

# THE HANDBOOK FOR MINISTERS OF YOUTH KINGDOM OF MERIDIES

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## Introduction

### Welcome to the Ministry of Youth!

Despite its innocent exterior, office can be one of the most difficult jobs you will undertake, and the most fulfilling! Multi-tasking is vital, as you will find yourself playing director of public relations, planner, teacher, accountant, so many distinct roles. However, you will be providing an educational service that benefits children, families, and the Society at large (these are our future leaders, after all)! Remember you are often the first person that a child has and experience with in an official SCA.

### Okay, now where do you start?

The very first thing you should do once your group has given you approval to conduct this office is contact the Kingdom Minister of Youth with a Letter of Introduction. It need not be formal, but it should include the following information...

SCA Name:

Modern Name:

Mailing Address:

Email Address:

Telephone Number:

Membership Number:

Membership Expiration Date:

What position are you applying for? MOY or MOY Deputy?

How long have you been in the SCA?

Have you helped with SCA youth activities? If so, when and for whom?

Are you willing to help with Kingdom level events or other groups in need?

Why do you want to be an MOY/Deputy?

Read the and understand the handbook! Remember, though, as soon as you are through - put it in your files. This handbook was created for your benefit, sure, but also for the benefit of your group and your successor. This goes for seneschals, too - if you are currently sans one Minister of Children, save it for the day when you do have one or so you may use it for reference for temporary planners who volunteer to run activities at your events.

### Next, make sure your background check is in order.

This is the new way to do Background Checks:

As a member of the SCA, to receive a background check:

You email your Kingdom Seneschal or other approved officer with your Full Legal Name, Country, and the best email address by which to reach you. Also include the reason you need a background check and any information that might be helpful.

If approved by the Kingdom Seneschal, you will receive a link from either IntelliCorp (if US-based) or Sterling MyBackCheck (if Canada-based). This link is good for two weeks. There you will fill in your information safely and securely.

When your results are returned to us from IntelliCorp or MyBackCheck, it will be updated in the database. Your membership will reflect that status, and your kingdom will be notified. Your background check will expire 2 years from its submission. This information will be noted in your account.

## For those without access to email / Internet:

If you do not have access to email and the Internet, you can fax or mail in a paper form, but note that it will be a slower process.

## Chapter One: Understanding The Office

We will Discuss the Structure of the Office form the Kingdom level down.

### **Kingdom Minister of Youth:**

The duties of the Kingdom Minister of Youth the face of the Kingdom, they must know all the rules and regulations regarding Kingdom and Society. They promote youth and youth activities. They will be there to answer any questions pertaining to youth and families. Assist Kingdom level deputies, local and regional Ministers of Youth. They ensure that there are youth activities at Kingdom level events.

### **Deputy Kingdom Minister of Youth:**

This is the individual that will step up into the Kingdom Minister of Youth position. They are learning how to run the office. They step in when the Kingdom Minister of Youth cannot fulfill their official obligations, they also can assist in running Kingdom level youth activities. They assist with answering questions and helping regional and local MOYs and assist them as needed.

### **Deputy of Teen Programs:**

The individual that fosters a sense of place and belonging to the Youth of thirteen and above. Often teenagers age out of Page School activities. This person organizes teen socials, classes and events that are geared for this age range.

### **Deputy Dean of Page School:**

They promote a structured degree program for youth much like the Royal University of Meridies. They host graduations keep track of Youth in the program and a list of teachers that participate in the page school program.

### **Deputy Dean of Resources:**

They will be able to assist Ministers of Youth in research for activity ideas historical references and other things to entertain and enrich the Youth of our Kingdom.

## **Regional Deputy:**

To satisfy the two deep rule, set forth by Society we must provide enough individuals that are non-married non-dating non-related, and not kin. At times this can be a challenging task, with our Kingdom being large, the Kingdom Ministry of Youth can split our kingdom into at least four subsections based on location. These individuals do not have to be part of any local group they just need to have a valid background check and knowledge of the handbook and rules for the kingdom and society regarding Youth. They can help run activities at the Kingdom and local levels.

## **Local minister of Youth:**

They are the Ministers of Youth that are attached to a local group or Barony. Their primary responsibilities are to ensure youth activities happen at the local or group level. When their group is hosting an event, they run these activities. They can also assist or run Kingdom level event youth activities.

## **Local Deputy Minister of Youth**

Again, because we must satisfy the two deep rule it is encouraged that every minister of Youth has a deputy. Their job is to assist the local minister of Youth with activities. They too can and should have a background check. This way if the local Minister of Youth cannot host the activities, they can. They can also assist in Kingdom activities regional activities.

There are a few simple things to understand about this office that we can briefly discuss, Kingdom Law provides a good description (provided in Chapter Four of this handbook)

- You are not a babysitter; you are an educator. Read that sentence again. Please commit it to memory.
- Along those lines, you are not providing services for pre-school-aged children. You are providing classes and activities for the children who are emotionally and physically prepared to participate without their parents, being those ages five through sixteen. The current policy relating to the age requirements can be found in the Seneschal's Handbook.
- “Glue and Glitter” activities are not considered educationally enriching. They are “busy work.” Occasionally, something mindless and fun is fine, but remember your office description, your goals, and your capabilities before relying on them too heavily. Do not sell yourself short and do not underestimate the brilliant young minds around you.

## **Our School of Thought**

### **Rule #1 - Youth Involvement**

Children should receive the same opportunities for learning, entertainment, and belonging as adults strive to provide for themselves. The SCA is not just a hobby for the adults - it belongs to the next generation, too!

### **Rule #2 - Family Involvement**

For Ministers of Youth and Activity Leaders, make sure the parents know what their children are doing and always let the parents know about the child's accomplishments and strengths. Involve the parents whenever you are able.

## Rule #3 - A Sense of Belonging

Not only should the children receive the same opportunities as mentioned in Rule #1, but they are being a piece of the overall Society should be encouraged. Separating the children in an area where they are “out of sight, out of mind” is detrimental to our goal of making them a part of their hobby, and a part of the social structure which includes both adults and children. Separating the children is acceptable, and frequently necessary, to provide learning among their immediate peers and structured for their specific ages but do make efforts not to hide at the back of any given event site. Also, strive to inform the non-parent adults about the children’s activities and accomplishments if they have been apart all day (court or meetings provide a fantastic opportunity for this).

