

Adventist®
Youth Ministries

SOUTHERN AFRICA - INDIAN OCEAN
DIVISION OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS



GUIDELINES ON HOW TO ESTABLISH COMMUNITY PATHFINDER CLUBS (CPCs) IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICA- INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION



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**GUIDELINES ON HOW TO ESTABLISH COMMUNITY
PATHFINDER CLUBS (CPCs)
IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN DIVISION**

**The Mission Statement of the Adventist Youth Ministries is:
“To lead young people into a saving relationship with Jesus and to help them embrace
His call to discipleship.”**

**The AIM says:
“The Advent Message to all the world in my generation”**

**The main objective of this document is to remind youth ministries leaders that the
reason for the existence of this ministry is to train young people to have a connection
with Jesus and to challenge them to be instruments and conduits that will bring other
youth into the church.**

**The Pathfinder Club entails a holistic program that we can utilize to reach our
communities.**

**These guidelines will provide our churches and youth leaders with practical tips on how
to establish CPCs**

**BY
Adventist Youth Ministries of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division**

**Date
15 March 2017**

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Introduction

The Pathfinder club is a well-known brand in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Pathfinding is to the Adventist church what Coca Cola is to the world. As a movement that espouses the health message we do not encourage people to use fizzy drinks but everyone knows Coca Cola because it's a brand that permeates the entire world. In like manner, one cannot be an Adventist and not be familiar with the Pathfinder club. We know and appreciate this ministry because it is part of the DNA and psyche of Adventism.

Those who have been Adventists since antiquity have fond memories of the Missionary Volunteer (MV) organization. Although I am not that old, I am privileged to have been part of the MV movement. We used to relish the progressive classes, the voice of youth campaigns, the camps, the honors and many other activities associated with MV now referred to as Adventist Youth Ministries (AYM). My generation and the one before us speak about MV with the fondest memories because we know that we owe our spiritual foundation and legacy to it.

It is no secret that youth ministries has metamorphosed over the years to adapt to the times we live in. But the main tenets of this ministry have remained untainted. The Pathfinder club, which is part of AYM has stood the test of time. I have observed that 'new' Adventists are fascinated by the Pathfinder club because there was no such a ministry where they come from. As we know, the progressive classes are age specific for relevance and easy assimilation. But many older children who join the Adventist church do not mind enlisting in lower classes because the Pathfinder club in its entirety presents well thought out and quality lessons for the youth. The Pathfinder club is a full house that presents holistic training to the youth. In the curriculum, you find a balanced menu suitable for the youth (spiritual content, fun, recreation, family values, relationship values, societal values and much more).

Yours truly was molded by the Pathfinder club, I owe my existence to God but I also credit this ministry for what I am today. It is a common feature of this ministry to draw many youth to the Adventist church. By its very nature, the ministry magnetizes the youth. Consequently, the parents of the youth who have become Adventists, appreciate the positive change they see in their children and in many instances these parents have also become Adventists. Apart from the club being a church based program, the Adventist church also utilizes the Pathfinder club as a drawcard. It serves as a precursor to evangelistic meetings, Pathfinders are dispatched to welcome dignitaries, Pathfinders serve as ushers in big church convocations, Pathfinders are part of public awareness campaigns, Pathfinders engage in community outreach programs and many other functions.

It is very common for senior youth to continue exhibiting Pathfinder related behavior such as marching, drilling, and even wearing the Pathfinder uniform. That's how contagious this ministry is to our youth. I have observed that one does not need to advertise Pathfinder events but you would have to work thrice as hard to advertise senior youth events. Why? I believe the Pathfinder club is a well-oiled-machine. No one will annihilate the Pathfinder club.

So, what is my point? If the Pathfinder club is such an important brand and feature of the Adventist church because of its proven track record. Then, let us take this ministry to another level. The Pathfinder club by its very nature is housed in the local church. This is the baby of the AYM and this ministry is sponsored by the church. Our children automatically join the club as they grow up (I say this because they find themselves in the church by birth and they

end up joining the club by default) but we also welcome children into the club whose parents are not Adventists.

