



We make leaders.

Proud Home of the 2013, 2016, & 2017
Division 2 Young Marines of the Year
and the
2013-14 National Young Marine of the Year!

PARENT HANDBOOK

REVISED 4/2021

NKyYoungMarines.com



We make leaders.

Est. 2005 (re-established 2011)

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* * It is important to remember that all Staff are volunteers. * *

*The NKYM Parent Guidebook is based on the experiences of this and other units within the Young Marines program. If a discrepancy is found within this guide or if any information conflicts with the National Young Marines Registered Adult Manual, it should be brought to the attention of the NKYM Staff for review.

Welcome to the Northern Kentucky Young Marines unit!

This Guidebook contains information and guidelines outlining what is expected from both you and your Young Marine(s). It is important to read and understand this guidebook plus attend all scheduled parent meetings. This program relies on the active participation of everyone, including parents. The Young Marine program is not a daycare nor are we a fix-it program; it is important to know this in advance to avoid future conflicts due to misconceptions.

• WHO WE ARE •

The Young Marines strengthens the lives of America's youth by teaching the importance of self-confidence, academic achievement, honoring our veterans, good citizenship, community service, and living a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. The Young Marines promotes the mental, moral, and physical development of its members with a focus on leadership and character-building.

• INTRODUCTION •

For some, there will be a certain amount of apprehension when getting a child involved in such a tough curriculum. As the program progresses, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will discover that everything may not have been fully explained the first day your child was enrolled, or that there was so much information provided it made it tough to remember, making this handbook a valuable resource. We also highly recommend attending all Parent Meetings - as there is always new information to learn.

The Young Marines is a Youth Leadership Program for males and females ages 8 through the completion of high school which is modeled after and endorsed by the United States Marine Corps. At our unit (one of over 260 across the U.S.) we focus on Military & American History, physical fitness, public speaking, citizenship, community service, and living a healthy, drug-free lifestyle. Young Marines are not pushed into the military, but they are required to appreciate the freedoms granted by those who serve(d).

This program is one of the only (if not the only) youth-led, merit-based programs still in existence. The kids are the leaders; they work hard to earn their rank and billets through discipline, teamwork, and hard work. Young Marines work all year long to prepare themselves not only for each drill, but for Leadership billets, Leadership Schools, encampments, competitions, and promotions.

In addition to 6-hour drills every other Saturday, we march in parades to honor veterans, perform Color Guard duties for veteran and community events, go on encampments, improve our physical fitness, earn their rank, teach Drug Resistance in our communities, volunteer time with Young Marines and many other organizations, and set a great example of how youth should respect our flag, our country, and our military members - past and present.

Young Marines is a lifestyle. Once a youth becomes a Young Marine Recruit, they are expected to act according to the Young Marines Obligation, Creed, and Orders at all times - not just at drill. Young Marines will get out of the program whatever they put into it. There are many, many amazing opportunities presented by this program, but they must be earned. Work is required outside of drill time if a YM wants to progress.

It must also be understood that the Northern Kentucky unit has a reputation - a very good one. It is expected that all Young Marines within the unit uphold that reputation or exceed it. Yes, we have high standards and, yes, we view that as a positive.

*The volunteer staff of the Northern KY Young Marines developed this guide in order to facilitate what will be expected from the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child(ren) enrolled in the program. This handbook is set up alphabetically (well, as alphabetically as possible) with the understanding that you can search by keyword, electronically.

It is also a work in progress (again, please remember, adult staff are volunteers).

ADULT VOLUNTEERS (AVs)

Every member of our staff has the same type of responsibilities as the parents/guardians of the child (ren) enrolled - including the same types of stress. Not all volunteers have children involved in the program, in some cases their child(ren)/grandchild(ren) were in the program and have already grown to become responsible citizens. In other cases, they are just here to give back. All of these individuals deserve a great deal of credit for unselfish devotion of their time to aid and educate our future leaders. Whatever hardships the parent(s)/guardian(s) may be experiencing; chances are there is a staff member that is going through or has gone through the same thing. Children are not perfect and neither are we; however, this is where much of our experience is learned and shared. Because the staff is just like you, they too like to see that they are not alone in working with the Young Marines - this program succeeds when the parent(s)/guardian(s) and Young Marines work in unison to help instill discipline and personal accomplishment.

