

GUIDEBOOK FOR
PARENTS AND
LEADERS OF
YOUTH





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In this guidebook, the terms *stake president* and *bishop* refer also to *district president* and *branch president*, and the terms *stake* and *ward* refer also to *district* and *branch*.

MESSAGE FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

Dear Parents and Leaders of Youth:

We love the youth of the Church. We have great respect and admiration for these choice sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father. They are the future parents and leaders in the Church. Our prayer is that we as parents and leaders can help them remain true and faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We want the young people of the Church to be valiant and righteous servants of God, dedicated to living each day so they can go to the temple and receive God's greatest blessings for them. Therefore, we have chosen the temple as the symbol for the youth of the Church.

The books *For the Strength of Youth*; *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God*; and *Young Women Personal Progress* help young men and young women understand what Heavenly Father wants them to do and be. The books provide a resource for you, as parents and leaders, to help the youth prepare for the temple endowment, missions, temple marriage, and parenthood.

We hope that every young man earns the Duty to God Award. We hope that every young woman earns the Young Womanhood Recognition. The requirements for earning these awards are challenging and rewarding. We are grateful to parents and leaders who help the youth achieve them. May the Lord bless you as you help the youth of the Church go forward to meet the great responsibilities that await them.

The First Presidency

ROLE OF PARENTS

Your sons and daughters are children of God who have great potential. Although the Church has many leaders and resources to help them, you as their parents have the primary responsibility to help them succeed. The Church's programs and materials for youth, described in this guidebook, are designed to assist you as you help your children develop the skills and attributes needed for success in life.



Following are some ways you can help your sons and daughters receive the greatest benefit from the Church's youth programs and materials:

- Become familiar with the information in this guidebook.
- Review *For the Strength of Youth* with them. Review *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* for deacons, teachers, or priests with your sons. Review *Young Women Personal Progress* with your daughters.
- Help your sons and daughters set and accomplish goals that will appropriately challenge them as they work toward the Duty to God Award or Young Womanhood Recognition. With your approval, they can design many of the requirements to meet their personal needs and interests.

- Talk with your sons and daughters about their progress. Each time they complete a goal or project, compliment their efforts and sign in the appropriate place in the *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* guidebook or the *Young Women Personal Progress* book.
- Talk with your children's Aaronic Priesthood or Young Women leaders. Learn what these leaders are doing in Mutual and in other quorum and class activities to help strengthen your sons and daughters. Encourage your children to attend Mutual each week.
- Whenever possible, participate in Church youth events in which your sons and daughters are being recognized.
- Encourage your sons and daughters to participate in seminary.

ROLE OF LEADERS

As a leader of young men and young women, you have a vital role in helping them learn the gospel of Jesus Christ, develop testimonies, and accomplish goals leading to the Duty to God Award and Young Womanhood Recognition. Your example, encouragement, and caring can be invaluable to youth at this important time of their lives. Learn about each young man and young woman and how you can best help them.



Information about the Church's youth programs is found in the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders*. This guidebook supplements that information by:

- Outlining the Church's achievement programs for youth—the Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God program and the Young Women Personal Progress program.
- Providing more detailed information about Mutual.
- Providing information about how to develop leadership in youth.

We encourage you to:

- Read the information in this guidebook carefully.

- Work together with parents to bless and strengthen young men and young women. When you first meet with youth who are entering the Young Men and Young Women programs, give their parents a copy of this guidebook and encourage them to read it. Keep parents informed about youth activities, and invite them to participate when appropriate.
- Read *For the Strength of Youth* and apply the standards in your own life. Do all you can to teach these standards to youth.



- If you are a leader of young men, become familiar with the *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* guidebooks for deacons, teachers, and priests. If you are a leader of young women, become familiar with the *Young Women Personal Progress* book.

FOR THE STRENGTH OF YOUTH

For the Strength of Youth is a guide given by the First Presidency of the Church to young men and young women. It presents the standards of the Church and teaches youth how to apply them. It provides sure direction to strengthen youth and guide them on their journey through life. By keeping these standards, youth will be of great service in the Church and the world and will be worthy to go to the temple to receive holy ordinances.