The premise of this document is that we should take the Pathfinder club to the community where the people are. Of course, since the Pathfinder club is based in the local church, it is logical that the local church Pathfinder club should be the one that establishes a Community Pathfinder Club (CPC). The Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID) Adventist Youth Ministries, advocates for this radical shift for two reasons:

1. The theme of the global church is *Reach the World* and the SID challenges each member to engage in *One Member One Soul (OMOS)*.
2. The global church challenges each member to be involved in soul winning through its slogan *Total Member Involvement (TMI)*.

These initiatives of the world church call for a fundamental paradigm shift. It cannot be business as usual when there's a rallying call for each member and youth to be involved in the mission of the church. Mission is the heartbeat of the church.

We hope that this document will serve as an invaluable tool in the hands of our members, youth leaders and young people. The objective of this tool is to provide guidelines that will pilot those who wish to launch CPCs in their communities.

A Brief History of the Adventist Youth Ministries

The Pathfinder club is a spiritual home for the youth ages 10 to 15. This is a critical age group because it is the formative period of a young person. The minds of these youth are fertile and ready to absorb any information and instruction. This is the reason why the Bible instructs us to, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."¹

"Believe it or not, youth, ages 10-15 have always been an important, contributing part of the movement known as the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At times, that importance has been placed in the shadows, but it has been there none-the-less. We often hear of the exploits of our pioneers, thinking them to be "old folks" simply because the technology of photography was not readily available nor used until most of our founding pioneers were well along in life. The courage, leadership, and dedication shown by leaders such as James and Ellen White, Uriah and his sister Anne Smith, John Loughborough, John Andrews and so many others did not just all-of-a-sudden appear when they were older. Those traits were all there from the time they were still young."²

The Pathfinder club was not founded by any single person but it was a collective effort of those pioneers who loved the Lord and desired to instill spiritual values in the youth. "The first Pathfinder Club of record was in Anaheim, California directed by John McKim and Willa Steen. This club began in the late 1920's and ran through the 1930's. In 1944 McKim died and the Steens had moved. In 1930 Lester and Ione Martin with co-directors Theron & Ethel Johnston began a club in Santa Ana, California."³

¹ *Proverbs 22:6*, KJV

² Robert Holbrook, *The Pathfinder Story*, Published by the Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 1

³ <http://www.pathfindersonline.org/about-pathfinders/history/27-overview-of-pathfinder-history/243-pathfinder-beginnings>

The growth and expansion of the Advent movement benefited Africans as well. “The first SDA college outside of North America was opened near Cape Town, South Africa, in 1893 as the forerunner of today’s Helderberg College... Africa was witness to a rapid northward expansion of the gospel as missionaries from South Africa and America pushed northward through the then British colonies of East Africa. Names like Tarr, Campbell, Stockil, Anderson, Sparrow all list under the pioneers. Today their descendants still continue in most of these countries. The Solusi graveyard is full of markers of these early pioneers, with the university itself a memorial.”⁴

We thank God for these exploits because the birth of the Adventist church in Africa afforded the African youth an opportunity to benefit from the Pathfinder club.

Each of the ten unions of the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division (SID) has a story to tell regarding how God has led the Pathfinder club.⁵

It is crucial to remember that the Pathfinder club is one of the four ministries of the AYM. I will now give a synopsis of the history of the AYM. “In 1879 Luther Warren (17) and Harry Fenner (14) began the first youth society in Luther’s home to; 1) Plan Missionary work 2) Raise money for literature 3) Promote the cause of temperance.” (By Paul Tompkins, former youth director of Trans European Division). “The passion for evangelism that spawned leadership skills in teenagers Luther Warren and Harry Fenner seems to have been kindled or nurtured by their local congregation there in Hazelton. According to the Trustees Record Book of the Hazelton church, a special day of prayer for the salvation of the church’s youth had been declared early in 1879.”⁶