“There are no parents at Young Marines” - meaning if you are a Staff member, while at any YM event, you are not the parent of your child but a mentor for ALL Young Marines. Your child must address you as they would any AV, and you must address them as you would every other Young Marine. We are here for the good of the group, and will look out for the best interests of all, not just our own child(ren).

Social media rules apply to Staff members, just as they do the Young Marines. You now represent this program, too. There is no smoking or drinking at YM functions where you are in charge of, or representing, Young Marines. You are required to read and adhere to the Young Marine Registered Adult Manual (RAM). You should read the YM Guidebooks and use Young Marines University (YMU) for training and knowledge.

ARRIVAL AT DRILL

Young Marines and Recruits are expected to be in formation and inspection-ready by 0855 (8:55am) on drill days. It is HIGHLY recommended to have your YM/Recruit on site 10 minutes prior 0845 (8:45am) so that they may arrange their gear properly and prepare themselves for the day ahead. If you arrive earlier than 15 minutes ahead of schedule, please wait in your car... you may see Staff and YM Leaders in the building, but that does not mean that we are ready for you (there is much preparation that goes into every drill and this set-up time is an important last step before we begin our drill day).

ATTENDANCE LOG

Young Marines and Recruits must be signed in by a parent/guardian to participate in the day's events and there must be a working emergency phone number listed. This also allows you a chance to receive any information concerning the event or changes in the training schedule (please read the dry erase board and any signs near the Attendance Book). At the end of drill, you must also sign them out.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Recruits undergo a strict and intensive schedule. One day's absence (or 2 half-day absences) may be acceptable, if arranged ahead of time - more than that will be grounds for recruit "recycling". Once a Young Marine, they must maintain an 80% attendance status to be considered 'active', per YMNHQ.

Authorized Absence: absence authorized in advance by written notice. Absence: given for health reasons or emergencies less than 48 hours prior to drill. **Unexcused Absence*:** No valid reason given by 0800 of drill day. (Unexcused Absences will prevent promotions for at least one quarter and can prevent the next full year of trips.) No more than two (2) **unauthorized** absences accumulative per fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) will be tolerated for regular drill or mandatory events.

BATTLE BUDDIES

At every YM function, for many reasons - safety being the most important, the Battle Buddy system will be enforced. Battle Buddies are assigned or based on the situation. If a YM is spotted alone, away from the group, they will be counseled and appropriate action taken.

BIRTHDAY BALL

Every October we celebrate the Young Marines' birthday (17 OCT) in ceremonial (and fun) fashion. This is typically a Saturday night event, semi-formal to formal dress for attendees (Young Marines wear full cammies or dress uniforms with ribbons). It begins with the formal cake-cutting

(modeled after the United States Marine Corps' Birthday Ball ceremony), then we have dinner, hear from our Guest of Honor, review our past year, announce annual awards, dance and socialize, and give out the "Gunny Awards".

CELL PHONE USAGE

During YM events, meetings, and activities, cell phone use is not permitted. Typically, we collect phones at morning formation - however, even if we neglect to do so, YMs are expected to follow the rules. If a parent wants their YM to have a phone on encampments, so their child can call when we arrive or are heading home, that is allowed but the phone will be kept by an AV during the trip. This is also the policy of HQ during leadership schools, camps, and most trips.

CHOW

Since our drills last over 6 hours, we have created a plan for providing lunch (aka chow) to our YMs. To save parents the trouble of packing lunches or sending money each drill, we have instituted a plan where chow is provided, on a rotational basis, by Young Marine families. A "Sign-up Genius" link is sent out by our Chow Coordinator listing drill dates where families can sign up to donate chow to our Young Marines, Staff, and any potential guest speakers we may have at various drills. Chow can be something homemade or purchased, but we also encourage families to seek out donations from local establishments. Recruit parents are not asked to provide chow until their Recruit graduates to a Young Marine - at that time, families will be asked to help fill in for future drill dates. Young Marines are expected to eat what is provided and at least try all healthy options. This is a great opportunity to expand palettes while being exposed to a variety of meals! Our unit is very appreciative of our families who spend their time, energy, and money to provide an array of meals to our unit. Families providing chow are always welcomed to stay and eat with us.

