

TRAINERS GUIDE

CAVE SAFELY-CAVE SOFTLY

Organized and Prepared by

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First Meeting – Pre-Training Organization

Objectives:

1. Meet leaders
2. Meet participants
3. Present cavers' point of view
4. Introduce and overview Safe Caving
5. Determine commitment
6. Meet with leaders and make decision to continue

Outline:

1. Cavers Introductions
 - a. Name
 - b. Years caving
 - c. Caving organization affiliation
 - d. Scouting affiliation or participation
 - e. Why you cave
 - f. Importance of safe and soft caving
2. Youth Leaders and Participants Introductions
 - a. Name
 - b. Age
 - c. Years involved with the youth group
 - d. Why you participate in the youth group
 - e. Why you want to go caving
3. Introduce Safe Caving
 - a. The youth group policy must be followed
 - b. The meetings and training activities must follow the youth organization's caving policy
 - c. It is the responsibility of the presenters and the youth group leaders to assure that all aspects of the policy are covered during training activities
 - d. Talk about cave conservation and preservation
4. Permission and permits are necessary for all trips and training activities
 - a. Discuss the importance of safe caving practices
 - b. Talk about each meeting
 - c. Describe the caving trips
5. Commercial cave trip
 - a. Experience a cave
 - b. Check out how participants behave on a caving trip
6. Horizontal wild cave trip
 - a. Follow youth group age restrictions for horizontal caving
 - b. Practice what you learned
 - c. Check out how participants interact on a caving trip
 - d. Determine readiness for more advanced horizontal caves
7. Introduce Waivers and Permission Forms

Objectives:

1. Determine the levels and extent of training
2. Set meeting schedule
3. Establish participation criteria

Preparation:

- After you receive the request, contact the youth group leader
- Discuss the dangers of caving
- Request a copy of the youth organization's caving policy
- Explain that you and the leaders must strictly follow the organizations safety, preparation, and policy guidelines
- Setup a meeting to meet the participants and discuss Safe Caving

Suggestions from Presenters' Experiences:

- **If participants do not come to training meetings exclude them from the outings**
- A person may be skilled in climbing or might have earned a climbing or rappelling badge, or taken a climbing course. This is **not** an indicator that, he or she is qualified to enter a vertical cave.
- Do not expect youth group members to be anxious to hear what you have to say. Some youth participants may confront you or may simply be obnoxious, just ignore it. Talk to the leader after the meeting. Grotto members are guests. It is the youth leader's job and responsibility to manage his or her group.
- Make observations to determine if you should go forward with the project.
- Be very cautious in taking on a project for groups of young people who give the appearance that they could present behavior situations that could be a risk to the group or to you when underground. Problem groups should not go beyond Tier 1 activities or participate in anything beyond the most basic horizontal cave.
- Have waivers for parents' signatures. (Refer to Caving Basics, Appendix B, Legal Forms and Releases, p 163.)

Second Meeting – Caving and Equipment

Objectives:

1. Become excited about caving
2. Watch a slide show of a horizontal cave
3. Learn basic cave formation types
4. Participate in caving equipment demonstrations

Outline:

1. Slide show presentation of horizontal caves
2. Equipment Demonstration
 - a. Groups are to be educated on and shown appropriate equipment to own before entering a cave. (Avoid using carbide lamps other than showing the difference between carbide and electric lights.)
 - b. Distribute an equipment checklist and describe and explain caving equipment

Equipment list

1. Helmet - first most important piece of caving equipment
2. 3 sources of light – second most important piece of caving equipment helmet mounted primary light (carbide or electric lamp, show differences, discuss advantages and disadvantages extra light sources, flashlights, candle
3. Boots with deep lugs
 1. Coveralls (preferably cotton / nylon mix)
 4. Pants & shirt (discuss jeans, shirts, and pants)
 5. Change of clothes for ride home
 6. Cave bag containing: a backup light source, food, water, first aid kit, candle, waterproof matches or waterproof container for matches
 7. Gloves
 8. Bandana
 9. Knee pads
 10. Small notebook & pen
 11. Discuss burrito bags and pee bottles
3. Discuss the importance safe cave training.

Remind participants to have parent permission/waivers ready for the next meeting.

Preparation:

- Have a slide show of a horizontal cave.
- Rent a cave show from the NSS Library.
- Avoid showing technical climbing and rope work. The youth group members will more than likely think that you are 'cool' simply because you are an experienced caver. We as cavers do not need to use training as a stage for flaunting our egos.
- Organize cave experience stories to illustrate the importance of the equipment cavers take caving.
- Do not go into the contents of the cave bag. Cave bags and making cave pigs will take place during the cave bag meeting.

