

# STARTING A PATHFINDER CLUB

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# ESSENTIALS FOR STARTING A PATHFINDER MINISTRY

## Congratulations!

You have just embarked on one of life's greatest adventures with God. Through continued prayer and personal Bible study the Holy Spirit will guide and equip you as you establish Pathfinder ministry in your church. You and your church will never be the same again!

## How to begin a Pathfinder Club:

Included are forms that will assist you in this exciting new adventure.

1. Acquire these Pathfinder Ministry resources from the Conference Pathfinder office.
  - a. Contact your Pastor, your District Coordinator, and your Conference Pathfinder Director and plan to meet with them on a regular basis for guidance and direction.
  - b. Read the little booklet *Seven Steps for Successful Pathfinder Leadership* and follow the steps as outlined with guidance from your District Coordinator.
  - c. Purchase a Pathfinder Staff Manual and become familiar with the Philosophy & Objectives and the concepts and structure of Pathfinder ministry.
  
2. Get church board approval to start a Pathfinder ministry.
  - a. Because having a Pathfinder Club is an outreach ministry of your local church, it is required that your church board approves it with recorded actions in the board minutes.
  - b. Together with your Pastor, review the following *New Club Questionnaire* form in order to put together a proposal to present to your church board.
  - c. Get signatures from church board members as specified on the following *New Club Charter Application* and mail or fax the completed form to the Man-Sask Pathfinder office.
  
3. Gather your Leadership Team.
  - a. Once the Man-Sask Pathfinder Office receives your New Club Charter Application you will receive a *Certificate of Operation*.
  - b. With the support of your Pastor and the church board, recruit members to become active as Staff. Share the need, vision, and enthusiasm of what Pathfinder ministry can do for your youth and larger community around your church.
  - c. Involve your District Coordinator to join you for Staff organizational meetings to help teach the fundamentals of Pathfinding and to build the ministry vision of your Staff. (See the following document *Pathfinder Staff Meeting Planning*.)

Congratulations! You are on the journey of Pathfinder ministry!

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# NEW CLUB QUESTIONNAIRE

Please print and fill in, sign and/or initial each line.

1. There are \_\_\_\_\_ potential Pathfinders (grades 5-12) in my church or churches. (List churches)
- 

2. I am interested in beginning a club and have read the booklet *Seven Steps for Successful Pathfinder Leadership*. I intend to follow the steps that lead to starting our club. \_\_\_\_\_

3. The following names are potential Pathfinder staff. They will participate in Staff Training prior to starting our club. (Suggested Staff to Pathfinder Ratio: is 1 Staff to 6 Pathfinders with a minimum of one adult male for boys and one adult female for girls as required.)
- 

4. Our club could meet on \_\_\_\_\_ and have \_\_\_\_\_ meetings a month. We will have at least one staff meeting a month on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Three meetings a month are recommended plus an outing and/or outreach activity.)

5. I will introduce a preliminary budget to the church board and ask for their support for a Pathfinder Club.

6. I would like our Pathfinders to be in dress uniform by:  
a. January      b. Camporee (May)      c. next Pathfinder year

7. I would like our Pathfinders to be in field uniform by:  
a. January      b. Camporee (May)      c. next Pathfinder year

8. I want to begin the progressive class level work by \_\_\_\_\_ (enter date)

9. I would like to teach the following honors during the year.
- 

10. Although not mandatory, I plan for our club to be involved with the following events:

Pathfinder Induction Ceremony  
Pathfinder Sabbath  
Pathfinder Investiture Ceremony  
Conference Camporee (May)

11. I will meet with our Pathfinder District Coordinators for help and advice in getting started.

# PATHFINDER CLUB CHARTER APPLICATION

## The Philosophy of Pathfinding

The purpose of having a Pathfinder Club is to lead its membership into a growing redemptive relationship with God, to build its membership into responsible, mature individuals and to involve its membership in active, selfless service. All Pathfinder leaders are Christians, working hand-in-hand with parents, teachers, and pastors to provide optimum opportunities for Christian development. The Pathfinder Club is an extension of the home, school and church. It is an experimental laboratory where growth and learning flourish. The membership involves youth in grades 5<sup>th</sup> –12<sup>th</sup> who have a desire for group activities ranging from community and world mission projects to nature, outdoor and camping activities, AY Pathfinder class curriculum and AY honors. Above all, Pathfinding gives youth an environment in which to actively expand their personal experience with Christ.