COLOR GUARD

Color Guard is a honor and must be treated as such. Color Guard members will be asked to present the Colors at an array of events, typically outside of drill. Color Guard members are expected to present themselves as honorably as possible and are also expected to check email regularly for invitations (some of which have tight deadlines).

COMMUNITY SERVICE

We are a service-oriented bunch. We help in our communities, with special consideration given toward veterans. Whenever we serve the community as a unit, those hours are entered in the database (and, therefore, the YM's Record Books). When YMs perform community service outside of the unit, we ask that they turn in those hours as well. With a few minor exceptions, any hours worked, where they did not receive pay AND their actions benefited the **community** will be counted. The hours apply toward both YM and Presidential Volunteer Service Awards. All hours must be verified by a non-parent leader, if possible, and submitted to Staff for approval.

DISMISSAL

We advise that parents/guardians attend the last ten minutes of drill for afternoon formation to hear any announcements, see promotions and/or awards given, find out what happened during drill, etc.

DRILL (Meetings)

Meetings (called "Drill") are held every other Saturday in our unit and attendance is very important (see attendance section). Young Marines are encouraged to be well-rounded, as that will help them in most aspects of life including this program. Those who are also involved in outside activities can do very well in Young Marines (as witnessed by the requirements for YMOY and past stars of the program) and can earn awards within the program based on those activities. However, there needs to be understanding that by missing drill they miss training, guest speakers, PT, teamwork activities, and more - and, while some of those things can be made up, others cannot. Staying current on DDR and PFT's is always imperative, as is studying the Guidebook. When a YM misses drill, they should make attempts to see what they missed and try to catch up. Our Drill calendar is on website (NKyYoungMarines.com) and typically runs on an every-other-Saturday schedule.

DRILL FACILITY

We have been granted permission by VFW Post 6095 in Latonia, KY to hold our meetings in their facility. We expect the Post to be treated with the utmost respect by our Young Marines, parents, and volunteers. There are rules that must be followed: no one under 18 in the bar area and no standing, leaning, or sitting on the monument. Field Day will be executed prior to every dismissal. We truly appreciate the generosity of, and continued support from, the VFW and will show all members respect and gratitude.

Please note: everyone needs to clean-up the meeting area prior to departure. Make sure your Young Marine has gathered ALL of their belongings before leaving the VFW Post.

DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION (DDR)

3 hours of DDR are required every quarter for every YM in order to maintain status for promotions, billets, and trips. DDR is offered at drill (through classes, presentations, guest speakers, activities, etc.), but can also be gained by attending online DDR courses, completing Project Alert training/certification/activities, or doing homework that is DDR-related (research papers, comic books, posters, PSAs, etc.). If YMs do not complete the required 3 hours per quarter, this can stop them from qualifying for SPACES trips, Leadership Schools, and promotions.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising profits are divided 50/50 between unit and YMs who worked them (based on number of hours worked). For example: if we receive a check for \$1,000 for a fundraiser, the unit gets \$500 and the remaining \$500 is divided by total number of hours worked at function by all YMs & Staff to figure out an 'hourly wage', each worker then receives their share in their personal YM account. YM Personal Accounts are held for each member and can be used for anything YM-related (trips, fees, uniform parts, etc). Personal Accounts are forfeited back to unit when YM leaves the program.

LEADERSHIP SCHOOLS

Before promotion to YM-SGT Young Marines are required to complete a National or locally certified Junior Leadership School (JLS). Young Marines must have minimum of 12 months in the program from date of graduation of recruit training to start date of JLS.

Before promotion to YM-GySgt Young Marines are required to complete a national or locally certified Senior Leadership School (SLS).