## We are working to...

1. Integrate children into the Society at large, at events, meetings, and in our hearts and minds,
2. Give the children a sense of belonging, in local groups, at events, within their Kingdom at large,
3. Foster parental involvement with regards to activities and learning for children by making those activities enjoyable for all, and welcoming parents,
4. Eliminate the “babysitter mentality” that’s not what the office of Minister of Youth is all about (it is about education and involvement),
5. Get rid of “glue-and-glitter” activities! Some plain old fun activities are welcome - and even needed, but falling back on “busy work” always is a disservice to the kids,
6. And finally, we hope we can all (kids and adults, alike) learn, grow, and have a lot of fun doing it! Let us help develop that sense of pride in accomplishment, love of learning, responsibility, respect, and chivalry among our youth. After all, they will be running the show one day!

## Guidelines for Running Children’s Activities

### Times

- It is recommended that activities not run for more than two hours per session, or three for larger events with volunteers readily available, with no more than two sessions in a day.
- Lunch breaks of at least one hour are necessary, to make certain children are fed and rested, and to ensure our MOYs and helpers do not run out of energy.
- Parents must pick up their children promptly at posted ending times. MOYs have the right to turn over children who have been left at activities past the end of activities (with a 15-minute grace period) to the constable on duty, the event autocrat, or the seneschal of the group hosting the event.

### Check-in

- Children should be checked-in to activities by a parent/legal guardian or designated adult.
- Adults need to supply the child’s name, parents’ SCA and real names, home group, and allergy information, if applicable.
- Adults are encouraged to donate an hour of their time to activities. MOYs without assistants (or without enough) **may require** parental participation.
- Youth activities are for children and youth **5 years of age and older**. Children under this age require much more attention and normally do not have the attention span and motor skills for most children’s activities. A child under 5 may participate if a parent/legal guardian or designated adult is always present with the child, at the local officer’s discretion.

**Note:** Checking children in and out of activities does not imply complete responsibility for your children falling on the MOY. While those managing kids' activities will look out for the safety of the children, the parents and children must be familiar with Kingdom Law regarding unattended children if the child is **under the age of twelve**. Additionally, children who are disruptive to activities (exhibiting violence or lewd behavior, for example) will be returned to their parents.

## Activities

- Activities should be geared to both educate and entertain the children and should be age appropriate. Activities should be goal oriented with stated objectives.
- The Ministry of Youth does not serve meals. It remains up to the parents to ensure that their children are fed. This does not exclude beverages and light snacks such as cookies from being provided by a local MOY, if he or she chooses. This also does not exclude a local group or household from sponsoring a meal for the children in a separate area, but the local officer will not be responsible for delivering, serving, and/or retrieving the children.

## Location

- Children's activities should be located where parents can easily check on their children. For most events, this is near the list field. This serves a dual function, also, as children do not need to be isolated from the major happenings of an event - they like to feel they are a part of the overall picture just as the adults do.
- Children's activities should be located away from obvious safety hazards, such as vehicular traffic areas, creeks and other bodies of water, unprotected balconies, and electrical equipment.

## Budget

- Host groups should provide adequate tables and chairs of normal size for children's activities.
- Host groups should budget a suggested \$50, at least, for supplies. This amount should be increased for events where large numbers of children are expected.

## Chapter Two: Planning Activities

Your group's event is coming up. You have been asked to run activities. Where do you start? Be vocal, it is a tendency of MOYs to take what is given and never ask for anything more, even if they are in desperate need. The autocrat cannot understand your needs if you don't express them! Be professional, courteous, friendly, and do not be afraid to ask for help or resources.

Let us begin with those resources I just mentioned. The first thing you need to know is what items, location, funds, and helpers are available to you. Here are some items to consider:

## Location

- What is the event site like, and where will you be located? Do you have access to an indoor classroom, and how close is it to bathrooms? If you need electricity, are there outlets available?
- If you choose to do outdoor activities, can you position them near the field (for the parents' convenience and to ensure the children are not excluded from the overall event)? If it is going to be hot outside, will you have shade? Is there drinking water nearby, or can it be made available?

- Watch out for dangers, too. How close are you to the parking lot? Are their natural hazards nearby? This is especially an issue in Meridies - we do not need to invite alligators to the party.

## Creativity

- Do you already have ideas brewing, or are you looking for inspiration? Does the event have a theme you can use? Do you have your own independent theme?
- Count on help, too. Use your MOY network, related MOY chat groups, or scour web pages for ideas. Remember, you are not just limited to other Children's Officers' pages; you can dig through history-related sites and come up with your own activities. The same goes for mundane education sites. Libraries are also fabulous resources.

## Structure

Are you planning to run a Pages' School session or block of classes, or do you want activities...or a mix of both? Consider there are many different vehicles for learning, and a blend of methods is more exciting to energetic young minds.

Remember, classes and activities can be taught different ways:

- Lecture-Style: Remind your teachers to be interactive - the kids will want to ask questions!
- Workshops: These provide a finished project to bestow on parents, plus it is "hands-on"
- Activity Centers: These allow children to move freely from one activity to another.
- Competitions: Great for outdoor games, or strategic games...and for parental involvement!
- Hunts/Quests: Hunts can be great methods for teaching historical facts or SCA anthropology.
- Field Trips: Rope in the folks running another area and have them strut their stuff! This benefits BOTH areas, children's activities, and the hosts.

## Putting Ideas into Plans

You have come up with a theme or ideas now and decided what classes you'd like taught, or what activities you wish to run. Keep in touch with your autocrat and inform them of your plans and needs. Take a written outline of your plans with you to the event meetings.

Make sure your information will be included in the Kingdom newsletter advertisement, onsite booklet, or any other publications that post schedules and activity details. If you will be doing any of your own press (signs, handouts, booklets), note the date in your calendar for completing publications and making copies.

Enlist teachers for your classes. A teacher does not have to be an MOY or a parent. And even those who profess to have trouble relating to children can be given pointers or help in working with children if you really hope for them to share their knowledge. Even those who are wary of running classes for kids often find it was as enjoyable as teaching adults - or even more so - if they give it a try.

As your teachers accept, make sure you know what their needs are so you can define your requisitions or purchases. Keep in contact with them before the event to stay on top of schedule alterations or requests for items needed.