Sponsoring  
Church(es) \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Elected Club Director \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## **Your Commitment to Pathfinding**

We, the undersigned, have read, understand, and are in full agreement with the above Philosophy of Pathfinding and agree to support our club through those means with which the Lord has blessed this church, including finances, staff volunteers, securing a place to meet, transportation on outings, and other such needs as may arise in the fulfillment of this ministry, and to assist and support the work of the Pathfinder ministry in this conference and around the world.

## **Signatures**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Church Pastor                      Head Elder                      Church Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Club Director                      Club Deputy Director                      Church Board Chairman

Church Board Members:

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# PATHFINDER STAFF MEETING PLANNING

## **Why hold staff meetings?**

- Discuss upcoming meetings, events and next month's calendar
- Keep staff informed
- Discuss problems and suggestions
- Make decisions together

## **Who may attend Pathfinder Staff meetings?**

- All Pathfinder staff
- TLTs
- Pathfinders in order to meet their AY Class Level requirements
- Area Coordinators and/or Conference Pathfinder Director by invitation

## **When should meetings be held?**

- Once a month – more if necessary
- After a Pathfinder meeting – recommended for emergencies only
- On a separate night
- Try to keep it to the same evening each month

## **Where should meetings be held?**

- At home of a Staff member with children
- Church Pathfinder room
- Wherever it is convenient

## **What Staff preparations are necessary?**

- Volunteer Application Form (Refer to the Policies section of the Man-Sask Pathfinder Handbook)
- Driver's Questionnaire (Refer to the Policies section of the Man-Sask Pathfinder Handbook)
- Certificate of Qualification (Refer to the Policies section of the Man-Sask Pathfinder Handbook)

## **How are the meetings held?**

- Director is usually the chairman and prepares the agenda (another staff could also do this)
- Make copies of the agenda in advance for staff to study
- Club secretary takes notes of meetings (Be sure all Staff members get a copy of notes)
- Keep accurate minutes on file
- Stay with your agenda as much as possible

## **Enjoy your staff and affirm them often!**

- Give out notes of appreciation as well as verbal appreciation
- Have a get-together for Staff so they get to know each other
- Play together – Staff are just older Pathfinders who want to enjoy Pathfinder ministry too

**Remember we are ALL volunteers!**

# CLUB MEMBERSHIP

1. Man-Sask Pathfinder membership is based on grades as follows:
  - Junior Pathfinders are grades 5-6
    - (Participation of youth under grade 5 must be at least 10 years old and must be approved by local Club Director.)
  - Teen Pathfinders are grades 7-10
    - (Participation of youth in grade 7 must be approved by local Club Director.)
  - TLT Pathfinders are grades 9-12
    - (There are no exceptions for age or grade level)
  - Pathfinder Staff must be out of high school and at least 18 years old with approved Volunteer Application Form by the Man-Sask Conference
    - (There are no exceptions for age since all staff must be legal adults)
2. Club activities include honors, outings, regular club meetings, AY class levels, drilling and marching, and fund raising campaigns. The Pathfinder must agree before joining the club to participate and cooperate in these activities.
3. Members must be faithful in attendance. Many clubs establish limits on absences and tardiness. Pathfinders who do not comply with these regulations are dropped from the club.
4. The Pathfinder's parents/guardians must be willing to cooperate with the regulations and activities of the club. At times they will be asked to supply money and time to support their child's membership.
5. New members pay an application fee and all members pay club dues on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis as established by their club.
6. Each Pathfinder should have a complete Pathfinder Class-A Dress Uniform and Field Uniform. The Pathfinder comes to all meetings and club-sponsored events in the complete uniform designated by the club director for each activity.
7. Pathfinders are expected to obey all regulations and instructions of the Pathfinder staff.
8. Club members must be willing to participate in Share-Your-Faith activities, which include community projects and outreach programs.
9. Pathfinders are expected to participate and cooperate in all Conference events, such as Camporees.
10. Pathfinders must learn and keep the Pathfinder Pledge and Law.

# PATHFINDER LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Listed below are resources that are invaluable for starting and leading a successful Pathfinder Club. It is recommended that churches acquire these resources so that club Staff can use them as guidance in establishing their Pathfinder Club.

