details for next week's New Parent Orientation.



JOINING EXPERIENCE CHECKLIST

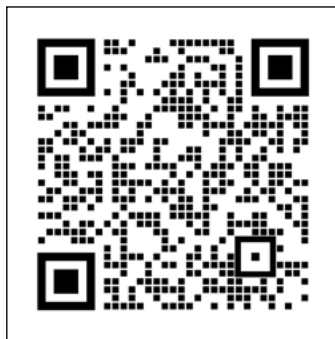
- Sign-in Sheet for recruit contact info*
- Customizable "Welcome to Our Troop" Flyers, see p. 12
- Laptops & credit card readers (more if expecting a crowd!)
- Leaders / Helpers in place
- Single Page Calendar to distribute
- Flags (American and Troop)

NEW RESOURCES:

"New Parent Packet," "New Parent FAQ," and "Welcome To Trail Life Video" are available in the "Welcome to Trail Life" tile on the TLC dashboard.

Scan the QR code below to access the resources mentioned above, or visit the following link:

https://www.traillifeconnect.com/page/welcome_to_trail_life



Further resources available at TrailLifeConnect.com in the JTA Recruiting Materials section of the Trail Life Resources menu.

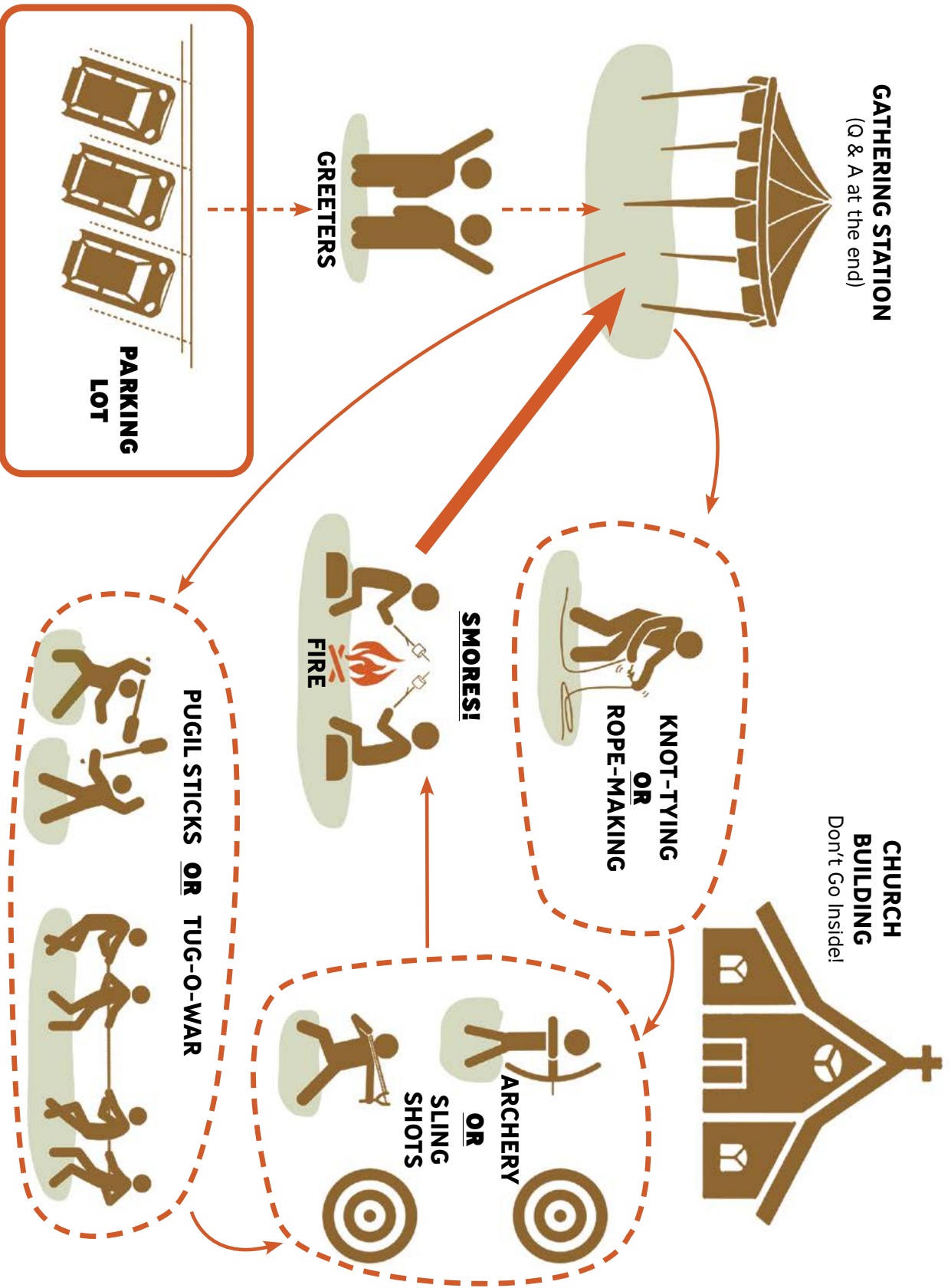
4 Ways to Sign up Families!