This is the abridged timeline of AYM events:⁷

- 1901 – Under the Sabbath School department
- 1907 – Missionary Volunteer Society was founded
- 1909 – Junior Missionary Volunteer Societies Organized (JMV)
- 1922 - MV (now AJY) Progressive Classes introduced Friend and Companion classes, MV classes (now AY Classes) Comrade and Master Comrade (now Guide and Master Guide -- 1951) A. W. Spalding and Harriet Hold advocate basic idea of Pathfinder Clubs
- The Pathfinder flag was designed by Henry T. Bergh

⁴ *Church Heritage Manual*, p. 42

⁵ For example, in my home union, Southern Africa Union Conference (SAU), we have a rich Pathfinder history. The first union Pathfinder club was established by DB Hills from Australia in 1974. The first Pathfinder Fair was held when VS Wakaba was the director. The Pathfinder movement in SAU owes its rich heritage to these erstwhile leaders: GH Coetsee, B Sterley, G Breedt, J Gebhardt, DB Hills, VS Wakaba, D Malotle, J Human, GB Yaze, P Shongwe, J Julies, G Africa, J Papu, SB Khumalo and P Maligudu. The current (2015-2020) SAU Pathfinder director is M Lupondwana. We encourage our unions to document their AYM history for the benefit of posterity.

⁶ Robert Holbrook, *The AY Story*, Published by the Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 2

⁷ www.pathfindersonline.org

- 1949 – Henry T. Bergh composed the Pathfinder Song, “Oh we are the Pathfinder Strong”
- 1950-1963 – The first World Pathfinder Director was Laurance A. Skinner
- 1963 – John Hancock elected as the second World Pathfinder Director
- 1979 - Missionary Volunteer (MV) was changed to Adventist Youth (AY)
Junior Missionary Volunteer (JMV) was changed to Adventist Junior Youth (AJY).
The Pre-AJY class was changed to Adventurers Club (4 yrs. - 4th grade)
- 1996 - Basic Staff Training, Pathfinder Leadership Award (PLA), & Pathfinder Instructor Award (PIA) curriculum developed
- 2005 - Youth Ministries Department (Adventurer Club Pathfinder Club, and Senior Youth Society)
- 2011 – Adventist Youth Ministries was effected

AYM was founded as a spiritual movement for young people. This understanding is also echoed by a secular source, “Similar (Pathfinders) in many respects to scouting, this differs by religious emphasis on their activities.”⁸

The Philosophy and Objectives of the Pathfinder Club

The philosophy of the Pathfinder club is encapsulated in this biblical injunction: “And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.”⁹

The Pathfinder club creates a conducive environment for such teaching to take place. We should remember that the home is the primary location for teaching the child to know and fear God. The club is a secondary medium that entrenches a holistic training to the child.

“The Pathfinder Club is a church-centered spiritual-recreational-activity program designed for young people 10 to 15 years of age. Pathfinding appeals to this age group because its program features activities that meet their needs and interests. Much of the Pathfinder Club program is built around physical action. This is because youth from 10 to 15 years of age are in a fast-growing physical stage of development. It is filled with action, adventure, challenge, group activities, and provides opportunities for the development of new attitudes and skills that produce personal growth, team or community spirit and a sense of loyalty and respect for God, His Creation, and His church. While the Pathfinder Club exists primarily for youth, one of its basic purposes is to also bring together parents and church members through active involvement with the club and its members. Here the so-called generation gap disappears as young and old worship, work, and play together in a bond of common experience. Meaningful relationships are forged as leaders and counselors join with Pathfinders in sharing, building confidence, and working together.”¹⁰

⁸ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pathfinders_\(Seventh-day_Adventist\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pathfinders_(Seventh-day_Adventist))

⁹ Deuteronomy 6:6-7, NLT

¹⁰ *The Pathfinder Administrative Manual*, Published by the Youth Ministries of the General Conference, p. 3

We now make the transition to the objectives of the Pathfinder Club:

1. Help the young people to understand that God and His church love them, care for them, and appreciate them. As Pathfinders are accepted and affirmed they will begin to appreciate the love of God revealed through the church and its ministry, and feel a need to be more committed to and involved with its program.
2. Encourage Pathfinders to discover their own God-given potential and to use their gifts and abilities to fulfill God's expectations for them and the part they can play in the great plan of salvation.
3. Inspire young people to give personal expression of their love for God by uniting them together in various outreach activities.
4. Make the number one priority of your club program the personal salvation of every Pathfinder. The Pathfinder age is a time when many decisions are being made that will affect the youth's future relationships and his or her own personal development. The peak time for discovering and making a relationship with God seems to be around 12 years of age.
5. Build into a Pathfinder's life a healthy appreciation and love for God's creation by enjoying outdoor activity (campouts, nature walks, nature honors, etc.). Pathfinders will experience a sense of wonder and worship as they observe and explore the beauty, the majesty, and the creative power in nature. Fellowship with God will become more meaningful.
6. Teach Pathfinders specific skills and hobbies that will make their lives more meaningful and will occupy their time with profitable accomplishments. Young people experience satisfaction and delight as they use their hands to fashion useful articles from wood, plastic, steel, clay, felt and yarn and as they discover how things work and operate.
7. Encourage the Pathfinder to keep physically fit. This is one important way to safeguard against idleness and boredom. Teach children to care for their body and establish habits that will provide for their future happiness and usefulness (cf. 2T 536, 537; Educ. 195).
8. Give opportunity for the development of leadership by encouraging club members to work together and share in leadership responsibility. This will teach them to learn the lessons of obedience, discipline, resourcefulness, patriotism and the processes of group dynamics.
9. Seek to foster the harmonious development of the physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual life of the Pathfinder. The invigoration of mind and body, the fostering of an unselfish spirit, the attention to recreational and cultural activities, will provide stimulus for personal growth and act as an outlet for that restless energy, which is so often a destructive source of danger to the young person.¹¹

The Pathfinder Club, a Success Story

This section of the document will glean heavily from *Seven Steps for Successful Pathfinder Leadership*.¹²

Ken Veal shares 4 reasons why we should consider establishing the Pathfinder club.

¹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 4-5

¹² Ken Veal and published by the North American Division.

Reason #1: Pathfinderism is Historically Successful

As stated earlier, the Pathfinder club is a brand which has stood the test of time. No one can kill it! In AYM, Pathfinder club events need no extensive advertising because children, youth and adults have a natural affinity for Pathfinderism.

“For 40-plus years now Pathfinderism has been a worldwide emphasis that has helped to win untold thousands of children to Jesus and led them to a commitment to the church. Pathfinderism knows no cultural, racial, or national boundaries. It is equally effective in large or small churches, rural or urban, with boys and girls...It is a ministry that involves children from other religious persuasions whether Christian or non-Christian...The historical evidence is that Pathfinderism worldwide is a proven heaven-inspired treasure, given uniquely to the Seventh-day Adventist church, with a success record that is clear. Why Pathfinderism? Because it has been so successful for so long!”¹³

Reason #2: Pathfinderism Provides a Unique FUN Experience

Being an Adventist Christian shouldn't preclude one from having good fun. Ken suggests a “Fun-Formula” for Pathfinders and he explains it this way:

“F=FRIENDS. Children have the most fun when they can be with friends. Pathfinders gives boys and girls, especially those from lonely or isolated homes, many opportunities to make and to be with friends.

U=UNDERSTANDING ADULTS. Left to themselves, boys and girls have fun for a while. Lasting fun comes when understanding adults are available to coach, to refer differences, to provide support, supplies and suggestions.

N=NEW EXPERIENCE. Through Pathfinderism boys and girls can experience activities, adventure, and achievement not otherwise available to them, travel to large camporees and fairs...and learning some of the more than 250 honors. Pathfinderism offers a staggering number of options for any youngster, rural or urban.”¹⁴

After one of our CPC sessions, a certain 8-year-old girl told me and my wife that she doesn't want to go home because she enjoys being in our home and it is fun to be with other children in the club and she enjoys the lessons we give them.