These and other resources are available at the Conference Pathfinder office and *Advent Source*.

- **Seven Steps for Successful Pathfinder Leadership** is a booklet that covers the steps-by-step process for starting a Pathfinder Club.
- **Pathfinder Staff Manual** is the primary resource for Pathfinder ministry! It contains an immense wealth of information and ideas for making a club successful.
- **AY Honor's Manual** contains requirements for all General Conference AY Honors as well as various Division honors, including North American Division.
- **AY Classes Instructor's Manual** takes the instructor through each step in leading young people to complete their class level preparing them to be invested and to prepare for the next level.

5<sup>th</sup> grade - Friend    6<sup>th</sup> grade - Companion  
7<sup>th</sup> grade - Explorer    8<sup>th</sup> grade - Ranger  
9<sup>th</sup> grade - Voyager    10<sup>th</sup> grade - Guide

- **Pathfinder Drill Manual** This resource shows how Pathfinder Drill and Marching is used, and works together with kindness and fun, teaching Pathfinders how to learn to listen and respond as a club.



# PREPARATION BEFORE REGISTRATION

Advertise the Registration dates early in the church bulletin, newsletters, in the schools and give personal invitations both verbally and by mail to Pathfinder age youth. Obtain a list from your local Church School and Sabbath School for this age group.

## REGISTRATION PACKET

It is very helpful to put together a “Registration Packet” for each of your Pathfinders and parents to complete on registration night that contains the following forms and information.

### Information to be filled out and signed by Pathfinders & Parents

1. Pathfinder Membership Application
2. Pathfinder Commitment and Pledge form
3. Club Requirements and By-laws
4. Health and Medical Records form

### Information for Pathfinders & Parents

1. Monthly & Yearly calendars
2. Uniform information
3. Pathfinder Insurance information

### Pathfinder File

1. Application
2. Health record
3. Emergency Contact Info
4. Digital Photo



### Pathfinder Staff File

1. Application
2. Health Record
3. Emergency Contact Info
4. Digital Photo
5. Criminal Record Check



**Pathfinder Membership Application:** (Refer to the Starting a Club section of the Man-Sask PF Handbook)

Each Pathfinder and Parent or Guardian is to complete this form each year. The completed form is put into the Pathfinder’s file. It has a voluntary waiver of claims clause.

**Pathfinder Commitment and Pledge Form:** (Refer to Starting a Club section of the Man-Sask Handbook)

Each Pathfinder is to complete this form each year. The completed form is duplicated. One goes in the Pathfinder’s file and the other in the Pathfinder’s Notebook. If you are ever challenged with the Pathfinder’s behavior, refer to the form that was signed and dated as a reminder of their “promise.”

**Club Requirements and By-Laws:** (Refer to your Church or Pathfinder club’s requirements) Each club should have its club requirements and bylaws in writing as well as their Merit System. These forms are to be signed by the Pathfinder and parent(s)/guardian and can be referred to in case of discipline problems later as a reminder of their agreement.

**Health and Medical Records:** (Refer to the Policy section of the Man-Sask Pathfinder Handbook) Use a different color each year to help distinguish who has up-dated and who needs to. It is very important that this form is completed accurately.



**Monthly & Yearly Calendars:** (Refer to the Club Planning section of the Man-Sask PF Handbook)

Each monthly calendar should have information concerning times of meetings, which uniform should be worn, sharing activities, outings, etc.

**Uniform Specifications:** (Refer to the Uniforms – Supplies section of the Man-Sask PF Handbook) The staff member in charge of ordering uniform items will need to have a chart to help with sizing and ordering. If each staff member is in complete dress uniform at time of registration, this will help parents and Pathfinders “catch the vision” of what the club will look like. (Refer to the Advent Source catalogue)

**Insurance Information:** (Refer to the Policy section of the Man-Sask PF Handbook) This information should be read by each Pathfinder, Parent, and Staff before you make any outing plans. Be certain that all forms are completely filled in and put in driver notebooks.

# PATHFINDER CLUB MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I would like to join the \_\_\_\_\_ Pathfinder club. I will attend club meetings, hikes, camping, field trips, missionary adventures and other club activities. I agree to be guided by the rules of the club and the Pathfinder Pledge and Law.



