

**NPYM Ad hoc Committee on Children's Program Staff
Final Report and Recommendation on Hiring an
Annual Session Children's Program Coordinator
July 2013**

Introduction

The Ad hoc Committee on Children's Program Staff was established by the Coordinating Committee in April. The members of this ad hoc committee are Jonathan Brown (South Seattle), clerk; John Allcott (Eugene), Tom Rawson (Salmon Bay), Cynthia Black (Eugene), and Kathryn Willard (Tacoma).

The ad hoc committee's charge was to draft a proposal, including budget and job description, for hiring a paid children's program coordinator for NPYM to begin work in fall 2013 (for the 2014 Annual Session). The committee met several times by telephone conference call, and consulted with the Coordinating and Finance & Legal Committees. A preliminary draft of this report was circulated in June for seasoning by local meetings. This final report includes recommendations for discernment and possible approval at Annual Session.

Note that, in response to feedback that the ad hoc committee received from local meetings, the recommendations in this report differ in several respects from those in the preliminary report by:

- proposing that this paid position be approved initially as a two-year experiment
- limiting the responsibilities to coordination of the children's program at Annual Session
- designating the clerk of the Youth Committee as supervisor for the employee
- establishing a beginning wage of \$15/hour (equivalent to the Secretary's current wage)

Queries

While considering the practical details of this proposal, the ad hoc committee also asks Friends to bear in mind the following queries:

- What are the practical and spiritual implications for the Yearly Meeting of hiring paid staff to fulfill responsibilities that have traditionally been done by volunteers?
- How would this approach to children's programming change us—both positively and negatively—as a Yearly Meeting? For example, what would it add and subtract from parent involvement and opportunities for service to the Yearly Meeting?
- A strong and growing children's program is vital to the Yearly Meeting as a whole, but how do we address the impact, especially on small meetings, of raising assessments?

Background

In 2012, when Nominating Committee was unable to find a volunteer to serve as Annual Session Children's Program Coordinator (ASCPC), the NPYM Youth Committee volunteered to take on the job.

In the fall of 2012 an ad hoc committee was established to review the ASCPC job description, and recommended replacing the single volunteer with a team of three volunteers. Unfortunately, despite extensive outreach by the Nominating and Youth Committees over the last six months, not even a single volunteer could be found, much less three. Consequently, Youth Committee has once again been forced to do the job for this summer's (2013) Annual Session.

Planning for the Annual Session children's program is an 11-month-long process. Work begins in October with a site visit and the fall Coordinating Committee meeting, and ends in August after wrapping up, debriefing, and accounting for Annual Session and youth camps.

When Youth Committee took on the job for 2012, three of its members were employed less than full time—that is no longer the case. Moreover, it's not what the committee wants to do, nor what it was established to do. The Youth Committee is charged with year-round support of community building and spiritual development for our children, youth and young adults, and strengthening links between the children, youth and adult communities at monthly, quarterly and yearly meeting levels. Since it became responsible for ensuring that children's activities occur at Annual Session, there has been little time or energy left to focus on broader year-round programming for children and families.

The most significant barrier to effective planning for the children's program and youth activities is administrative leadership. NPYM members are more likely to volunteer their time to support the children's program at Annual Session than they are to take a leadership role in planning the event. In fact, finding Friends to serve as teachers and staff for the AS children's program has not been difficult. However, since that is part of the job of the ASCPC, the longer the coordinator position remains unfilled, the more daunting the task of recruiting staff becomes and, hence, the more difficult it is to find a coordinator.

There are other reasons that finding a volunteer ASCPC is difficult:

- NPYM lacks corporate memory around children's activities. Those who are asked to plan and lead Annual Session activities are also asked to reinvent the wheel.
- Lengthening the Annual Session and adding more business has contributed to the challenges of running children's programming because of the longer hours needed to provide care.
- Historically, those who run the children's program and other youth activities are isolated from each other and the adult community at Annual Session.

In any case, Youth Committee is clear that it is not willing or able to act as the coordinator for the Annual Session children's program beyond this summer. Instead, the committee reached unity on the need for a paid position to assume this responsibility, which it brought as a recommendation to the Coordinating Committee in April. In response, Coordinating Committee established this ad hoc committee to carry this concern forward by bringing a proposal to the Annual Session.