Every young man and young woman should have a copy of *For the Strength of Youth*. They should be encouraged to review the standards often and consider how well they are living them.

As a parent, you should have a copy of the pamphlet. Study it. Discuss the standards and principles with your sons and daughters. Plan family home evenings to discuss the standards. Live the standards yourself. Your example will do much to help your children live them too.



If you are a leader, you should study the standards in the pamphlet. Find ways to reinforce them in lessons and in quorum and class activities. *For the Strength of Youth* is a key resource for planning Mutual activities.



AARONIC PRIESTHOOD DUTY TO GOD PROGRAM

Overview

The Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God program helps young men accomplish the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood. It helps them develop skills and attributes that are needed to succeed in life.



The goals and requirements of the program are outlined in the *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* guidebooks for deacons, teachers, and priests. Young men work with their parents and priesthood leaders to set and accomplish goals leading to the Duty to God Award.

Some goals are accomplished in a family setting, some with the quorum, and some individually. For example, a deacon would accomplish the following goals over a two-year period:

Family: 7 goals in a family setting

Quorum: 7 goals in a quorum or Mutual setting

Personal: 32 goals to accomplish individually

Service project: Of own choice

The young men set personal goals in the following four areas of development: Spiritual Development; Physical Development; Educational, Personal, and Career Development; and Citizenship and Social Development.

The following chart summarizes the Aaronic Priesthood achievement program. A copy of this chart is included in each young man's guidebook to help him record his progress.

YOUR DUTY TO GOD RECORD SHEET	
<p>Check or initial the appropriate box as you complete each section. Your bishop will sign your Completion of Duty to God page when you have completed the requirements in the following areas. Then you can receive your Duty to God certificate.</p>	
Priesthood Duties and Standards	
Family Activities	
Quorum Activities	
Personal Goals	
Spiritual Development	
Physical Development	
Educational, Personal, and Career Development	
Citizenship and Social Development	
Duty to God Service Project	
My Personal Journal	

Duty to God Service Projects

Each young man must complete three service projects that benefit the family, ward, stake, or community. One project is performed as a deacon, one as a teacher, and one as a priest. The young man should plan, prepare, and carry out the project. Others may assist as needed. The project needs to be approved by the young man's parents and quorum adviser.



Duty to God Activities at Mutual

The Young Men presidency and the quorum presidencies are encouraged to plan Mutual activities focused on the four areas of development: Spiritual Development; Physical Development; Educational, Personal, and Career Development; and Citizenship and Social Development. This will help young men complete the goals leading to their Duty to God Award.

Scouting

Scouting is part of the Atonic Priesthood activity program. The Duty to God Award is a priesthood award, having requirements that will help young men develop spiritually and fulfill their priesthood duties.

All young men are encouraged to earn the Eagle Scout Award. Scouting requirements may be used to fulfill many of the personal goals of the Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God program. Also, the Eagle Scout service project may count for one of the Duty to God service projects.

Certificates and Award

A young man should earn three separate Duty to God certificates: one as a deacon, one as a teacher, and one as a priest (deacon certificate, 36416; teacher, 36417; priest, 36418). He receives a certificate each time he completes the requirements outlined in one of the three *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* guidebooks. Bishopric members may present each certificate in a quorum meeting or during priesthood opening exercises.

When a young man receives all three of his Duty to God certificates, he receives the Duty to God Award. He should receive this award by his 19th birthday. This award consists of a certificate (36419) and a medallion (81334). A member of the bishopric may present the award in a sacrament meeting.

The certificates and medallion may be obtained through a Church distribution center using ward or branch funds, at no cost to the young men or their parents.

Record Keeping

Young men are encouraged to keep their guidebooks as a record of their progress. Quorum advisers may want to

keep a simple record of each young man's progress in order to provide appropriate support (see the *Aaronic Priesthood Duty to God Achievement Record* [36720]). Extensive record keeping is not expected.

Adapting to Individual and Local Needs

The requirements listed in the *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* guidebooks may be modified or replaced according to personal or local circumstances, interests, and needs with the prior approval of parents and Aaronic Priesthood leaders. When making any changes or exceptions for one person, leaders should carefully consider the effect those changes may have on the other young men. After careful consideration by parents and leaders, modifications may be appropriate to meet the needs of young men with disabilities or educational limitations, to meet cultural or individual needs, or to allow young men who are not members to participate.