Before promotion to YM-MGySgt Young Marines are required to complete the National Advanced Leadership School. Advance Leadership School is only conducted on the National level each summer

Young Marines must complete Senior Leadership School before they can apply for Young Marine Staff at any level schools. Graduates of SLS may apply as YM Staff in the billets of YM Platoon Sergeant or Squad Advisors only, and only for JLS.

In order to apply for Leadership Schools, you must have all current rank requirements plus be current on DDR hours, paperwork, attendance, PFT scores, etc. for the past 12 months.

NKYOUNGMARINES.COM

There is a wealth of information on our website for you. In addition to accolades and upcoming events, you can find needed forms, our calendar, a donation button (for friends who want to help our YMs), photos from past events, a link to the original YM documentary, and more.

PHYSICAL FITNESS TESTS (PFTs)

PFTs are held twice a year, once per each half of the year. Passing PFT scores are required to maintain the ability to attend trips above the unit level and leadership schools, as well as maintain good standing for promotions, billets, instructor positions, etc. within the unit. Only one make-up PFT will be held for each PFT. Individual PFT scores are based on age and gender; passing overall scores depend on rank.

PHYSICAL TRAINING (PT)

Physical training is part of nearly every drill schedule, but it cannot be the only exercise that YMs get if they hope to improve. YMs should set their own training regimen to ensure that they are improving themselves. Daily exercise and stretching is recommended; however, YMs do not have to join a gym to get a solid workout.

PHYSICAL TRAINING GEAR (PT Gear)

For physical training period of instruction, Young Marines may wear Unit PT shirt or any SPACES event T black or solid white socks. On cold days, solid black or solid grey sweatpants and sweatshirts are allowed to be worn **under** PT gear. ***For PFTs, unit PT T is only shirt choice.**

PREPAREDNESS

All Young Marine and Recruits are expected to be prepared for every drill (binders, guidebook(s), inkstick, PT Gear in PT bag, water bottle, red cord bracelet, and any assignments) and every trip (gear list followed explicitly).

PROMOTIONS

YMs must be signed-off (in their Guidebook) on all Enabling Objectives (Guidebook Knowledge) listed in the Table of Promotions for that rank. YMs must stand and pass an oral promotion board for each promotion (LCpl and above - not knowing the Obligation, General Orders, or Creed will be an automatic fail). YMs must not have had an unexcused absence the quarter prior to request.

Executive Staff also take the following into consideration regarding promotions:

- 1) Does the YM practice good citizenship and leadership?
- 2) Does the YM participate in school, home, and outside activities?
- 3) Does the YM pass required PFT's or show improving effort at each test?
- 4) Does the YM follow the chain of command and respect those of higher rank—no matter their age?
- 5) Is the YM mature enough to handle the rank for which they are being recommended?

RECORD BOOKS

Each Young Marine has a Record Book located on YoungMarines.com (in order to login, they must have the last 4 numbers of their Social Security number.) Their Record Book contains their entire YM career (start date, promotion dates, PFT scores, etc.).

SOCIAL MEDIA

As for Facebook and any other social media sites, AVs, YM leaders, and HQ monitors these places for behavior “unbecoming a YM.” There should be no foul language, no inappropriate photos posted, and if a friend links the YM to a post that puts that YM in a bad light, it should be removed from their page. If a member of our unit notices something on another YM's Facebook page that is inappropriate, they will send a notification asking that it be removed in a timely manner. Keep in mind, we are always representing not just ourselves, but the program and other Young Marines - we cannot allow that reputation to be tarnished.

SPACES

(Summer Programs of Adventures, Challenges, Encampments, & Schools)

HQ provides exciting adventures each summer for YMs; each trip for under \$500 (which includes transportation, accommodations, activities, and meals - you are responsible for initial fee, any gear needed, plus any unaccompanied minor fees imposed by the airline). Announcements regarding the camps will come out in late fall of each year and will be communicated by the UC. Sign-ups begin the first week of January and are on a first come-first served basis. If you want to sign up your YM for one of these activities, you must fill out the proper paperwork and notify the UC in advance, as well as have any funds allotted for payment needed in February. These are highly selective trips and only 1 YM per trip may be submitted by each unit during initial, restricted period. If there are available slots open after the initial sign-up period, we may be permitted to add additional YMs. Young Marines must work for selection to these trips and must give back to the unit after said trip. HQ creates and subsidizes these trips so that not only the YMs who attend will learn from them, but so they will pass that knowledge to all of our YMs.