Recommendation

The ad hoc committee recommends that NPYM establish a part-time, paid position of Annual Session Children's Program Coordinator (ASCPC) for an initial period of two years. This employee will be responsible for planning and administering all aspects of children's programming at Annual Session from infant care up to Central Friends (8th grade). This includes: recruiting and supervising staff, coordinating volunteers, arranging for background checks in accordance with the Youth Safety Policy, planning and scheduling the activities and curricula for all ages, overseeing the physical arrangements, acquiring and managing supplies including snacks, arranging for a field trip, acting as liaison with parents and other groups at Annual Session, problem solving on site, tracking expenses, packing up and cleaning up, debriefing staff, and documenting all of the above in a written report. The ASCPC will be expected to track his or her time and activities in order to assist with improving the job description in future years. A detailed job description is attached.

Evaluation

Near the end of the initial two-year period, the Youth Committee will conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness and appropriateness of this paid position on behalf of the Yearly Meeting. This evaluation will include feedback from attenders of the 2014 Annual Session, especially children's program staff and the parents of participants, as well as an opportunity for input from local meetings. The outcome of this evaluation will take the form of a written report to the NPYM Executive Committee, which will in turn bring a recommendation to the 2015 Annual Session as to whether the paid position should be continued. The timing of this evaluation by the Youth Committee and of the discernment by the Executive Committee will take place early enough in the spring of 2015 (i.e., concluding prior to the spring Coordinating Committee meeting) to respect the schedule of the Finance and Legal Committee as it prepares a draft budget for FY2015-2016.

Supervision

The Youth Committee will be responsible for advertising, interviewing, and recommending a final candidate for this position. The Clerk of the Youth Committee will serve as the supervisor of the employee, and will be responsible for checking in with the employee regularly (e.g., at least monthly by phone and more often by email as needed) and for conducting an annual performance review. However, the formal hiring (and, if necessary, firing) of the employee will be done by the NPYM Personnel Committee in accordance with NPYM personnel policies.

Budget

The ad hoc committee proposes that the ASCPC be paid an initial wage of \$15/hour for up to 500 hours of work (1/4-time). An annual cost of living adjustment may be offered in accordance with NPYM personnel policies. Reimbursement will be provided for all expenses and travel, and the ASCPC will receive a full fee waiver for Annual Session.

Wage (500 hours at \$15/hour)	7,500.00
Federal Taxes (7.65%)	573.75
State Taxes (\$0.1728/hour)	86.40
Estimated Expenses (10%)	750.00
Total	\$8,910.15

Funding

The ad hoc committee recommends that funding for the first year come entirely from reserves (which the Finance & Legal Committee assures us are sufficient to cover the expense). Funding beyond the first year will likely require an increased in the NPYM assessment. Please keep in mind that the assessment increase for FY2014-2015 listed below is an estimate; the actual amount of any assessment increase depends on the state of the reserves and is determined each year by the Finance & Legal Committee as part of the annual budget process.

Estimated Assessment Increase:

FY2013-2014	\$0.00	<i>expenses will be paid from reserves</i>
FY2014-2015	\$9.80	<i>per person</i>

Conclusion

The ad hoc committee appreciates all of the feedback we received from individual Friends and local meetings who were able to respond on short notice to our preliminary report. We understand that hiring an additional staff person for the Yearly Meeting is a big step. Regardless of how Annual Session chooses to act on this proposal, it is clear that Friends are in unity that strong youth programming at all levels of the Yearly Meeting is essential to the development of a strong Quaker identity among our young people. As one Meeting put it: "Yearly Meetings provide a lifelong anchor for children as they grow up."

POSITION: Annual Session Children’s Program Coordinator (ASCPC)

QUALIFICATIONS: Member or attender of a Quaker meeting within NPYM; familiarity with the Annual Session children’s program; experience in religious education in a Quaker context helpful; highly organized person with excellent time management and communication skills essential; comfort with electronic communication required; ability to do some travel (visiting the AS site is mandatory) and participate in AS Planning Committee meetings (typically by telephone conference call); willingness to undergo a mandatory safety/background check in accordance with the NPYM Youth Safety Policy; ability to maintain a spiritual presence/awareness and a sense of humor/perspective while balancing/responding to the needs of multiple constituents.