A worthy teacher or priest who did not receive one or both of the preceding Duty to God certificates may still earn the Duty to God Award by completing (1) all the



requirements for the current certificate and (2) the family and quorum activities and the personal goals for preceding certificates (except for the annual service projects, talks, and family home evening lessons).

Responsibilities of Leaders

Bishopric members are responsible to teach young men their priesthood duties and help them earn their Duty to God Award. Bishopric members are assisted by the Young Men presidency. The Young Men presidency should ensure that young men are given opportunities during quorum meetings and activities to fulfill their required quorum goals.

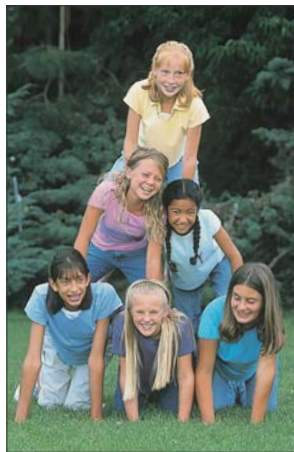
Near a young man's 12th birthday, a member of the bishopric and a member of the deacons quorum presidency should meet with the young man and his parents. They should give him a copy of *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* for deacons and teach him his duties. Similar visits should also take place as the young man is ordained to the offices of teacher and priest.

Members of the bishopric are encouraged to use their regularly scheduled interviews with young men to review each young man's progress. Stake presidents should regularly ask bishops about the welfare and progress of the young men in their wards.

YOUNG WOMEN PERSONAL PROGRESS PROGRAM


Overview

The Young Women Personal Progress program helps each young woman understand God's will for her, encourages her to keep His commandments, and prepares her to make and keep sacred temple covenants. It provides ways for her to contribute to her home now and prepare for future responsibilities as a faithful woman, wife, mother, and Church leader. It prepares her to receive her Young Womanhood Recognition.










The goals and requirements of the program are outlined in the *Young Women Personal Progress* book. Young women work with their parents and Young Women leaders to set and accomplish goals based on the seven Young Women values. A young woman will complete six Value Experiences for each of the seven values. These experiences are designed to help her understand each value and the associated gospel principles. She will then complete a ten-hour Value Project to apply what she has learned. She will also strive to live the standards outlined in *For the Strength of Youth*.

The following chart summarizes the Young Women Personal Progress program. A copy is provided in each *Young Women Personal Progress* book for use in tracking a young woman's progress.



PERSONAL PROGRESS RECORD SHEET

	 Faith	 Divine Nature	 Individual Worth	 Knowledge	 Choice and Accountability	 Good Works	 Integrity
<i>Value Experience</i>							
<i>Value Experience</i>							
<i>Value Experience</i>							
<i>Value Experience</i>							
<i>Value Experience</i>							
<i>Value Experience</i>							
<i>Value Project</i>							

Young Womanhood Recognition _____ Date _____

In the boxes above, write the number of the experience you completed.

Value Experiences and Projects

Young women may work at their own pace in the Personal Progress program but should try to space their progress so the program will last throughout their time in Young Women. It is anticipated that a young woman will complete at least nine experiences or projects every year.

The following are guidelines for completing Value Experiences and Projects:

- Young women may work on the values in any order. They should finish the six experiences in a value before doing the project for that value.
- It is recommended that Value Projects not be combined. However, if a young woman chooses to do a large project that encompasses more than one value, she should spend a minimum of ten hours for each value. The same ten hours may not count for more than one Value Project.
- Young women may work together on projects. However, a young woman must spend a minimum of ten hours of her own time if she is using that project for her own Personal Progress program.
- The good things young women are doing at home, church, school, seminary, and in the community may fulfill the requirements of the Personal Progress program with the prior approval of parents or Young Women leaders.

If a young woman completes the Personal Progress program before she enters Relief Society, she can continue to be actively involved in Young Women. She can complete additional Value Experiences and Projects, compile her personal history, read the Book of Mormon, complete leadership assignments, and help other young women who are still working on the Personal Progress program.