Remember, these are highly selective trips (both on Unit and National level). Just because you want to go and can afford to go, does not mean that you get to go. There are many factors involved:

- ~Young Marines must be current on PFTs (1 every 6 months of last 12 months).
- ~Young Marines must be current on DDR (3 hours per quarter every quarter for last 12 months).
- ~Young Marines must have attended 2 overnight unit trips **WITHOUT INCIDENT**.
- ~Young Marines must meet the specific trip's listed requirements (e.g., age, rank, PFT score, TIP, etc.)
- ~Young Marines must be **wholeheartedly recommended by Unit Staff** to uphold their Obligation,

Creed and Orders while on said trip, as they represent our Unit and risk the possibility of the entire Unit's disqualification from future trips. (Unexcused absences, poor inspection scores, ill-preparedness, incidences on other trips, misbehavior at school, etc, are factors that are definitely taken into consideration.)

~Final selections are made by HQYM from those who are submitted.

In addition:

~Parents/Guardians must be ready to fill out all paperwork accurately and quickly, if their YM is selected

~Parents/Guardians and YMs must read all paperwork sent (by the Unit and HQ) in a timely manner

~Parents/Guardians/YMs must be willing to purchase needed gear well in advance of trip

~Parents/Guardians must accept the flight schedules given to them by HQ & agree to NOT change it in any manner

~Parents/Guardians/YMs must have full payment listed ready 2 weeks after being notified that you have been selected

**NOTE: Even if your YM is not qualified for SPACES, or are qualified but aren't selected, does not mean that you won't have the opportunity to attend other trips - we can attend Unit-, Battalion-, or Division-level trips.*

STAFF (see "Adult Volunteers")

TRAINING ROTATION

Training Rotations are distributed regularly. Training Rotations assign periods of instruction to Young Marines. If your YM is on the Training Rotation, it is their responsibility to send an outline of their period of instruction to Unit Commander at least one week prior to drill. If your YM will not be in attendance at assigned drill, is their responsibility to seek out another YM to cover that class (they are allowed to switch instructors, but not topics - e.g., if they are assigned guidebook knowledge they may not switch for PT).

UNIFORMS

RECRUIT uniform consists of gym shoes (tied), jeans, belt, (worn at waist line) white T with last name on front and back (tucked in). If weather requires, a solid grey or solid black sweatshirt may be worn under the white T and sweatpants/underlayers may be worn under jeans.

Young Marine Uniform - Unless informed otherwise, standard drill uniform is full cammies (cover, trousers, blouse, black leather boots, solid white blank crew-neck T, web belt, red cord bracelet, boot bands, boot socks, chevrons - if applicable). Shirts are always tucked in, and trousers are worn at waist line. All parts must be clean, pressed or polished, and present. Inspections are performed nearly every drill and taken into account for promotions, billets, and other opportunities. Hair must be within Young Marine regulations.

***Ribbons are not worn to drill unless specified prior.**

Whenever a YM wears his/her uniform, it must be worn properly! (this includes ANY location and whether other YMs or Staff are around) If you are out from under cover, you wear your cover (even if it is just a short walk from your house to your car - integrity at all times).

VOLUNTEERING/WORKING AT EVENTS

Every event is different. Some are open to all YMs, some are not. Sometimes this is deemed by outside organizations, sometimes it is restricted by us. Sometimes we cannot invite all YMs to certain events whether due to lack of physical space, only needing a certain number of volunteers, or if that particular event has requirements - like age, training, maturity, etc. When there are limitations, we first make a list of which YMs are event-qualified on paper (age, strength, ability, etc.), then we have to decide whom to invite.

*For example, if an event requires 7-10 YMs per day; age 10 or up; ability to listen carefully and comprehend quickly (weapons and ranges require ultimate respect of safety and rules); ability to stand fairly still for long periods of time (without reminders to stand up properly and/or pay attention); willingness to work for long periods of time (without someone constantly reminding them to do so); ability to speak loudly and clearly (very noisy environment); ability to describe our program properly; and the maturity to be near very cool (some may call them dangerous) items without touching them.