WORKS WITH: Youth Committee, AS General Arrangements Clerk, AS Physical Arrangements Clerk, AS Program Coordinator, AS Volunteer Coordinator, and families, staff and volunteers of the AS children’s program.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The ASCPC is responsible for planning and implementing all aspects of Infant Care (IC), the Children’s Program (CP), and Children’s Activities (CA) at NPYM Annual Session.

Infant Care

IC is provided on an as-needed basis, under terms specified in the registration materials (e.g., parental commitment by a specified date).

The ASCPC works with the General Arrangements Clerk and the Volunteer Coordinator to find IC providers, who may be paid providers, fee-waiver recipients, or unpaid volunteers.

Children’s Program

The CP offers religious education classes for children from pre-school through Central Friends (middle school), typically in four groups, during morning and afternoon plenaries and other adult programming.

The ASCPC selects and supports teaching staff (helping them to find curriculum and purchasing snacks and supplies, etc.) and works with the AS Volunteer Coordinator to arrange for other volunteers to assist as needed.

Children’s Activities

CA is an afternoon and evening program designed to be looser and more spontaneous than the CP. All children (grades K-8) gather together for multi-age fun, dividing into groups doing active outdoor play and exploration, or quieter arts and crafts, games, and stories (sometimes inside, sometimes outside).

The ASCPC is responsible for finding, supervising, and supporting staff (by facilitating planning and purchasing equipment and supplies, etc.). Staff are typically young adults who have experience working with children and are paid by the hour. The goal is to have enough staff for a 10/1 ratio.

Safety and Security

The ASCPC is responsible for implementing and adhering to the NPYM Youth Safety Policy during Annual Session. In particular, ASCPC notifies the NPYM Secretary of staff names far enough in advance for background checks to take place.

TASK TIMELINE: Currently the job is budgeted at 1/4-time (500 hours/year). The ASCPC is responsible for keeping a written record of time spent and activities performed in order to assist with improving the job description and estimated hours associated with the job.

October – December (estimated 120 hours)

- Seek out persons to serve as lead and assistant teachers for each age group (traditionally pre-school, lower elementary, upper elementary, and Central Friends). May require visits to quarterly or monthly meetings to identify and recruit teaching staff.
- Once found, work with NPYM Secretary to vet all staff in accordance with the NPYM Youth Safety Policy. Begin this process immediately as background checks take time.
- Phone contact with NPYM Coordinating, Nominating, Youth and Executive Committees as necessary and appropriate.
- Attend October Coordinating Committee

January – March (estimated 120 hours)

- Work with the General Arrangements and Physical Arrangements Clerks to determine the best physical arrangements at the site for the Children's Program. A site visit is advisable. The CP typically requires five classroom spaces near the plenary that meet the Youth Safety guidelines. Consideration should be given to natural light, usable surfaces, storage, lighting, etc.
- Attend Annual Session Planning Committee phone and site meetings
- Identify and assist Central Friends camp staff
- Work with lead teachers to develop effective child-centered plans for CP via conference calls or in-person meetings. Planning topics should include all significant elements of the annual program, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - supplies needed;
 - time-slot responsibilities;
 - field trip parameters;
 - volunteer procedures;
 - pick-up, drop-off, sign in/out protocol;
 - physical arrangements;
 - special needs children;
 - age-appropriate theme representations;
 - guidelines by age group;
 - field trip and attendant logistics;
 - service project if and as applicable;
 - preparation of children's epistles.
- Recruit CA staff. Appeals on Facebook and by email from the Young Friends clerk have been successful in the past.
- Draft CP and CA schedule, based on last year's schedule, and confirm with the Planning Committee.
- Provide descriptions of volunteer needs (time slots, numbers of volunteers needed, age groupings, and description of jobs) to the Volunteer Coordinator, who is responsible for recruiting classroom and activities volunteers for IC, CP and CA.
- Develop information regarding IC, CP and CA for inclusion in the registration packet and submit to the Registrar in a timely manner.
- Prepare a working budget for IC, CP, and CA in consultation with the AS Planning Committee and the Registrar, including the number of full and partial fee waivers that will be available. (In the past this has been equivalent to 10 full-time fee waivers.)