If a young woman has not completed all of the Personal Progress requirements before leaving Young Women, she may continue to work toward receiving the Young Womanhood Recognition until her 19th birthday.

Personal Progress Activities at Mutual

Personal Progress activities may occasionally be held at Mutual. Such group activities should be planned prayerfully and selectively to ensure that the Personal Progress program remains personal for each young woman.

Emblems, Certificate, and Recognition

When a young woman completes the experiences and projects for each value, she receives an emblem (36654), which she places on the Personal Progress Achievement Certificate in the back of her book. This recognition of her progress can be awarded in a Young Women meeting.

When a young woman completes her work in all seven values and has been interviewed by the bishop, she receives the Young Womanhood Recognition. This recognition consists of a certificate (36651) and the Young

Womanhood medallion in either gold or silver (gold, 36652; silver, 36653). A member of the bishopric may present the Young Womanhood Recognition in a sacrament meeting.

Awards and certificates may be obtained through a Church distribution center using ward funds, at no cost to the young women or their parents.

Personal Progress Requirements for Leaders

Leaders who participate in the Personal Progress program themselves understand the program better and set a favorable example for the young women to follow. Leaders may earn the Young Womanhood Recognition after they:

- Serve for a total of one year as a Young Women leader.
- Complete the three required Value Experiences in each of the seven values.
- Complete three Value Projects.

Adapting to Individual and Local Needs

Value Experiences and Value Projects may be modified according to personal or local circumstances, interests, and needs with the prior approval of parents and Young Women leaders. When making any changes or exceptions for one person, leaders should consider the effect those changes may have on the other young women. After careful consideration by parents and leaders, modifications may be appropriate to meet the needs of young women

with disabilities or educational limitations, to meet cultural or individual needs, or to allow young women who are not members to participate.

If a young woman joins the Church or becomes active in Young Women after age 16, her requirements for completing the Personal Progress program are to (1) live the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, which the bishop or branch president verifies in an interview; (2) complete the three required Value Experiences in each of the seven values; and (3) complete the Value Project in each of the seven values. These requirements may also apply to young women in other circumstances as determined by local Young Women leaders.

Responsibilities of Leaders

Young Women leaders should meet with each young woman who enters the Young Women program and her parents. A member of the girl's class presidency could also attend. The leaders should present the young woman with a *Young Women Personal Progress* book and explain the program to her. They should encourage parents to work with their daughter in selecting and completing Personal Progress experiences and projects. They should also invite the parents to all programs in which their daughter participates.

When a young woman completes the entire Personal Progress program, the bishop interviews her, using the standards in *For the Strength of Youth* as a guide. This can be part of her annual or six-month interview. The bishop

determines the worthiness of the young woman to receive the Young Womanhood Recognition.

Members of the bishopric are encouraged to use their regularly scheduled interviews with young women to review each young woman's progress. Stake presidents should regularly ask bishops about the welfare and progress of the young women in their wards.



MUTUAL

Purpose

Young men and young women should have a weekly activity night called Mutual, unless travel or other restrictions preclude it. Well-planned Mutual activities play an important role in the lives of youth. Mutual gives them an opportunity to meet in a social setting, apply gospel principles taught on Sunday, strengthen their testimonies, give service, develop wholesome relationships and communication skills, and reach out to less-active youth. Mutual also helps them achieve their Duty to God Award and Young Womanhood Recognition.

Planning

Under the direction of the bishopric, the ward Young Men and Young Women presidencies oversee Mutual. They may be assisted by class presidencies, advisers, and specialists. Their plans are approved in bishopric youth committee meetings.



Frequency and Structure of Mutual

Mutual is held on a day or evening other than Sunday or Monday and should, if possible, convene at the same day, time, and place each week. Generally, Mutual should be 1 to 1½ hours in length and is divided into the following parts:

- Opening exercises (10 to 15 minutes)
- Class or quorum activity (30 to 75 minutes)
- Practice or social activity (optional; 30 minutes)

Opening Exercises. A member of the bishopric or a member of the Young Men or Young Women presidency presides over opening exercises. The Laurel class presidency and the bishop's priest quorum assistants take turns conducting. Opening exercises should include a hymn and a prayer and may also include talks, musical selections, practice of new songs, and opportunities for youth to share their talents and testimonies.