Reason #3: Because Pathfinderism has the Right Philosophy

Ken summarizes the Pathfinder philosophy:

1. Spiritual benefits
2. Formation of right thought pattern
3. Alternate activities to the distracting influences in the secular world
4. Development of skills and physical fitness
5. Development of lifestyle interests that can provide for a richer, fuller, adult experience
6. Involvement with nature and the out-of-doors

¹³ *Ibid.* p.10

¹⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 10-11

7. Assimilation of Scripture
8. Learning new ideas, things and skills through honors study
9. Group-leadership development and learning how to make right decisions

Who wouldn't want their child to learn these values in a fun but effective way? Pathfinderering offers these values to young people of different persuasions in a non-threatening and non-prejudicial environment.

Reason #4: Pathfinderering Provides A “Laboratory” Experience

Ken argues that Pathfinderering is a “laboratory, a hands-on program, an extension of the home, school, church, an experimental laboratory where growth and learning flourish, an environment where failure is not expected but becomes a tool for learning.”¹⁵

In the Pathfinder club we meet children and youth from different backgrounds. Some of these children are not doing well academically. Some of these children come from broken or dysfunctional homes which negatively impact their self-esteem and identity. When they join the club they should find love and acceptance. Many Pathfinders discover their talents and gifts for the first time as they participate in different club activities. This success spills over to other facets of their lives in return and they develop a whole new worldview that astounds their parents and the community.

There is no doubt that the Pathfinder club is a success story.

Establishing Community Pathfinder Clubs

Now that the foundation for the main subject of this document, has been laid, we need to get to the point. It was necessary to show that the Pathfinder club is positioned in the local church, that its philosophy and objectives are targeting the young people to prepare them for this world and the world to come, that Pathfinderering is historically a successful enterprise whose legacy needs to be continued and passed on to posterity, the club is a “laboratory” where young people experiment and learn without being judged, that an inter-generational partnership between the youth and the adults is necessary to mentor the youth and to give them the correct guidance they need, and that it is good to have fun while instilling in the youth critical life skills and matters pertaining to salvation.

Why CPCs?

Buoyed by the motto of the AYM, “The love of Christ Compels us”; we propose and urge the young people of the SID and their leaders to examine themselves to see what compels them in life. Is it material things? Is it worldliness? Is it love for fame? Is it the drive to win at all cost at the expense of ethics and morals? I propose that we pray that the love of Christ should be our driving force. If we follow this, we will engage in radical prayers that will bring radical changes in our lives and lost souls will be our priority. Many of our young people are spectators, they are waiting for someone else to proclaim the three angels’ messages of Revelation 14:6-12 and Matthew 28:19-20.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p.12

There are many avenues and strategies for soul winning and evangelism. There's a plethora of ideas available in the field of missiology that anyone who loves evangelism can glean for their edification and motivation for soul winning. As stated above, a paradigm shift is inevitable as we ponder how we can involve many of our young people in outreach and soul winning. TMI/TYI is an audacious initiative that requires all of us to put our hands to the plough and labor while it is still day for the night is coming and Jesus's coming is imminent. The days are evil and "Men's hearts are failing them for fear..."¹⁶ Each one of us should pray for guidance so that we may find our niche in evangelism.

We believe we have not exploited the full potential of the youth and God is ready to use anyone who is willing to be used of Him. The Pathfinder club is a mine that is ready to be researched to see if we can reach many young people who may otherwise not be reached through conventional evangelism strategies.

We have already stated that the church on numerous occasions deploys the youth into the community to draw the attention of the populace to any event or program we desire to embark upon. As the young people march through the streets of their communities, a lot of interest is generated and we leave members of the public panting for more and having scores of questions about us. In most cases, we hardly go back to take advantage of the interest that is generated. The Adventist church has ministries that leave many people awestruck. Regrettably, we always engage in hit-and-run tactics. We do not touch base with people in a meaningful way. It is precisely for this reason that we should reach out to people not for our own interest but for their benefit.