Suggestions from presenters' experiences:

- Always have two cavers at presentations. This way the group can learn from two experienced people.
- During the first meeting you may notice disruptive behaviors. If this occurs, describe your observation and the behaviors as a group behavior and problem, with the leader.
- Avoid singling out individuals.
 - Ask what the group's intentions are. (If they really want to go caving or not?)
 - Do not discuss the situation with the group. (We are not participating as counselors or group therapists.)
 - Caving is not an activity for resolving behavioral problems. (Time would be safer-spent participating in a less risky activity.)
 - Suggest that youth participants and their leaders discuss their intentions about caving and decide as a group if they are going to continue.
 - Decisions not to move forward will allow you time to work with another group.
 - Explain that you will expect a telephone call from the lead youth participant between the next day and one day prior to the meeting. If you do not hear from the lead youth participant you will understand, and the program will be terminated.
 - Talk to the youth group leader about the situation.
- Assign group to get to a library and check out and read a book on cave exploration.
- Work on teamwork. Use a buddy system. Discuss how to work together in an emergency.

Third Meeting – Caving Techniques

Objectives:

1. Review caving equipment – importance of helmets
2. Organize a caving trip – commercial cave
3. Landowner relations
4. Cave conservation and preservation activities

Outline:

1. Review Caving Equipment
2. Caving Techniques
 - a. Demonstration of wooden squeezebox
 - b. Experience a squeeze box
3. Organize a caving trip to a commercial cave
 - a. Discuss commercial caves in your area
 - b. You may need to plan the trip as an overnight camping experience
4. Determine the cave you want to visit
 - a. Size up the cave you want to visit
 - b. Discuss level of difficulty in the cave
5. Delegate preparation activities
 - a. Contact the cave to get visitation schedules that fit your schedule
 - b. Arrange for camping
 - c. Determine the fees for camping and for entering the cave
 - d. Set the time for the trip
 - e. Make transportation arrangements
 - f. Plan eating arrangements, food, and menus
6. Collect parent permission forms and waivers
7. Leaders must follow up with participants
 - a. Leaders to check equipment before the trip
 - All the equipment on the equipment checklist
 - b. Smoking, food, and drink are prohibited in all caves
 - c. No stimulating beverages (no beer, no liquor, no heavily caffeinated beverages or energy drinks)

Pilot group participants drank high sugar and caffeine beverages before entering a cave. Their hyperactivity brought on by the beverages endangered themselves and the group.
8. No pets allowed.
9. Remove all trash and human waste that they've made before leaving the cave.
10. Be on the good side of the cave owners. Be responsible and display good behavior.
11. Distribute cave and karst conservation activities from Project Underground and Exploring Caves and Karst

After meeting activities

1. Gather and organize equipment

Preparation:

- Have phone numbers for cave owners
- Talk to cave owners before the meeting and the trip
- Copy activities that the group would be interested in doing to learn more about caves

Suggestions from presenters' experiences:

- Remind youth group leaders that tour permits and parental permission is required.
- Contact land owner to assure arrangements are made.
- Update youth group leaders before the meeting.
- The team approach to caving is essential. Even in a commercial cave, youth group participants can practice a buddy system.
- Have a final equipment check at the parking lot where they'll leave from to travel to the cave.
- Be strict about equipment. Cancel the trip if participants are not prepared with essential equipment, if they do not have helmets, or if one or more wear tennis shoes.
- Be strict about caffeinated beverages. If they are consumed consider canceling the trip.

First Outing - Commercial Cave Trip

Objectives:

1. Visit a cave.
2. Get ideas for a cave project, book to read, or activity to complete

Outline:

1. Equipment check completed before the day of the trip
2. Meet on time, be serious and professional
3. Leave on time
4. After cave trip activities
 - a. Contact a local grotto, cave tour organization, or the National Speleological Society (NSS) to request information about caving and information about caves and cavers near you
 - b. Learn about the different types of caves
 - c. Learn about caving courtesy, caving do's and don'ts, and what the youth organization policy is on cave exploring
 - d. Read at least one book about caving
 - a. Bring 2, one gallon plastic bottles with screw caps and 5 feet of webbing or nylon cord for each boy to make a cave pig

Preparation:

- Follow up with the leader
- Follow up with the land owner
- Have waivers with the youth group leader. Cancel the trip if permission and waivers are not in hand

Suggestions from presenters' experiences:

- Follow up is essential.
- Like cavers, youth groups will rarely leave on time.
- Terminate your involvement if permission and /or tour permits are not completed and in hand before the trip.