April – Annual Session (estimated 160 hours)

- Continue working with the teachers to develop and prepare activities. Incorporate the AS theme into these activities as much as possible.
- Acquire classroom supplies. This involves inventorying existing supplies before purchasing anything new.
- Work with the General Arrangements Clerk to schedule time for the Friend in Residence to meet with each class.
- Send preliminary schedule to CA staff. When registration opens, advise staff to register early, and remind them to turn in the background check form.
- Organize Infant Care:
 - Consult with the Registrar about the number of infants needing care.
 - Recruit child care providers, in consultation with the General Arrangements Clerk about local providers and/or the Volunteer Coordinator as necessary.
 - Arrange for background checks for prospective providers.
- Set up a system for snacks and field trip lunches, including menu planning, purchasing, preparation areas, refrigeration, and volunteer coordination for preparation and delivery. Sack lunches are typically arranged with the host facility ahead of time.
- Prepare sign-in sheets, permission slips and related documentation.
- If desired, arrange or find someone to arrange an appropriate Saturday field trip for both the younger age groups and Central Friends. Confirm hours and pricing, times, cost, lunch arrangements, etc. Distribute field trip information to parents and teachers. Arrange for permission slips and transportation.
- Working with the Registrar, assign the fee waivers. Notify the Registrar and let the recipients know who is getting full and partial waivers.
- Work with the Registrar to get a preliminary count of how many children will be at AS. Prior to annual session, send an information packet (e.g., by email) to all parents covering the following topics:
 - Times and locations of IC, CP, and CA;
 - Introduction to the IC, CP and CA staff;
 - Sign-in and sign-out procedures;
 - When permission slips need to be completed;
 - General theme of the program;
 - Guidelines for ages of each class (including Safety Guidelines);
 - Provisions for children with special needs (may need to talk individually with those parents);
 - Contact data for all parents and responsible adults;
 - Specific instructions about any planned field trip (times, how lunch will be handled, transportation needs, etc.).
- Conduct a phone conference with CA staff to confirm schedule, who will arrive on the first night, and brainstorm ideas for games and crafts.
- Make a list of supplies required for CA games. Popular activities in the past included volleyball, Frisbee, capture the flag, beading, drawing, and a variety of circle games.

During Annual Session (estimated 60 hours)

- At the beginning of Annual Session, organize a meeting lasting no longer than 20 minutes of parents, children, and staff to briefly reiterate the topics covered in the pre-Annual Session mailing, and answer any questions;
- Lead a meeting with the CA staff each afternoon before activities begin to debrief and make plans for keeping all ages integrated and happy.

- During CA, help staff to make sure that all children are signed in and out and to coordinate assignments for the other adult volunteers (usually by assigning them to follow the youngest children).
- Be available to staff and parents to help problem-solve (e.g. finding supplies, running errands, helping resolve issues, working with parents as needed)
- Consult with the Ministry and Oversight Committee for spiritual support of the program.
- Keep a log of medical or safety incidents as they arise, including contact data.
- Check in daily with all program staff.
- If a field trip is planned, assist with arrival and departure, including check-offs and mobile communication.
- Keep track of expenses and make sure reimbursements are made as necessary.
- Coordinate teacher appreciation (cards, etc.).
- Help with packing up and cleaning up the children's supplies and spaces.

After Annual Session (estimated 40 hours)

- Debrief with program staff and with Youth Committee about what worked and what didn't, and suggestions for improvement.
- By August 14 get a report/evaluation from each of the planners, as well as bills or receipts for any supplies or other expenses.
- By September 21, submit a report for the Children's Program file, documenting what occurred and suggestions and information that would be helpful for planning the next year's program, along with any recommendations for changes to the job description.

EXPENSES AND TRAVEL: The ASCPC is expected to provide his or her own phone and service, as well as computer and internet access. Reimbursement is provided for office supplies and expenses (phone calls, postage, copying, etc.) and travel (mileage is reimbursed at the federal rate, which is currently \$0.555/mile). The ASCPC receives a full fee waiver for Annual Session, including program fee, lodging, and meals, as well as travel reimbursement. Expenses incurred for supplies for the AS Children's Program are paid for out of the AS operating budget; all bills and requests for reimbursement, with all receipts, should be submitted to the NPYM Treasurer as soon as possible and no later than August 31.

HIRING AND SUPERVISION: The NPYM Youth Committee is responsible for advertising, interviewing, and recommending a final candidate for this position. The Clerk of the Youth Committee serves as the supervisor, and is responsible for checking in regularly (e.g., at least monthly by phone and more often by email as needed) and for conducting an annual performance review. However, the formal hiring (and, if necessary, termination) is done by the NPYM Personnel Committee in accordance with NPYM personnel policies.