Plan to have some books or other activities on hand if the children run through two hours' worth of activities in a half-hour!



## Confirming Plans

Finalize your schedule; then, call your teachers, helpers, runners, autocrat, and anyone else working in your area to confirm. Let everyone else in your group know your final plans with appropriate verbal reports at meetings.

Make a list of what items from your group's property you will need (not the things you are purchasing with your budget, but items your group keeps for events). Some groups use requisition forms, but you can create one by simply writing down that list to present to the autocrat (or whomever is overseeing site set-up). Write when (during the event) you will need the item and where it should be at that time.

Make sure the herald is aware of any announcements for your area and knows to check in with you (or a runner) at the end of activities in case children were not picked up by parents. It is also a good idea to have the herald announce the end of activities about 15 minutes prior to closing them, so parents have a heads-up. You might also want to double-check with the constable/autocrat/seneschal to be sure you have a plan for getting kids who were not picked up, if you normally handle the unattended children issue in this manner.

## Keeping Notes

Save your receipts! It often helps to keep notes on expenses, too. Fill out your reimbursement forms ahead of time, too, and make sure you know when your reeve needs them submitted.

Keep a list of all who assisted you, for thank-you notes and kudos following the event.

## Things to Do Ahead of Time

Make your purchases for any supplies you might need. Organize them as you buy, according to each activity. Some people bag supplies, or storage totes, (good for inclement weather, too). Keep an inventory as you go, which you can also tape to the inside lids of the totes if it helps keep you organized.

Make up sign-in sheets. If you are running Pages' School accredited classes, add a column for the child to mark whether he or she is enrolled. If it is a large event, you may want a column indicating the parents' camping area or where they plan to be during activities. Also handy is a space for noting allergies and other health concerns.

Finish any signs, booklets, or handouts you plan to post or distribute onsite. Make sure you get them (and your sign-up sheets) copied in advance!

## At the Event

Set up early! Have activity supplies set out in proper places before the children arrive. Have fun and relax as best you can. If things do not go quite as you expected, ad lib. Children are flexible and will often come up with their own ideas if you just ask their opinion (which is handy if they speed through the activities).

Keep an eye out for drop-in volunteers and note who did what to help you. Thank your helpers!

If you are able, get on "court business" and tell everyone what the kids did that day. Hang or display their works of art in the main hall for all to see.

## Following the Event

Send in your report (within two weeks) to the KMOY. If your group does "after-action" reports, submit that to the autocrat, seneschal, or appropriate person.

Turn in receipts and reimbursement forms to the Exchequer.

Feel free to tell all the details at your next meeting in a verbal report and thank all your helpers and teachers. You might also want to submit a thank-you letter in your local newsletter and/or write thank-you notes.

## Chapter Three: Reports and Paperwork

As mentioned earlier in this book, the Ministry of Youth is a Lesser Office, and therefore is not a required office, so many groups still do not have an MOY (and some do not need them). However, being a “lesser office” does not make reporting any less important. In fact, it is mutually beneficial on so many different levels.

Another point to consider - if you do not report regularly, you risk being marked as “inactive” on the KMOY’s roster. Inactive coordinators of children’s activities plan such under the auspices of and with the permission of their seneschal. In addition, active and reporting MOYs tend to have a better support system and resource network with the Kingdom Ministry of Youth.

- **Reports are due quarterly to the KMOY.** Current reporting dates can be found on the Kingdom’s webpage for the Office of the Minister of Children. Make sure you send your report to the KMOY, unless otherwise specified. You may also want to send a copy of the report to your seneschal to help keep your group informed of your office’s activities and concerns. As of the latest revision of this handbook Quarterly reporting dates are:
  - 1st Report (Nov - Jan) - Report Due February 10th and Late by the 20th
  - 2nd Report (Feb - Apr) - Report Due May 10th and Late by the 20th
  - 3rd Report (May - Jul) - Report Due August 10th and Late by the 20th
  - 4th Report (Aug - Oct) - Report Due November 10th and Late by the 20th
  - Year-end Report - Report Due January 1st and Late by the 10th
- **Reports are also due following events, within two weeks following the final day of that event.** Check with your seneschal to see if a local event report is required additionally and to whom it is due.

### What is Required in a Report

Report forms are available on the Kingdom’s webpage for the Office of the Minister of Youth. You can also use the form in the Appendix (though you will need to retype it to provide enough room for answers). These forms may be used “as is” for quarterly reports.

Event reports should include all the same contact information that is included in the quarterly report, but the following basic information should be substituted for the questions:

- Event name, date, and location
- Host group, mundane location of group.
- Discuss Activities
- Note Attendance
- Expenses Incurred
- Problems
- Successes
- Credits

Remember, reporting is your opportunity to seek help, ask questions, or seek team members in solving common problems! You also contribute to the big picture when you offer your feedback and help with overall solutions.

## Finances

Keep an envelope handy within for receipts and keep with it reimbursement forms, expense charts, and any purchase notes you might have. It can be beneficial to make copies of receipts, too, for reference for the next year's event and to cover the "just in case" factor.

## Articles/Handbooks

Not only will you utilize this file for storing this handbook but add relevant articles and updates to the handbook. A separate folder (or folders) within for other articles can be used for writings that inform how to teach specific classes or run certain activities, articles for parents, resource articles, (not required, but handy).

## Correspondence

Any letter you write in your official capacity as MOY should be included in this file, starting with your letter of introduction. Keep a spot for incoming mail, too. Do not forget to include emails if you discussed scheduling, ideas, class notes.

## Reports

Keep copies of your quarterly, year-end, and event reports. If you write separate local reports or abbreviate reports for your newsletter, these can be filed in a "local" folder within this file.

## Additional

None of these are required to be stored in the local MOY files, but some the items may be helpful to you. Consider keeping:

- A calendar: Note when reports are due, when nearby events are scheduled (if you would like to offer to assist neighbors), and when your group's functions and events are scheduled.
- A small phone/address book: Keep contact information on hand for the Kingdom/Principality MOY, your deputies (or helpers, or regular teachers), families with whom you work, and the officers of your group.
- Kingdom Law: If you do not have a copy of Kingdom Law, you can simply print a page with law and revisions relevant to children for quick reference.
- Event attendance notes: How many people attended? How many of them were children? Percentage breakdowns can help if you use such things to determine budgets.
- Activity List: Keep good notes about activities you have tried, what worked and what did not, and what is needed for each activity. You might also want to note activities you want to try. Obviously, this is good for your own reference, but it will also be beneficial to your successors.