Pathfinder Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>Pathfinder Law</b>                  By the grace of God,                  I will be pure and kind and true                  I will keep the Pathfinder Law                  I will be a servant of God                  And a friend to man.</p>	<p><b>Pathfinder Pledge</b>                  Keep the Morning Watch                  Do my honest part                  Care for my body                  Keep a level eye                  Be courteous and obedient                  Walk softly in the sanctuary                  Keep a song in my heart                  Go on God's errands</p>
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Registration Fee \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Club Dues \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Insurance: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ AY Class \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Church \_\_\_\_\_

I have been a Pathfinder:     yes  no    Where \_\_\_\_\_  
 My dad is a Master Guide     yes  no    My dad has been a Pathfinder     yes  no  
 My mom is a Master Guide     yes  no    My mom has been a Pathfinder     yes  no

**Approval by Parents or Guardians**

The applicant must be in at least the 5<sup>th</sup> grade as a Junior Pathfinder, or 7<sup>th</sup> grade as a Teen Pathfinder.

We have read the Pathfinder Pledge and Law and are willing and desirous that the applicant becomes a Pathfinder. We will assist the applicant in observing the rules of the Pathfinder organization. In consideration of the benefits derived from membership, we hereby voluntarily waive any claim against the club or the Manitoba-Saskatchewan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for any accidents, which may arise in connection with the activities of the Pathfinder Club.

**As parents we understand that the Pathfinder Club program is an active one for the applicant. It includes many opportunities for service, adventure, and fun. We will cooperate:**

1. By learning how we can assist the applicant and his leaders.
2. By encouraging the applicant to take an active part in all activities.
3. By attending events to which parents are invited.
4. By assisting Club leaders and by serving as leaders if called upon.
5. By supplying needed information on the Membership Application and Health Record.

We hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ was born on \_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's name month/day/year

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of father or guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Father's or guardian's occupation

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature of mother or guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Mother's or guardian's occupation

Date of application \_\_\_\_\_

# PATHFINDER COMMITMENT AND PLEDGE

I will do my best to practice the principles of the Pathfinder Pledge and Law, and to cooperate with the leaders and obey the regulations of the Pathfinder club as outlined in the requirements for Pathfinder Club Membership and the club bylaws, which I have read.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Please print

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## PATHFINDER PLEDGE

By the Grace of God  
I will be pure and kind and true  
I will keep the Pathfinder Law  
I will be a servant of God  
And a friend to man

## PATHFINDER LAW

*is for me to*

Keep the Morning Watch  
Do my honest part  
Care for my body  
Keep a level eye  
Be courteous and obedient  
Walk softly in the Sanctuary  
Keep a song in my heart  
And go on God's errands

## PATHFINDER SONG

Oh, we are the Pathfinders' strong,  
The servants of God are we.  
Faithful as we march along,  
In kindness, truth and purity.

A message to tell to the world,  
A truth that will set us free,  
King Jesus the Savior's coming back  
for you and me.

More than just learning these requirements to be a Pathfinder, you must always try to live up to the Pledge and Law. As you sing the song, think of the words and really mean them.

## PATHFINDER PARENTS' COMMITMENT AND PLEDGE

I will do my best to support and cooperate with the Pathfinder programs and activities. I will further do my part to see that my Pathfinder \_\_\_\_\_  
cooperates and participates with the requirements and bylaws of the Pathfinder club.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian's Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# GETTING YOUR CLUB ORGANIZED

## Prepare

1. Reconfirm what each person will be doing the next week (You have already planned the agenda at your last meeting)
2. Make a to-do list and work on it until it has been completed
3. Don't procrastinate as things done at the last minute are often caused by lack of organization and create a loss of control
4. Assign each staff member to be responsible for devotions unless you have a club pastor or chaplain. This is a good time to insert activities from the progressive class levels.