Qualified YMs are then sorted by considerations (as proven at drill, fundraisers, and other events) such as attendance, moto, bearing, listening skills, being up-to-date on all things YM (DDR, PFTs, assignments, registration, fees), and responsiveness to emails (we are volunteers - if we have to send email(s), it is already time from our lives... if we have to send follow-up email(s) to gather responses to questions asked or items sent, that is more time, more frustration, and less time to plan). Requests are then sent and, if first ones on list aren't available, we invite more (in order and as necessary) until slots are filled.

YOUNGMARINES.COM

There is a wealth of information on the National website. In addition to each YM's personal record book, you can find practice tests, all guidebooks, HQ Staff and Board member info, how to submit an article to the Esprit magazine, and more.

*** FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS * ***

• As a parent, if I have a question, where do I find answers?

Always ask your YM first. You can also consult our website, the national website, our group Facebook page, the YM Guidebook, this Handbook, your child's binder, the emails that Staff has taken the time to prepare and send, and, after exhausting those resources, ask a YM leader or YM Staff member.

• Where does my Young Marine turn if they have a question?

They can look in their binders, their Basic guidebook, in the emails sent by Squad Leaders/Staff members, on our website, or on our Facebook page, and on the national website (YoungMarines.com). Unit Chain of Command: **Young Marines** should first approach their Squad Leader. If that YM is not available, go to the Platoon Sergeant, then Platoon Leader, before reaching out to adult staff (unless it is an issue with YM command).

• Why is Drill mandatory?

Our meetings (aka Drill) are held every other Saturday for 6 hours each. In that time, we need to fit in required DDR, guidebook training, close order drill, PT/PFTs, and other essential subjects. Unless there is an exception, meetings will begin promptly at 0900 and end at 1500.

Outside activities are optional; however, certain awards and events do require a minimum level of activity in the unit to be able to participate in or receive credit for a ribbon.

• Do I need to tell you if my child can (or can't) attend drill or other events?

Young Marines will receive an email from their Squad Leader prior to each drill, and they are expected to respond. Regarding other events, please do not commit your YM to an activity and then back out the day of. Often, we have to make plans and provide numbers to organizations we may be assisting and often times these events are competitive selection. Circumstances may come up unexpectedly and we understand that; however, if this becomes a pattern rather than an oddity, your YM will be excluded from signing up for such opportunities. If something does come up, please let the UC or RAC (Registered Adult in Charge) know as quickly as possible, so they are no longer expecting your YM and can fill that open spot if necessary (and do not waste time waiting on your YM to arrive).

• How can my Young Marine get selected to try out for Color Guard?

There are many factors that go into Color Guard selection. As stated earlier in this handbook, Color Guard is an honor and it is reserved for those Young Marines who have proven that they have the respect for their uniform (inspections at morning formation show us who has cared for and worked on their uniform parts and who has simply gotten dressed), our country's flag, and all authority. We watch Young Marines at every drill - especially during Close Order Drill practice. It is very easy to judge who stands up proudly, no matter the temperature or how long they've been on the grinder, and who has worked on their facing and drill movements outside of drill. When we need to train new Color Guard members, we will ask those who have impressed us (repeatedly and regularly) to attend practice(s) and then see if they are ready for the advanced moves and stress of Color Guard.

• **How can we find out what's going on and what we need for outings?**

Check our website's calendar (www.nkyyoungmarines.com/calendar)

Communications are primarily done via email and Facebook - for any YM that provides an email address, we will include them on all news appropriate for them. Most unit-related information will be emailed by the UC so as to alleviate any miscommunication and avoid doubling up or something slipping through the cracks. The exceptions will be the following:

- You may receive community service opportunities and notifications from other Adult Staff or YMs.
- The DDR Officer may send reminders of low hours, missing work, or make-up DDR from YMs.
- The Financial Manager may send out invoices for events, gear, and re-registration.
- Prior to most events, an email will be sent with a summary of the activity and a date to respond by if your YM wishes to attend. A more detailed email with any need paperwork will be sent to those who indicate a willingness to commit to an activity. Read them thoroughly as they contain addresses, possibly directions, uniform of the day, gear lists, the purpose of the outing, unit contacts, and times.
- A Hold Harmless Agreement will be signed by parents prior to all events—this allows us authority to treat your YM in case of emergency and indicates best contact information.