# Chapter Four: Kingdom Laws/ Society

## Kingdom Office Description

From Kingdom Law, October 2023: IV-414 Minister of Children

### IV.114.1 MINISTER OF YOUTH

- A. The Minister of Youth foster the education of the children of Meridies (between the ages of 5 to 16) on medieval activities and the Society. This position is a deputy to the Kingdom Seneschal.
- B. The Minister of Youth will ensure, but not necessarily run, children’s activities that occur at Kingdom-level events.
- C. The Minister of Youth administer and develops curriculum for the Page School or assigns a deputy to oversee this administration and curriculum development.
- D. The Minister of Youth is responsible for and has authority over all other ministers of children in the various branches of the Kingdom.
- E. The Minister of Youth may appoint deputies as necessary to aid in the administration of their office

## Regarding Children's Attendance

From Kingdom Law, October 2023: VII-109 Minors

- A. Minors must attend any Society event in the company of a parent/legal guardian or a designated adult with the appropriate Society approved waivers.
- B. Parents/legal guardians or the designated adult, are responsible for any, and all, acts of the minor.
- C. Children must not be left unattended at events.
- D. Children **under the age of twelve** must always be within the sight or voice range of a responsible adult or teenager.
- E. Children **under the age of five** cannot be left unsupervised by the parent/legal guardian or designated adult at events. Failure to comply with these rules may result in sanctions ranging from expulsion from site to notification of mundane authorities depending on the circumstances.
- F. Waivers
  1. The designated adult of a minor child must present two sets of properly executed Society waivers at the registration table before the minor(s) enters the event.
  2. Each waiver includes instructions for completion; failure to follow the instructions may result in a denial of admittance to the event.
  3. The branch must retain one set of the waivers, and the other set retained by the Designated Adult.
  4. Waiver forms are on the Society or the kingdom websites. The branch Seneschal can also provide them.

G. For any official Society sponsored children’s activities, there must be two unrelated (non-married, non-dating, non-kin) adults in charge for the duration of the activity; at least one of which must have an active valid background check on file with the Society.

## Society Seneschal's Policy on Youth Participation in Online or Virtual Events:

As there is no way to guarantee adherence to the “Two Deep” model during live virtual or online Youth Activities, such activities are NOT sanctioned by the SCA.

All online activities billed as Youth Activities must follow an asynchronous model. The use of short engaging videos or written instructions for activities posted to official websites is encouraged. Any instructional videos for youth that are posted to an official channel should be previewed and approved by either the Kingdom Seneschal or the Kingdom Youth Officer. These videos may not contain instructor contact information (such as email address, etc.), nor may they encourage the viewer to contact the instructor. Further, any such videos must adhere to the specific platform's rules concerning videos for youth.

Youth are not prohibited from participating in general online activities hosted by the SCA. For these events, as with in-person events, the parents/guardians of the youth are responsible for overseeing their child's activities. Youth may participate in Kingdom and local online events, but their parents or legal guardians assume full responsibility for their child's safety and wellbeing.

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The final paragraph above may be used as a disclaimer on virtual event platforms.

June 2, 2021  
Lis Schraer  
Society Seneschal

## What does this mean to you?

At its core, the law means parents or “legally designated adults” (of the sort noted in the consent form, not someone you left your child with onsite with no paperwork exchange) are responsible for the actions of their child.

Parents may allow a responsible teenager or other adult to watch the child on site (without the paperwork), if the parent is present at the event. Children must stay in sight or voice range of that designated person. Parents are still ultimately responsible for the actions of the child in this situation.

As someone who works with the children, you are more likely to see infractions. Make sure parents (or another adult/teenager as mentioned in the above paragraph) escort children to and from and make sure these rules are understood. Post youth policies in a highly visible location or in the event book.

Never release the children at the end of the day to go find their parents. If parents do not show up to pick up their children, enlist the help of a herald/autocrat/seneschal to announce that the parents are needed at activities.

Make sure parents discuss your rules for attending activities with their children before dropping them off. Parents should ensure their children know, according to their age, whether they can come and go independently. For children **under age 12**, a firm understanding that they should not leave activities without an adult is crucial.

Finally, be gentle. Remember that children will wander or sneak off on occasion. Likely, the parents will already be frantic in this situation - enlist help for finding their child and be understanding. Consider scenarios like this one when reporting “lost parents.” Very few parents will blatantly disregard the laws; most are very diligent in their parenting.

However, if a parent is repeatedly leaving the child unattended, please report it to your autocrat, seneschal, and the KMOY. Be aware of those with multiple and deliberate infractions.

## More Regarding Waivers & Gate Paperwork

### From Kingdom of Meridies Seneschal's Handbook October 2023: Waivers-Gate Minor's Consent to Participate and Hold Harmless Agreement

The “Minor Waiver” is to be filled out by every minor which does not have a blue card of their own. This form is required regardless of if the minor is attending with their parents/guardians or with a designated adult in charge. If the minor is attending with a designated adult in charge, this form should be completed before arrival at the event by the parent or guardian of the child.

#### Family Minor Waiver

The Family Minor Waiver exists to help large families. This can be used by up to five children if the children all have the same parents and/or guardians and are attending with their parents or guardians. This is the only time in which you can have multiple children on the same waiver.

#### Designated Adult-in-Charge of a Minor

The “Adult in Charge” form allows a minor to attend an event with an adult who is not their legal parent or guardian. Again, this form must be executed by the parent or guardian of the child in question, so usually it will need to be completed before arrival at the event. You will need three copies of this form. One is for the gate staff and for event records, one is to be in the possession of one of the designated adults who are present at the event, and one in the possession of the parent/legal guardian executing the Designated Adult form. One original (for the gate staff) and two photocopies are acceptable.