Fourth Meeting – Cave Bag

Objectives:

1. Give a cave trip report.
2. Show slides of the trip.
3. Participate in a cave bag demonstration.
4. Make a cave pig.

Outline:

1. Slide show presentation of the commercial caving trip
2. Present parent permissions and waivers for participation in the outing.
3. Brief reports on the activity/project completed
4. Cave Bag Demonstration
 - a. Pack
 - b. First Aid Kit
 - c. Two garbage bags (for heat tent)
 - d. Backup lights
 - e. Batteries, spare bulbs
 - f. Pee bottle
 - g. Burrito bag
 - h. Food
 - i. Whistle
 - j. Surgical masks to fit inside top of helmet for use in case there is a lot of dust
 - k. Bottled water
 - l. Cereal or power bar or light non-perishable food
 - m. Candle
 - n. Waterproof matches
5. Must Have Items to Bring
 - a. Medications
 - b. Complete change of clothing and shoes
 - c. Plastic garbage bag for dirty clothing
 - d. Parental consent form and/or waivers
 - e. Health form (You must know each individuals limitations)
 - f. Trip permits
6. Optional Equipment
 - a. Space blanket
 - b. Disposable flash camera
 - c. Magnifying glass
 - d. Sketch books
 - e. After-trip snack
 - f. Money for incidentals
7. Group Equipment
 - a. First aid kit for in-cave use cave map and compass
 - b. Pencil and small note pad for each adult
 - c. Out-of-cave emergency cache
8. Make a Cave Pig

Preparation:

- Have leaders get boys to bring 2 one gallon plastic bottles and 5 feet of webbing or nylon rope to make a pig
- Assemble your cave bag
- Have garbage bags for heat tent demonstration

Suggestions from presenters' experiences:

- Making the pig is important. The size of the bottles standardizes the cave bag and will limit the amount of things the participants will take into a cave.
- Explain or demonstrate the use of each item. (Just explain the pee bottle and burrito bag.)
- Demonstrate the heat tent and double bagging.
- Have everyone make and use a pig - simply to try it out.
- Be prepared for participants who have health problems, physical limitations, and attention disorders. Adjust the program to fit their limitations.

Fifth Meeting - First Aid Review

Objectives:

1. Review and practice first aid

Outline:

1. Discuss need for first aid knowledge in caves
 - a. Tell cave accident stories
2. List cave related injuries
 - a. Head and neck
 - b. Lacerations
 - c. Falls
 - d. Fractures
 - e. Hypothermia
 - f. Heart attack
3. Review basic first aid
 - a. Head lacerations
 - b. C-spine stabilization
 - c. Fractures
 - d. Hypothermia
 - e. CPR
4. Discuss cave accident scenarios, how to react and how to prevent
 - a. Caver fractures arm
 - b. Minor slip injury in a wet cave where air temperature is 54 degrees Fahrenheit
 - c. Not wearing helmet stands up and hits head on stalactite
 - d. Twisted ankle
 - e. Dislocated shoulder
 - f. Severe chest pains
 - g. Fainted and breathing stopped
 - h. Getting lost
 - i. Getting stuck
 - j. Discuss and demonstrate how to get an injured person stabilized and out.
 - k. Remind the group to bring signed parent permission and waivers to the next meeting
5. After meeting activity
 - a. Assign group to make a caving first aid kits
 - b. One kit for the group
 - c. A personal kit for their cave bag

Preparation:

- Get search and rescue people involved in this meeting
- Get an EMT involved to teach the first aid
- Get cave accident reports

Suggestions from presenters' experiences

- This is an important meeting. If participants miss this meeting, exclude them from the outing.

Sixth Meeting – Wild Cave Trip Planning

Objectives:

1. Review caving skills – importance of helmets
2. Organize a wild cave trip
3. Landowner relations
4. Cave conservation and preservation discussion (this is a cave-cleaning trip)
5. Demonstrate the use of a cave map

Outline:

1. Overview
 - a. This is like an examination and audition
 - b. How this works will determine the kind of cave we will go to on the next trip
 - c. The caver who will participate will make observations on how well you caved
 - d. Review caving equipment
 - e. Discuss caving techniques
2. Organize a caving trip to a wild cave
 - a. Collect waivers
 - b. Discuss wild caves in your area
 - c. You may need to plan the trip as an overnight camping experience
 - d. Determine the cave you want to visit
 - e. Show a map of the cave and how to use it
3. Delegate preparation activities
 - a. Contact the cave to get visitation schedules that fit your schedule
 - b. Arrange for camping
 - c. Determine the fees for camping and for entering the cave
 - d. Set the time for the trip
 - e. Make transportation arrangements (Cavers should avoid transporting youth group members)
 - f. Plan menus
4. Leaders to follow up with participants
 - a. Leaders to check equipment before the trip
5. Review Rules
 - a. Smoking is prohibited in all caves.
 - b. No stimulating beverages (No beer, no liquor, no heavily caffeinated beverages or energy drinks)
 - c. No pets allowed
 - d. Remove all trash & human waste that they've made before leaving the cave
 - e. Be on the good side of the cave owners and display good behavior
6. Distribute cave and karst conservation activity handouts from Project Underground and Exploring Caves and Karst
7. After meeting activities
 - a. Gather and organize equipment
 - b. Participants call leaders to have equipment checked