If ANY of your contact information changes, at any time, please be sure to let STAFF know.

• **What can kids earn and how often do they get awards?**

All awards have different requirements - some outside of YMs and some within. All descriptions are detailed in the Awards manual found in the library on the national website.

If a YM is eligible for an award that is not earned as part of the unit, a ribbon submission form will need to be turned in along with the appropriate documentation. The requirements are listed in the Awards manual. Suggestion: print off the page from the awards manual and staple to the ribbon form, along with any other necessary paperwork. Once the submission is complete, please turn into the UC or Awards Officer for review and entry into the database. If you feel a YM is deserving of one of the advanced awards, please bring it to the attention of the UC. There are higher achievements beyond the unit that the kids can be eligible for, and we want to recognize their efforts.

• **How do we pay for activities?**

Fundraising is extremely important to the unit, as it allows us to continue activities. There will be opportunities throughout the year for the YMs to participate in activities; we try to avoid sales, but will take an opportunity if it is a great one. If YMs do not participate in these activities, they will not be eligible for the discounts afforded those that do for certain events. In other words, if the unit is paying for half or all of an activity, the YM must participate in the fundraising efforts to realize the benefit. AVs and support staff are always pursuing donation efforts and would appreciate any help that YMs or family members can give.

• **What should I know about leadership schools?**

For all leadership schools, certain requirements must be met to apply – time in program (TIP), PFT scores, updated DDR training, rank and age, etc.

YMs can attend Junior Leadership School (JLS) once they have completed one year in the program prior to the school if they have earned the rank of LCpl or Cpl (and based on age), plus have no disciplinary, respect, or inspection issues. The YM can attend any JLS that has openings, anywhere in the country, provided parents are able to provide and fund the transportation necessary to get them to the location. Senior Leadership School (SLS) and Advanced Leadership School (ALS) are held at the National level and transportation is included in the school fee.

• **Why is Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) important?**

Per our regulations, we must conduct DDR training at the minimum rate of three hours per quarter. Typically, this is done through instruction at each drill, but can also be a longer presentation by a YM, a guest speaker, or may include such things as working at DDR booths or trips to appropriate venues. A YM that does not have the required 3 hours per quarter will have to submit make-up work (or attend online DDR sessions), within that same quarter to count. If the YM does not maintain the minimum DDR training, he/she will not be able to participate in activities above the unit level.

• **What is expected of the Young Marines and adults on outings?**

HQ has an array of information in the form of manuals and memorandums available to all on the National website (YoungMarines.com) - they are accessible through the Library tab after you click on "member" on the home page. They are very clear about behavior, both YM and adult. The number one priority is the safety of the YMs. To that end, adults will not be permitted to smoke or drink around YMs during any YM activity, outing, or event, public or otherwise. The general consensus is that AVs should not be smokers unless they can abstain for the length of time necessary for drill, outings, activities, or events.

We are not a military organization; however, we do subscribe to the values of respect for others, self-discipline, chain of command, and following orders. There is a time to have fun, but we still must act according to the Creed and Obligation. Whether in uniform or in regular clothes, we expect youth to act like Young Marines; they will be courteous, respectful, and not bring shame upon themselves or the program.

Appearance is important. Refer to the guidebooks for specifics, but generally speaking, the uniform should be neat, patches sewn on correctly, proper hair style, jewelry limited to permitted items, clean nails (neutral tone or no polish), clean footwear, and clean-shaven face (if applicable). A blank white t-shirt is worn under the camouflage blouse (in rare cases, we may wear the National or PT t-shirt, but you will always be notified of those decisions).