#### Notarized Medical Authorization for Minors

The “Medical Authorization for Minors” is for minors who attend an event without their parents or guardian. **NOTICE:** If an event is held within the State of Florida, this form must be notarized and must be filled out by the parent or guardian of the minor, signed, and notarized by a registered Notary Public before they arrive at the event. Copies of this form, duly executed, should be in the possession of the named minor, at least one adult named in the document and present at the event, one to be left at gate with the other registration paperwork, and one with the parent or guardian executing the Medical Authorization. For **events held in other states within Meridies, notarization is not required.**

**Please note: Modern policies and laws periodically change. Make sure to check the local and state laws where you are hosting youth activities. If they require notarized medical authorizations, so do we.**

## What does this mean to you?

Waivers are a fact of SCA life. The seneschal of an event's hosting group is responsible for seeing that the group follows SCA waiver policies, and for educating group members on what these policies are. As an MOY you should also be familiar with paperwork policy regarding minors as you are the first many will contact topics regarding youth

in Society. **Please note:** What is not defined very well is the age limit of minor status. In Alabama, you are a minor until you are 19 years of age. In Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Florida, it is 18 years of age.

If a minor is going to attend an event without a parent, some advance planning must be done. Make sure your members are aware of these policies and provide direction or resources as needed. If your group holds an event, make sure that whoever is working gate is familiar with the above paperwork policies. The forms used at gate are available on the kingdom's website on the office pages of Kingdom Seneschal and Kingdom Minister of Youth under Resources. Please see the Appendix of this handbook for a flow chart which may help with gate procedures.

## Orders and Awards

### From Kingdom Law, October 2023: VIII-215 Cygnet, Order of the

- A. The Crown may induct into this order those children who have shown courtly behavior and rendered honorable service.
- B. Companions are entitled to place after their names the initials "C.C."

### From Kingdom Law, October 2023 VIII-216 Cygnet's Nest, Order of the

- A. The Crown may induct into this order those subjects who work tirelessly on behalf of the children.
- B. Companions are entitled to place after their names the initials "C.C.N."

### From Kingdom Law, October 2023: VIII-217 Duvant Cross, Order of the

- A. The Crown may induct into this order those subjects who have exhibited exceptional skill, courtesy, and honor on the field of Youth Combat. This order is called the Duvant Cross in honor of Count Sir Francois Duvant, First Prince, and Fourth King of Meridies, whose shining example of honor, chivalry, and courtesy has been the model for all who have come after.
- B. Companions are entitled to place after their names the initials "C.D.C."

### From Kingdom Law, October 2023: VIII-236 Rising Swan, Order of the

- A. The Crown may induct into this order those minors (age 17 and under) who through outstanding service and achievement have gone above and beyond that of the Order of the Cygnet.
- B. Companions are entitled to place after their names the initials "C.M.R.S."

## VIII.238 SABLE CYGNET, ORDER OF THE

- A. The Crown may induct into this order those children who show promise and skill in  
45  
the Arts and Sciences.
- B. Companions are entitled to place after their names the initials "C.S.C."

### What does this mean to you?

Just as you are more likely to witness infractions of laws regarding children by your regularly being in the children's company, you will also witness the brighter side of the Society. You will see children giving their time and energy serving the Kingdom, and you will see outstanding behavior and refined manners in the youngest of the Kingdom's subjects. Please take note! Write recommendation letters when you see consistent industry and good manners that you feel should be recognized.

The same goes for adults who work with children. Please pay attention to your helpers - never forget to pile on the praise for jobs well done, but also note outstanding service that seems worthy of being brought to the Crown's attention.

When you do write your letters, it is helpful to note a little about yourself, including the name of your office. It assists the Crown when you note that you are an MOY in a letter recommending someone for an award for or related to children. They know, then, that you are someone who spends a lot of time with these recommended individuals and that you have many opportunities to notice their endeavors.

## Chapter Five: Programs

There are so many “program” options available to you for enhancing the education of the children, both under the auspices of this office, and under other offices!

### Page School of Meridies

Since Page School does have its own handbook and deputy officer, we will only cover an abbreviated “mini handbook” here. The school is a system of credits designed to provide more interaction in the child’s learning. While it seems much like a “scout” system its creation was prompted for other reasons (see below).

The school does not dictate which classes a child must take, only several hours in each of three areas: service, chivalry, and arts and sciences. It is deliberately vague to allow children to pursue individual interests and to allow some freedoms for coordinators of classes and sessions who may not have some classes available due to lack of teachers in their geographic region (or conversely, who may have something available that is not common to other groups).

The Kingdom school is merely an administrative body. We track credits, offer advice and resources to MOYs and coordinators, and offer our support to individual families and children via long-distance communication. We do not run sessions at local events, as we hope to see more local involvement from officers (yes, other than just the MOYs), Peers, parents, and teachers. Using the sink-or-swim method, while offering advice, experience, resources, and helpers, seems to compel groups to rely more on their own initiative and creativity (which usually ends up exceeding ours by leaps and bounds!).

The Page School does offer sessions at Royal University’s Universitas Meridies in the summer and at Gulf Wars in March, traditionally. However, it is possible for local events to host Page School accredited classes. We also offer credit for students who attend events, but who take adult classes or serve during the event.

### So, why was the school created?

- The school’s main intent, through heavy press and communication, was to raise the standard of activities in Meridies. Whether through healthy competition or through direct collaboration with the school, this seems to have worked in many areas. Locally, MOYs and coordinators are paying great attention to how educational their activities are, and in some places, “glue and glitter” or “coloring book” activities have been nearly eliminated (except for in small doses - it can be fun, right?).
- A side effect of “raising the bar” was that more local involvement and individualized learning seems available these days. MOYs and coordinators are less likely to be strangers to the children now, and that provides opportunities for long-term learning and direct attention for each student. While it was one of our areas to push, it seemed to happen more because of local initiative than because of anything we did.
- Another side effect is the amazing focus on creativity we have witnessed growing over time. Realizing the sky is the limit, many wonderful teachers and planners have gone the extra mile to find classes that are more exciting and more unusual than most. In fact, many adults have attended Page School classes not realizing that they were not planned for adults. What can I say? The youth of Meridies are very capable!
- The school was also formed to provide a vehicle for roping in a larger slice of the population. Having an official name on activities seems to compel more people to try teaching, including many experts in various fields who previously exclusively taught adult classes.



## Implementing Programs Locally

Remember, anyone with a sincere desire to educate the children can organize Page School accredited classes at their event or meeting. The handbook and Dean of the School can all provide the necessary information to get started. There are also many other programs open to the youth of Meridies. While they are not part of the Ministry of Youth, they are nonetheless valuable opportunities for our younger members if interest is present.