Second Outing - Wild Cave Trip

Objectives:

1. Visit a cave
2. Get ideas for a cave project, book to read, or activity to complete

Outline:

1. Equipment check completed before the day of the trip
2. Meet on time, be serious and professional
3. Leave on time

After cave trip activities

1. Contact a local grotto, cave tour organization, or the National Speleological Society (NSS) to request information about caving and information about caves and cavers near you.
2. Learn about the different types of caves
3. Learn about caving courtesy, caving dos and don'ts, and what the youth organization policy is on cave exploring

Preparation:

- Follow up with the leader
- Follow up with the land owner
- Cancel the trip if permissions and waivers are not in place

Suggestions from presenters' experiences

- Follow up is essential.
- Like cavers, youth groups will rarely leave on time.
- Terminate your involvement if permission and /or tour permits are not completed and in hand.

Seventh Meeting – Trip Report

Activities for a parents night and Cave Safely / Cave Softly presentations

2. Set a date
 - a. Check with cavers to be sure they can make it.
 - b. Check with youth organization leaders and officials.
3. Make invitations
4. Plan a Program Agenda
 - a. Have one or two speakers
 - Motivational wrap-up
 - Keynote Speaker
 - b. Organize a slide show
 - c. Have displays of equipment
 - d. Prepare a trip report
5. Organize a Dinner
6. Have presentations for participants and leaders
 - a. Make Assignments
 - Youth group members organize and manage the activity
 - Agenda – led by youth participants
 - Pre meeting activities – displays
 - Opening comments
 - Dinner
 - Trip report
 - Recognize leaders and trainers
 - Certificate presentation
 - Speakers
 - Closing comments

Presentation and Training Tips

Youth Group Policies

The meetings and training activities must follow the youth organization's Caving Policy. It is the responsibility of the presenters and the youth group leaders to assure that all aspects of the policy are covered during training activities.

Meeting Tiers

Meetings are organized into tiers of training based on age groupings

Tier 1 – Covers introductory caving experiences (Ages 8-13)

Tier 2 - Horizontal caving practices - includes tier 1 (Ages 14 and up)

Meeting Format

Meeting Title

Objectives: The learning objectives listed for the meeting

Outline: Outline of topics, activities and materials

Preparation: Suggestions for preparing the presentations

Suggestions from presenters' experiences

Presenters

Two or more cavers are present for each training meeting. Having at least two cavers provides two perspectives to each presentation.

Consider using experienced young adults (the ages of the participants) involved with the training (if possible).

Resources and References

Books and Other Printed Material

Jones, Cheryl, A Guide to Responsible Caving, National Speleological Society, 2813 Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35810. 256-852-1300, nss@caves.org
 Boy Scouts of America, Guide to Safe Scouting, Caving, Boy Scouts of America, Irvine TX, <http://www.scouting.org/pubs/gss/>
 Boy Scouts of America, Field book, Boy Scouts of America, Irvine TX, <http://www.scouting.org/pubs>
 Boy Scouts of America, Varsity Team Program Features, Vol. I, pp104-121, Boy Scouts of America, Irvine TX, <http://www.scouting.org/pubs>
 Boy Scouts of America, Venturing Leader Manual, Boy Scouts of America, Irvine TX, <http://www.scouting.org/pubs>
 Rae, Tom, Caving Basics, National Speleological Society, 2813 Cave Avenue, Huntsville, AL 35810. 256-852-1300, nss@caves.org, 1997
 Project Underground, c/o Carol Zokaites, 6245 University Park Dr. suite B Radford, VA 24141, 540-831-4057, Carol.Zokaites@dcr.virginia.gov
 Exploring Caves and Karst, National Caves Association, Box 280, Park City, KY, 42160, 866-552-2837 www.cavern.org

Videos

<http://www.caves.org/imo/video.htm>

30-3121 A Scouting Approach to Wild Caves \$25.00

This beautifully produced video was made by a Kansas Scout troop as an introduction to caves and caving, and is professional in every way. It is 100 minutes long and is segmented into chapters for use as a teaching aid. It covers every aspect of caving, from history of use through modern vertical techniques and conservation ethics. Although it has a scouting flavor, it is perfect for all beginning cavers, and even the veteran can learn something. *See the 4-Star Review in Video Librarian Magazine*

Internet

www.caves.org NSS website
www.cancaver.ca The Canadian Cave and Karst Information Server
www.cavern.org American Cave Conservation Association
www.goodearthgraphics.com/showcave.html US Show Cave Directory
<http://www.caves.org/grotto/timpgrotto> Timpanogos Grotto
www.caveutah.com Brandon Kowallis's website on Nutty Putty
www.caversdigest.com Cave information page