Class or Quorum Activities. Combined Aaronic Priesthood–Young Women activities are normally held once each month. The remaining weeks may be used for separate Young Women class activities and Aaronic Priesthood quorum activities. Occasional activities may be held for any combination of Young Women classes and Aaronic Priesthood quorums, including activities that involve parents or families. Occasionally, when there is a fifth week in a month, a ward or branch activity that involves the entire family could be held. Such activities could be under the direction of the activities committee.

- The monthly combined Aaronic Priesthood–Young Women activity is an opportunity for all the youth in a ward, ages 12 to 18, to participate together in a wholesome, nondating situation, where they can work and learn together and support each other in living gospel principles. The combined youth activities should be scheduled and reviewed in bishopric youth committee meetings and carried out under the direction of the bishopric.
- Young Women activities should include a variety of experiences from the following areas: service; home arts; music, speech, and drama; dance; literary and visual arts; camp; sports and physical fitness; and Personal Progress. Young women should learn skills that will prepare them for their future roles in the family, Church, and community. Activities should help each young woman understand and incorporate the Young Women Values.
- Aaronic Priesthood activities should help each young man accomplish the purposes of the Aaronic Priesthood by giving him experience in the following four areas of development as outlined in the *Aaronic Priesthood: Fulfilling Our Duty to God* guidebooks: Spiritual Development; Physical Development; Educational, Personal, and Career Development; and Citizenship and Social Development.

In areas where Scouting is available and approved for use as part of Aaronic Priesthood quorum activities, young men should also work on merit badges, rank advancement, and development of the qualities and characteristics taught by Scouting.

Practice or Social Activities. Mutual may also include time for young men and young women to meet together after their class or quorum activities. This time may be used to rehearse or prepare for a special event, practice or participate in sports, or enjoy a short social activity.

Annual Theme

Information will be sent each year from Church headquarters to priesthood leaders suggesting an annual theme for Mutual to be discussed with youth leaders. The theme may be used to provide focus for activities such as dance, drama, speech, sports, music, or service. Preparations for the activities should be made during Mutual.

Additional Resources

The Activity Book (31455) contains over 300 activity ideas that reinforce the Priesthood Purposes and the Young Women Values. Church magazines also contain ideas that can be used for Mutual activities.

The following is an example of a worksheet that can be used to help plan Mutual:

Mutual Planning Worksheet

Date this Mutual night will be held: _____

Opening exercises

Presiding: _____

Conducting: _____

Opening hymn: _____

Opening prayer: _____

Music (musical numbers, new song practice):

Talk(s): _____

Class or quorum activity

Practice or social activity (optional)

TEACHING LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES TO YOUTH

An important part of a young man's and young woman's preparation for adulthood is the development of leadership skills and qualities. Today's youth are the fathers, mothers, and Church leaders of tomorrow. A primary purpose of the Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women achievement programs is to help youth develop leadership skills and qualities.



Parents and youth leaders should use the achievement programs to provide youth with leadership experiences in the home, in quorums and classes, and in Mutual activities. For example, youth can learn leadership in the home as they teach a lesson in family home evening, lead a family discussion, plan a family activity, or help a younger brother or sister. They also learn leadership as they plan and carry out activities in their priesthood quorums and Young Women classes. Leaders should take every opportunity to give youth leadership experiences.

Aaronic Priesthood and Young Women leaders have a particular responsibility to teach leadership skills to class and quorum presidencies. These skills can be taught in presidency meetings.

The following leadership principles should be taught to youth:

- Follow the Savior's example.
- Develop the character traits of a leader:
 - Faith
 - Love
 - Obedience
 - Unity
 - Sacrifice
- Fulfill the tasks of a leader:
 - Seek direction and set goals.
 - Plan and delegate.
 - Prepare and use an agenda.
 - Conduct effective meetings.
 - Participate in and conduct effective councils.
 - Keep confidences.

Resources available to help parents and leaders teach young men and young women leadership principles are "Gospel Teaching and Leadership," section 16 of the *Church Handbook of Instructions, Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders* (35209) and the *Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders' Guidebook* (31178).