### Youth Combat

This program is not a function of the Ministry of Children, but instead is administered by the Earl Marshal's office. However, this office does tend to enjoy being involved or providing supplemental classes. Contact your local YCM (Youth Combat Marshal) if you are also interested in collaboration.

To learn more about the program, contact your local marshal or YCM, the Kingdom YCM, the Earl Marshal of Meridies, or visit the Kingdom's web site at [www.kingdom.meridies.org](http://www.kingdom.meridies.org), and check the Earl Marshal's section (the handbook is available under Youth Combat).

### Youth Rapier Combat

This program is not a function of the Ministry of Youth, but instead is administered by the Rapier Marshal's office. However, this office does tend to enjoy being involved or providing supplemental classes. Contact your local YRM (Youth Rapier Marshal) if you are also interested in collaboration.

To learn more about the program, contact your local marshal or YRM, the Kingdom YRM, the Earl Marshal of Meridies, or visit the Kingdom's web site at [www.kingdom.meridies.org](http://www.kingdom.meridies.org), and check the Earl Marshal's section (the handbook is available under Rapier Combat).

### Target Archery

This program is not a function of the Ministry of Children, but instead is administered by the Earl Marshal's office. However, this office does tend to enjoy being involved or providing supplemental classes. Contact your local LWM (Live Weapons Marshal) if you are also interested in collaboration. Make sure to check about any age restrictions he/she might have first, but children often enjoy shooting targets. Some groups will schedule a time for a minors' shoot at events. To learn more about the program, contact your local marshal or LWM, the Kingdom LWM, the Earl Marshal of Meridies, or visit the Kingdom's web site at [www.kingdom.meridies.org](http://www.kingdom.meridies.org), and check the Earl Marshal's section (the handbook is available under Live Weapons).

### Others

What makes an activity an "adult activity"? In some cases, it is obvious - heavy battle combat, brewing classes are obviously and classes labeled for eighteen and up are not appropriate for children.

- Heraldry - Many heralds are welcoming of youth that want to learn and participate in the heraldic arts. Also, many service opportunities exist at events such as helping announce tournaments or running the list.
- Royal University Classes/A&S Classes - many teachers do not mind having children in the classroom if the material is not "adult only" or if there is not dangerous equipment in use.
- Check with teachers at your event and ask for a cut-off age if they agree. Coordinate with your local A&S Officer or Provost. There's even a children's division for A&S competitions!

Official programs aside, remember that there are established guilds and offices in the Kingdom that will often include children. At larger events, it is not unheard of for Middle Eastern groups to host teen competitions and classes in dance and music, for Coursing and Falconry groups to host field trips and demonstrations, or for heraldic consultation groups to run classes in heraldry for the children. Look around you at other "interest areas" and see where the youth might be able to get involved, and do not be afraid to ask!

## Chapter Six: Burnout

From Kingdom of Meridies Seneschal's Handbook December 2023

3. Classic burnout happens when the sufferer finds their job intolerable and impossibly dear at the same time. The officer may need help but is hesitant to ask for it for fear of appearing incompetent. This should never be the case. Please know that you are encouraged to ask questions, accept help, and delegate when possible and appropriate. This is a very large, demanding job; while it provides great benefits and is of immense importance, it should not drive you out of the SCA after your term or cause you to end your term prematurely.

4. Once you accept the possibility, you can protect yourself. Conserve and refresh yourself as needed, take breaks, and start training a couple of potential successors while you still feel strong enough.

## Appendix

### Reports

Meridian MOY Quarterly Local Report

Meridian MOY Year-End Summary Local Report

Meridian MOY Event Report

### Gate Flowchart

### Helpful Class Tools

Classroom Rules: We Follow the Code of Chivalry

Youth Activities Check-in and Check-out Policies Printout

Kingdom Law Regarding Children Printout

Youth Activity Sign-in/Sign-out Sheet

### Resources

OFFICE OF MINISTER OF YOUTH(MERIDIES)

[YOUR GROUP] QUARTERLY REPORTING FORM

[DATE SUBMITTED]

LOCAL MINISTER OF CHILDREN

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SCA Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of the CLOSED Facebook group, Meridies Minister of Children? Yes No

LOCAL DEPUTY MINISTER OF CHILDREN

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SCA Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of the CLOSED Facebook group, Meridies Minister of Children? Yes No

How long has your group had a Minister of Children? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months

How long have you served as Minister of Children? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months

How many children/minors) do you currently have in your group? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 0 - 4? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 5 - 8? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 9 - 11? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 12 & Older? \_\_\_\_\_

How much time do you devote to your office...

Daily? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours \_\_\_\_\_ Min.

On a weekly basis? \_\_\_\_\_ Days \_\_\_\_\_ Hours

On a monthly basis? \_\_\_\_\_ Days \_\_\_\_\_ Hours

Does your group have a provision in their budget for supplies for your office? Yes No

If so, how much? \$\_\_\_\_\_

How many events has your group held in the past quarter? \_\_\_\_\_

What were the (approximate) dates of those events?

Event 1. \_\_\_\_\_

Event 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Event 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Did you host any Kingdom level events this quarter? Yes No

If yes, which events?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does your group have a newsletter? Yes No

If so, do you publish a regular letter to the populace in the newsletter? Yes No

Does your group publish a children's section in the newsletter? Yes No

Does your group provide any other publications to the children of your group? Yes No

Please answer the following in detail. Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary:

1. What problems have you had (if any) in the following areas:

planning activities at events;

communication with parents;

communication with Kingdom/Principality;

reporting requirements;

child participation in activities at events;

maintaining discipline during children's activities?

2. What are your three main goals for improving your office in the next quarter?

3. What areas of the Kingdom Minister of Children's office do you think need improvement (e.g., communication, reporting, planning, etc.)?

OFFICE OF MINISTER OF YOUTH(MERIDIES)

[YOUR GROUP] YEAR-END REPORTING FORM

[DATE SUBMITTED]

LOCAL MINISTER OF CHILDREN

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SCA Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of the CLOSED Facebook group, Meridies Minister of Children? Yes No

LOCAL DEPUTY MINISTER OF CHILDREN

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SCA Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of the CLOSED Facebook group, Meridies Minister of Children? Yes No

How long has your group had a Minister of Children? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months

How long have you served as Minister of Children? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months

How much time do you devote to your office...