- **Text Message:**
Send an SMS sign up link to parent's cell phone
- **Email:**
Send an email sign up link to parent's email address
- **Kiosk:**
Allow parents to sign up **NOW** in-person via laptop or device
- **QR Code:**
Allow parents to sign up by scanning the Troop-specific QR code found at the bottom of the "Add New Adult" section of your "My Troop" menu in TLC

Visit the "Trail Life Resources" section of TrailLifeConnect.com for more details on using these features!



SAMPLE JOINING EXPERIENCE SETUP



STEP FOUR

Follow Up

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have helped new families onto the Trail!
But their Adventure is just beginning...

Onboarding New Members

The first impression new families have of Trail Life USA is greatly important for increasing retention. Your challenge of assimilating new Trailmen and their families begins the moment they come to your *Joining Experience* or their first Troop meeting. It is vital that families are onboarded well, so they don't get lost in the shuffle.

Here's How:

Well before your *Joining Experience*, appoint a knowledgeable and winsome adult as an Onboarding Chair who will...

1. Welcome new families to the Troop
2. Host a New Parents' Orientation
3. Help parents get involved with their son's Trail Life journey

3 Steps to Success— Onboarding Chair:

1. Send Welcome Message

Immediately after the *Joining Experience*, send the "Welcome to Our Troop" [email](#) (found in TLC Resources) to each parent who signed in.



2. Call Parents

[Call](#) one parent from each family that attended your *Joining Experience* using the sign-in sheet.



- If they haven't joined yet, encourage them to do so.
- Ask the parents if they have questions or concerns that weren't addressed at the *Joining Experience*.

- Confirm they know when and where the next Troop meeting is, and make sure they feel invited. Remind them that this meeting will include the new Parents' Orientation.
- Then call each Patrol's Trail Guide, giving him the names of each new youth and his parents so that current members can welcome them as they arrive for the first time. At their first meeting, Trail Guides should make sure all Trailmen meet the new boy, and all dads meet the new dad.

3. Host a Parents' Orientation

During the first Troop meeting after your *Joining Experience*, host a Parents' Orientation for all new parents. The New Parents' Orientation is your chance to help new families understand what the Trail



Life program is all about and how your Troop operates. Make sure families leave with all the information they need about meeting times and locations, supply lists, uniform expectations, annual calendars, fundraising information, parental involvement, and child safety. Here is a sample Agenda:

- Communicate the basics of Trail Life— Check out the “Welcome to Trail Life” tile in TLC for a New Parent Information Packet, New Parent’s Frequently Asked Questions, and a Welcome to Trail Life video. Use these resources as needed and guide parents through the information.
- Point families to the Parent and Leader Guide in the Trail Life Store for more in-depth information on all things Trail Life USA.
- Encourage parents to complete Peak I training online or in person.
- Help dads understand the importance of attending meetings and campouts with their sons. It’s important to befriend the new dad, not just his son. “Ease dad in” by giving him a small role—one small thing to do with his son.

But don’t try to make dad sign up to assist as a leader right away; he might not be a Christian yet, so he may not be eligible to register. Ask your Troop Chaplain to be intentional in getting to know each new dad.

- Review behavior expectations of all Trailmen.
- Provide a basic supply list (such as uniforms and handbooks) and how to find them in the Trail Life USA store.
- Help them understand the importance of the upcoming fundraiser (what it accomplishes for each family and for the Troop, not details about the fundraiser itself).
- Show parents how to download the TLC icon (shortcut) onto their smart phones (find the “Add a TLC icon” in TLC under Help Menu/ Videos and Documents). Let them know to check frequently for updated information on lesson plans, advancement tracking, and future events.
- Point them to **“Understanding Woodlands Trail Advancements”** (view this 13-minute video in Trail Life University/Modules). New parents—especially Woodlands Trail parents—need to know how advancements work...what they can do at home, and other ways to help their sons advance.

Great job!

Communicating these few important items during the Parents' Orientation meeting will help new parents feel connected, knowledgeable, and part of your Troop family.



**Thank you for joining our Troop!
Please keep this info in a safe place.**

Troop Number: _____
Meeting Place: _____
Day: _____
Time: _____
Leader's Name: _____
Leader's Contact Info: _____

Upcoming campouts and activities:



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Day: _____
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Leader's Contact Info: _____

Upcoming campouts and activities:

FOOT NOTES:

SUGGESTION BOX:

"Volunteer-Driven" and "Shared Leadership" are among our most highly-regarded Core Values!
Look for the "Suggestion" icon throughout our Troop Resources and make sure you send us your ideas on how the resource can be improved.
The best ideas come from the field!



The Picture Is Not Complete Until You Have All Five!



The Trail Life Planning, Budgeting, Fundraising and Recruiting Guide Series is composed of five parts that will help you plan a great program year.

- 1. The Annual Planning & Budgeting Guide for Troop Committee Members**
- 2. The Patrol Planner for Adult Leaders**
- 3. Officers' Conference Planner**
- 4. The Annual Troop Fundraising Guide**
- 5. The "Join the Adventure!" Recruiting Guide**

Look for next years' Planning Guides
in Trail Life Connect.