

Junior Yearly Meeting 2013
What to expect for parents and sponsors of teens

Parent meeting will be at 3:45 Monday in the main hall next to registration. See you there!

For all attendees under the age of 18 - an adult sponsor or a parent must be on site at all times for each person under the age of 18, including day attendees. ***A signed medical history form, parental release form, with sponsor signature if parent will not be attending, and the Respectful Relationship consent form must be submitted with registration for the teen to participate in the program.***

Why come to JYM?

Teenagers are invited to participate in Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM). When we gather at Yearly Meeting, teens will work together to develop community, learning to use Quaker process to live together for a week. The JYM community is based on the Quaker values of love, respect, integrity, honesty and mutual responsibility. In keeping with Friends' practices, JYM members select officers and committees as needed, hold business meetings, meetings for worship, worship sharing, and come together through fun activities and games. Many Monthly Meetings do not have enough teens to create a sense of community, so teens may not attend their local meeting. At JYM a much larger group of teens gather to develop friendships, try out leadership roles, and witness the power of the Spirit. This is an opportunity for teens to practice Quaker process and claim it for themselves. By learning with their peers and struggling to reach unity, they grow as Quakers.

Is my tween/teen ready for JYM?

The program is directed toward and run by teens 13-18. Some Friends are ready earlier than others for the opportunity to participate in a spiritual community led by their peers using Quaker process and values. For others, the rigor of sitting in business meetings is too much, and they would prefer the structure and activities of the Middle School Program. If you would like to discuss your youth's readiness for JYM, please feel free to call JYM adult committee clerk Stephen Myers at 916-396-5332.

How are teens supervised?

JYM is essentially a self-governing community, guided by Friends Testimony of Community and agreements created using Friends' business practice during the week. Adults provide support, guidance, and safety as needed. In addition to adult committee members, we have day and night Friendly Adult Presences (FAPs) who will be supporting our youth in their program.

Support Groups

Each teen will be assigned to a small Support Group led by an adult, which will meet daily. Support Groups foster adults and teens getting to know each other better and promote a feeling of belonging in the community for all. Your teen's Support Group adult will be your contact person should you have questions or concerns about how your teen is doing.

What are the Community Agreements?

Friends' testimonies on integrity, unity, equality, simplicity and peace come together in our testimony on community which calls us to sustain caring relationships for all... We come to know one another as we seek our collective, Spirit-led Truth – our shared sense of the common good within which we discover who we are and where we each fit in the larger scheme of things.

PYM Faith and Practice 2001, pp. 44,45

We will begin the week reflecting on Friends' Testimony on Community and the values that are the foundation of our time together as we use last year's agreements regarding specifics such as quiet time. As the week progresses we may change those specific agreements based on the discernment of the community. Changes will be posted for parents and sponsors.

The PYM wide expectation that we all remain free from drugs and alcohol is enforced in JYM. In addition the teens agree to abstain from sexual relations. Violations of these expectations will lead to a discernment process with wider PYM Ministry and Oversight Committee, JYM Ministry and Oversight, and a teen may be asked to leave JYM, and/or PYM.

What about sleeping accommodations?

JYM will provide two separate supervised sleeping spaces, one for boys and one for girls, where teens can sleep on mattresses on the floor. Please note on the "what to bring" list the 3x7 foot fitted sheet cover for the provided mattresses. Teens can also share a room or camp with a parent or sponsor, and younger teens attending JYM for the first time sometimes prefer this. This is also a good alternative for teens of any age who prefer a quieter sleep environment, or who would like to go to sleep earlier. The teens will agree to lights out time as part of community agreements, and we anticipate quiet time in the sleeping spaces by midnight, and lights out by 1am. **The parent or sponsor is responsible for supervising any teen camping or sleeping in any area other than the JYM cabin during the night.**

What is the schedule like?

Parents' and Sponsors' orientation meeting will be held at 3:45 on Monday in the main hall. During the opening plenary session an announcement will be made and teens will leave together to begin the JYM program. Every day there will be a teen run business meeting regarding the day's program and plans. Other activities will include interest groups, Worship sharing, games, Capture the Flag, and a service project. We will join the wider PYM community for intergenerational activities. The JYM schedule will be posted, however changes may occur as the JYM community makes decisions in business meeting. We will make every effort to announce and post changes as they occur.

Respectful Relationships

Young Friends and the PYM Youth Program Coordinator will host activities with the teens focused on respectful relationships. The majority of the time will be spent discussing how Quaker testimonies and Quaker ideals can be lived in romantic relationships. Topics that may be explored include boundary setting, self-respect, dealing with expectations from a partner, how to feel safe in a relationship, acceptance

of one's own sexual orientation, and how to communicate with parents/guardians. It will also include a presentation on Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and birth control methods.

While optional, Respectful Relationships has gotten some of the highest ratings from teens on their evaluations, and we hope parents will support their teen's participation. We will continue, with the help of our Youth Program Coordinator, to present materials from the *Our Whole Lives, Sexuality and Our Faith* (OWL) curriculum that was created by the Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ. We believe that OWL's assumptions and values of "self worth, sexual health, responsibility, and justice and inclusivity" align well with PYM Friends' beliefs.

JYM, like Our Whole Lives (OWL), affirms that parents/guardians are the primary sexuality educators of their children. Therefore, your signature is requested on a consent form in the registration materials to opt in or out of this session, and you are welcome to contact Alyssa Nelson at pym.youthcoordinator@gmail.com with any questions.

How can parents or sponsors support the teens and JYM?

1. Expect you teen to check in with you daily during PYM. Meals are a good time for check ins.
2. Set appropriate limits to meet the needs of your teen. Younger teens often sleep with their parents the first year in JYM.
3. Give your teens space to learn and grow.
4. Be available to help if needed.
5. Speak to your teen's Support Group adult or JYM adult committee members if you have a concern.
6. Talk to your teens about their experience after PYM.
7. Provide feedback to the JYM committee.
8. Help your teen get together with other teens in your area during the rest of the year.

If you have any questions about the program please contact committee clerk Stephen Myers, 916-396-5332, stefanovich76@gmail.com

Please be sure to fill out your teen's Parental Release and Medical forms and the Respectful Relationships consent. They are available at the registration web site. Teens will not be allowed to participate in the program until these forms are received.

We are excited by the great program developed by JYM for this year and look forward to seeing you and your teen at PYM!

In the Light,

The JYM Adult Committee

Stephen Myers, clerk
Kate Connell
Steve Leeds
Sue Torrey

and Teen Officers

Augie Brinker,
Emma Castanedo,
Clare Griese, co-clerks
Nathan Walker, clerk of M&O