Daily? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours \_\_\_\_\_ Min.

On a weekly basis? \_\_\_\_\_ Days \_\_\_\_\_ Hours

On a monthly basis? \_\_\_\_\_ Days \_\_\_\_\_ Hours

How many events did your group host this year (including Kingdom level events)? \_\_\_\_\_

What were the (approximate) dates of those events?

- Event 1. \_\_\_\_\_ Event 7. \_\_\_\_\_ Event 12. \_\_\_\_\_
- Event 2. \_\_\_\_\_ Event 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- Event 3. \_\_\_\_\_ Event 9. \_\_\_\_\_
- Event 4. \_\_\_\_\_ Event 10. \_\_\_\_\_
- Event 5. \_\_\_\_\_ Event 11. \_\_\_\_\_
- Event 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Did you hold children's activities at each of those events? Yes No

If not, why

How many children attended your group's events this year (on average)? \_\_\_\_\_

Did all children attending the event take part in the planned children's activities? Yes No

What are the ages of the children who did \*not\* participate in the planned activities?

How many (on average) ages 5 - 8?

How many (on average) ages 9 - 11?

How many (on average) ages 12 & Older?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please give the reason (if known) why children did not participate in the planned activities.

Does your group have a provision in its annual budget for supplies for your office? Yes No

If so, how much? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How is it spent? \_\_\_\_\_

Does your group have a provision in event budgets for supplies for youth activities? Yes No

If so, how much? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How is it spent? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think are the activities or programs that will do the most to advance the education and opportunities for the youth in your group, and that you think you can carry out with the income and resources you know you have or can foresee?

Please answer the following in detail. Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary:

1. How would you characterize your group's current perception of your office?  
Has this changed over the past year? For better or for worse?  
What would you like to change (if anything) about this perception?
2. What problems have you had (if any) in the following areas:  
planning activities at events; communication with parents; communication with?  
Kingdom/Principality; reporting requirements; child participation in activities at  
events; maintaining discipline during children's activities?  
Are there any other problems you have encountered in the past year?
3. What solutions have you come up with for each of the problems listed above?  
Did you get a chance to implement your solution? If so, did it work?
4. What classes/activities worked for you in the past year? Why?
5. What classes/activities did not work? Why?
6. What are your three main goals for next year?
7. What areas of the Kingdom Minister of Children's office do you think need improvement (e.g., communication, reporting, planning, etc.)?

# OFFICE OF MINISTER OF YOUTH(MERIDIES)

## EVENT YOUTH ACTIVITIES--REPORTING FORM

[DATE SUBMITTED]

[EVENT NAME]

[EVENT DATES]

[SITE LOCATION: ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP]

Hosted by: [HOST GROUP] (HOST GROUP LOCATION: CITY, STATE)

MINISTER OF YOUTH [YOUR LOCAL GROUP]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SCA Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPUTY MINISTER OF YOUTH [YOUR LOCAL GROUP]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SCA Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Did the host group provide in their event budget for supplies for youth activities? Yes No  
If so, how much? \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please discuss the following. Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary:

### Planned Classes & Activities

### Class & Activity Expenses

#### Attendance

How many children/minors (under 18) attended your classes & activities? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 0 - 4? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 5 - 8? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 9 - 11? \_\_\_\_\_

How many ages 12 & Older? \_\_\_\_\_

If you had multiple sessions, were there any differences in attendance?

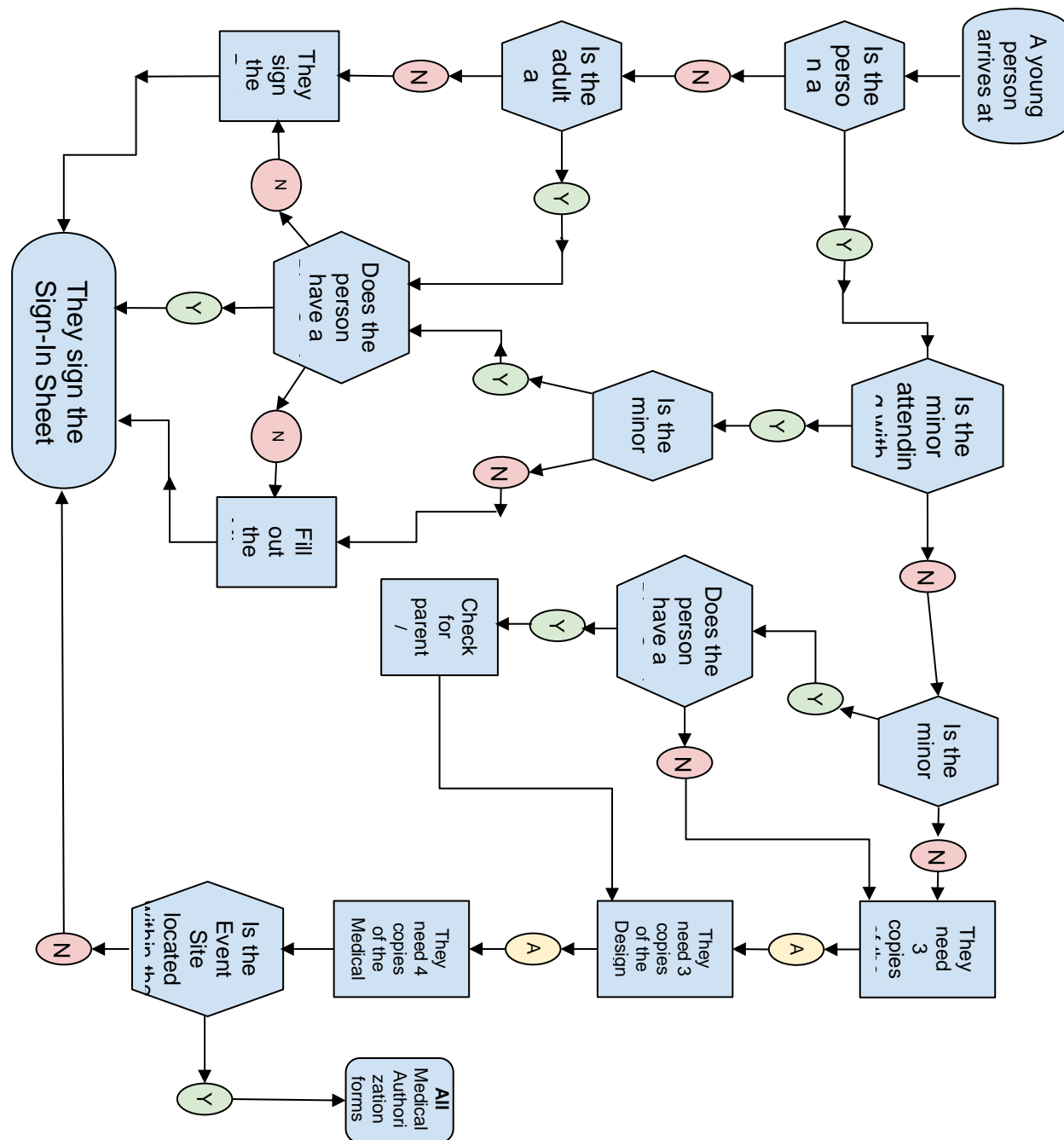
If there were children who did \*not\* join youth activities, please explain why (if known)