• **Behavior & Consequences**

This is a detailed, subjective, lengthy topic that cannot be completely covered here. From the simplest of behavior vs consequence examples - a YM who slouches through close order drill - to the most serious - a YM caught with drugs - severity of punishment is based on severity of offense, whether it is a first-time or repeat offender, and what we as a group (Unit HQ) decide. (example - a YM who slouches through close order drill practice at drill will likely never be asked to try out for Color Guard.)

• **Being a (Northern KY) Young Marine:**

Once you become a Young Marine (or Registered Adult Volunteer), you represent our unit - the years of volunteer work it took to make this unit what it is, all of the YMs who came before you, the Northern KY reputation, over 6,000 YMs and countless YM Alumni across the country, and the United States Marine Corps who has endorsed us. **Every person you come in contact with will judge the Young Marines program by you - you must represent us well (whether in uniform or not).**

You will be held to the following rules:

- No sunglasses in uniform.
- No chewing gum in uniform.
- We leave places better than we find them.
- We use full sentences when asked a question.
- We wear our covers properly and at the proper times.
- We do not rest our hands in pockets of our uniforms.
- We thank Veterans for their service to this great nation.
- YMs will not have tattoos that show in (any) YM uniform (YM PT gear is a uniform).
- We show common courtesy (saying please and thank you, pushing in chairs, cleaning up after yourself, answering properly, looking people in the eye, saying ma'am and sir, etc.).
- We shake hands properly - firm grip, maintain eye contact, shoulders square to other person.
- We adhere to the rules of Chivalry (holding doors, helping people, etc.).
- We respond to emails (LCpls & up, this is your responsibility not your Mom's or Dad's).
- If you earn a title or a trip, you owe it back to the program, the unit, and your YMs in the form of service and sharing the knowledge gained on said trip.
- We have integrity - we do the right thing even when we think no one is watching (but **someone is always watching**).
- We respect our flag, our country, our Anthem, and our Pledge of Allegiance - and we follow proper etiquette for all.
- We have prayer before meals and events, given by our Unit Chaplain - you are not required to participate but you are required to allow others their reverence.

ACRONYMS

AAR	After-Action Report
ALC	Adult Leaders Conference
ALS	Advanced Leadership School
AV	Adult Volunteer
BDU	Battle Dress Uniform
BN	Battalion
CO	Commanding Officer
DDR	Drug Demand Reduction
DIV	Division
DYMOY	Division Young Marine of the Year
EGA	Eagle, Globe & Anchor
F'NYMOY	Former National Young Marine of the Year
GAHA	Great American History Adventure
JLS	Junior Leadership School
LEF	Leadership Evaluation Form
NLA	National Leadership Academies
NYMOY	National Young Marine of the Year (pronounced EN-YUH-MOY)
PFT	Physical Fitness Test
POA	Position of Attention
PT	Physical Training
RAC	Registered Adult in Charge
RAM	Registered Adult Manual
RRW	Red Ribbon Week
SLS	Senior Leadership School
SO	Supply Officer
SPACES	Summer Programs of Adventures, Challenges, Encampments & Schools
TIP	Time in Program
TO	Training Officer
UC	Unit Commander
UOD	Uniform of the Day
USMC	United States Marine Corps
UYMOY	Unit Young Marine of the Year
VA	Veteran Affairs
XO	Executive Officer
YM	Young Marine
YMU	Young Marines University
YMOY	Young Marine of the Year (pronounced YUH-MOY)

YOUNG MARINE RANK STRUCTURE & ABBREVIATIONS

	YM/Rct	Young Marine Recruit
Basic	YM/Pvt	Young Marine Private
Basic	YM/PFC	Young Marine Private First Class
Basic	YM/LCpl	Young Marine Lance Corporal
Junior	YM/Cpl	Young Marine Corporal
Junior	YM/Sgt	Young Marine Sergeant
Senior	YM/SSgt	Young Marine Staff Sergeant
Senior	YM/GySgt	Young Marine Gunnery Sergeant
Adv.	YM/MSgt	Young Marine Master Sergeant
Adv.	YM/MGySgt	Young Marine Master Gunnery Sergeant
Billet	YM/1stSgt	Young Marine First Sergeant
Billet	YM/SgtMaj	Young Marine Sergeant Major