## Counselor notebooks

1. Names, addresses and phone numbers of Pathfinders in their units (Remember these are to be kept confidential)
2. AY Class Level groups
3. Yearly calendar
4. Events for the year
5. What uniform is required for each event?
6. Addresses for staff with phone numbers and e-mail addresses

**Pathfinder notebooks** can be made up and color coordinated to match the classwork levels.

1. Copy of the Pathfinders application
2. Copy of commitment and pledge that the Pathfinder has signed
3. AY Class Level material
4. Honor class record
5. Instructions for knots
6. Yearly calendar

## Administrative files including:

1. Pathfinder applications
2. Medical records
3. Uniform information and if renting uniforms, a complete list of what the club owns
4. Staff information and child protection forms
5. Copy of all Drivers' information and Insurance Cards

## Drivers' notebooks

1. Copy of Permission & Medical Consent form for Pathfinder for the current event
2. Copy of knots they can practice on and rope
3. Other activities they can do in the vehicle while traveling

## General file

1. Attendance
2. Yearly and monthly calendars
3. Devotions
4. Drill Team list
5. Finances
6. Forms
7. Honor Class lists
8. Supplies
9. Travel information
10. Unit lists

## Events

1. Camporee
2. Club outings
3. Fund-raisers
4. Induction
5. Investiture
6. Leadership Training
7. Pathfinder Sabbaths

# CLUB OUTINGS

Club outings come in several forms, General Outings and Extreme Outings, and throughout the year many of the various types of outings will be experienced by your club membership. (See *Outing Specifications* in Policies section of the Man-Sask Pathfinder Handbook.)

Outings are an important part of Pathfinders as they are the glue that keeps the club together. Working, playing, learning, and experiencing new things together are what bind your group.

While on outings, Pathfinders are able to “work” on honors and because they are doing it together in a different setting it won’t seem like work at all.

Class Level work is another area which the club membership can work on while on outings, including camping skills and outreach.

You have many choices and the following list is just the beginning of what is out there to do:

<b>Club Campout Backpacking Unit outing</b>	Provincial Park, farm, Camp Whitesand, churches, “back yard”...
<b>Outreach activities</b>	Feeding the homeless at a soup kitchen Reading to the elderly in a care facility Taking flowers to a shut-in Mowing the lawn of a church member who is unable to mow The list is almost endless - use your imagination
<b>Excursions</b>	Museums Zoo Police/Fire/Ambulance Station The list is almost endless - use your imagination
<b>Reward trips</b>	Miniature golf Special hike Gym Night Rock climbing gym Sledding And many more...

Take your Pathfinders into nature as much as possible to experience what God has made for each of us.

# PATHFINDER PUBLICITY

Remember everything you do reflects on the church and on the club. Be a positive influence in your church and community, smile and go the second mile. You will want the Pathfinder Club publicity to be favorable! Communication is an important tool for your Pathfinder Club.

- Monthly newsletter to Pathfinders and their families
- Active bulletin board at church with pictures and captions
- Articles in the church newsletter
- Articles in the **Prairie Horizons**
- Stories and pictures in the local newspaper
- Helping at church
  - Ushers and deacons
  - Telling stories
  - Babysitting
  - Cleaning up church and grounds of church
  - Greeters - inside and outside (shovelling walk way)
  - Sabbath School teachers
  - Sharing musical talents
  - Helping out during evangelistic meetings
- Helping in the community
  - Community clean up days
  - Picking up trash along the roads (check for any age limits on this activity)
  - Collecting canned goods and preparing food baskets for needy
  - Christmas gifts and food for needy family
  - Volunteer as Salvation Army bell ringers at Christmas time
  - Volunteer at the hospital or Adult Foster Care Homes

There are a few “common sense” ways for helping the Pathfinder program have good publicity.

- Always ask before using church facilities.
  - Don't assume you can just use the church any time you want. Check to see if available.
- Clean up after each program
  - Pick up and clean any spills on tables, floors, etc. It will be appreciated.
- Put away items that have been used.
  - Put tables, chairs, etc. that were not set out, away where you found them.
- Have work bees to go the extra mile at church and club.
  - You may do yard work, clean up, painting, etc. but be sure to get permission first.
- Keep Pathfinders in units, no running around, church property may get damaged.
  - If an item is broken, repair it, or report it.
- Stay together when doing can collecting or ingathering.
  - Pathfinders running across lawns and acting up won't help good publicity.
- Have the Pathfinder units write special invitations to programs and hand deliver them
  - We all know that the Pathfinder program is better with Pastoral and parent support.
- Think of ways you can help in your church and community.
- Be creative and think of helpful things you can do. Remember it is not just good publicity.
  - It is also teaching sharing, caring, and responsibility to Pathfinders.