### Complications

### Successes Acknowledgements



## Gate Flowchart



\* Modern policies and laws periodically change. Make sure to check the local and state laws where you are hosting youth activities. If they require notarized medical authorizations, so do we. **Please note:** What isn't defined very well in this flowchart is the age limit of minor status. In Alabama, you are a minor until you are 19 years of age. In Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Florida, it is 18 years of age.

# *We Follow the Code of Chivalry*



## *1. Fair Play*

- I. WE DO NOT CHEAT.
- II. WE TAKE TURNS.
- III. WE DO NOT GET UPSET IF WE DO NOT WIN.

## *2. Nobility*

- I. WE SHOW SELF-DISCIPLINE.
- II. WE SHOW RESPECT TO OTHERS.

## *3. Valor*

- I. WE SHOW COURAGE.
  1. WE ARE NOT AFRAID TO MAKE MISTAKES.
  2. WE ARE NOT AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS.
  3. WE ARE NOT AFRAID TO TRY.
- II. DEFEND THE WEAK.
  1. WE DO NOT MAKE FUN OF OTHERS WHO MAKE MISTAKES OR ARE DIFFERENT.

## *4. Honor*

- I. WE TELL THE TRUTH.
- II. WE SHOW RESPECT TO EACH OTHER AND TO OURSELVES.

## *5. Courtesy*

- I. WE ARE POLITE TO EACH OTHER.
- II. WE LISTEN WHEN THE TEACHER IS SPEAKING.

## *6. Loyalty*

- I. WE ARE LOYAL TO THE KINGDOM, TO THE CODE, AND TO OUR HEARTS.

# Youth Activities

## Check-in and Check-out

### Check-in

- Children should be checked-in to activities by a parent/legal guardian or designated adult.
- Adults need to supply the child's name, adult's SCA and real names, home group, and medical information, if applicable.
- Adults are encouraged to donate an hour of their time to activities. Ministers of Children without assistants (or without enough) **may require** adult participation.
- Children's activities are geared for children 5 years of age and older. Children under this age require much more attention and may not have the attention span and motor skills required for some activities. Children under 5 may participate if a parent/legal guardian or designated adult is present at all times, at the local officer's discretion.

### Check-out

- Adults must pick up their children promptly at posted ending times, within the 15-minute grace period.
- Adults need to sign and note the time of check-out **before** leaving with their children.
- Ministers of Children have the right to turn over children who have been left at activities past the end of activities (with a 15-minute grace period) to the constable on duty, the event autocrat, or the seneschal of the group hosting the event.

**Note:** Checking children in and out of activities does not imply complete responsibility for your children falling on the Minister of Children. While those managing youth activities will look out for the safety of the children, the parents and children must be familiar with Kingdom Law regarding unattended kids if the child is under the age of 12. Additionally, children who are disruptive to activities (exhibiting violence or harmful behavior, for example) will be returned to their parents.

# Kingdom Law Regarding Children

## VII-109 Minors

- A. Minors must attend any Society event in the company of a parent/legal guardian or a designated adult with the appropriate Society approved waivers.
- B. Parents/legal guardians or the designated adult, are responsible for any, and all, acts of the minor.
- C. Children must not be left unattended at events.
- D. Children under the age of 12 must be within the sight or voice range of a responsible adult or teenager at all times.
- E. Children under the age of 5 cannot be left unsupervised by the parent/legal guardian or designated adult at events. Failure to comply with these rules may result in sanctions ranging from expulsion from site to notification of mundane authorities depending on the circumstances.
- F. Waivers
  - 1. The designated adult of a minor child must present 2 sets of properly executed Society waivers at the registration table before the minor(s) enters the event.
  - 2. Each waiver includes instructions for completion; failure to follow the instructions may result in a denial of admittance to the event.
  - 3. The branch must retain one set of the waivers, and the other set retained by the Designated Adult.
  - 4. Waiver forms are on the Society or the kingdom websites. The branch Seneschal can also provide them.
- G. For any official Society sponsored children's activities, there must be 2 unrelated (non-married, non-dating, non-kin) adults in charge for the duration of the activity; at least one of which must have an active valid background check on file with the Society.

# Youth Activity Sign-in/Sign-out Sheet

Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Session: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name	Age	Home Group	Allergy/Health Concerns
Guardian SCA Name	Guardian Legal Name		Guardian's Location on Site/Phone #
Signature In	Time In	Signature Out	Time Out

Child's Name	Age	Home Group	Allergy/Health Concerns
Guardian SCA Name	Guardian Legal Name		Guardian's Location on Site/Phone #
Signature In	Time In	Signature Out	Time Out

Child's Name	Age	Home Group	Allergy/Health Concerns
Guardian SCA Name	Guardian Legal Name		Guardian's Location on Site/Phone #
Signature In	Time In	Signature Out	Time Out

## Resources:

Society Youth Activities Officer:

[youthactivities@sca.org](mailto:youthactivities@sca.org)

Kingdom Web Page.

<https://meridies.org/home/royaltyandofficers/moc/>

Youth Activities for Meridies

<https://www.facebook.com/mocmeridies>

Ask the KMOY to Join the Closed Facebook group.