We would do well to heed these inspired counsels:

"Have the people of Israel build me a holy sanctuary so I can live among them."¹⁷ God was not satisfied with Him being our Creator but His desire was to come down and live among us. The sanctuary and its services became a visible illustration of a God who tabernacles with sinful man. God's incarnational ministry began in the wilderness as the nation of Israel was travelling to Canaan and in the New Testament, we see Jesus coming down physically to fulfill what the sanctuary was symbolizing. "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me." There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice."¹⁸

"We are not to wait for souls to come to us; we must seek them out where they are. . . . There are multitudes who will never be reached by the gospel unless it is carried to them."¹⁹

¹⁶ *Luke 21:26, KJV*

¹⁷ *Exodus 25:8 NLT*

¹⁸ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143

¹⁹ Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 229.

"Sometimes a church will have community service outreach programs in areas of health, family, personal finance, conflict management, et cetera, and might ask: What is the bridge to bring them to the "Follow Me" stage? We rather should ask, Who is the bridge? Answer: You are! "The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian."²⁰

What is a CPC?

We believe through the Pathfinder club we can mingle with people the way Jesus desires us to. Pathfinding is not an event but a lifestyle. The curriculum of the club spans the whole academic year. So, it requires one to get into some routine just like in an academic setting.

The SID AYM proposal is simple. Let each local church Pathfinder club go into the community and establish a 'satellite' club which will be monitored by the church. The church club need not be dissolved to start a CPC, NO, but we give the community what we are enjoying in the church. It is as simple as that. Some among us may shudder to do that because they regard the Pathfinder club as sacrosanct and exclusively ours and they may think that taking it to the community will dilute its sanctity.

If such fears exist, it is normal to think that way. Change is not easy and any 'new' idea needs to be implemented with caution and wisdom. Hence, we propose that this project should be undertaken by the church because "Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But someone who falls alone is in real trouble."²¹

May I remind us that the Adventist church has other programs that we run in the communities like *Vocational Bible School (VBS)*, *Adventist Disaster and Relief Agency (ADRA)*, *Meals on Wheels (MOWCS)* *Adventist Community Services (ACS)*, *Dorcas* and others. It is obvious that each of the mentioned programs is different from others but the bottom line is that we are taking our programs to the people. The difference with the Pathfinder club is that we will be spending more time with the people and we will be sharing with them exactly what we do in the local church albeit in a contextualized way.

I know there are many zealous Adventist youth leaders who have already embarked on their own versions of CPCs. In that sense, the concept of CPCs is not actually new but we are giving it our special focus and impetus. And we are bringing this ministry as a viable option that fits very well in the frame work of TMI/TYI.

How to establish CPCs

We will now get into the gist of this document to answer the how question. We need to make it clear that this document serves as a guideline and not as the Bible. The user should feel free to adapt the ideas espoused with the intent to effect maximum impact and benefit on the implementers (the youth) and the end-user (the community). By now you should have noticed that most of the concepts in this document are not originally mine but the available AYM literature has helped to crystalize what has been in my mind for a long time. We recommend that the club leadership be conversant with the relevant AYM handbooks, especially the

²⁰ Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 470.

²¹ Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, NLT

Pathfinder Administrative Manual and the Pathfinder Basic Staff Training Course Manual including the Teacher's Resource Manuals of the 6 Pathfinder classes.

We are proposing two models of Community Pathfinder Clubs. The first one is to go out into the community and establish a Pathfinder club. The second model is to go out into the community and recruit children and the youth to come to our church and become members of the Pathfinder club. Both models are achieving the same objective, and that is to reach out to the community with the Word of God couched in the Pathfinder garb.

Establishing a CPC in the community

The SID youth advisory took this landmark resolution²²:

“Whereas, the focus of the Adventist Youth Ministries is on Total Youth Involvement, One Member One Soul and the local church with the sole purpose of *REACHING THE WORLD*; and

Whereas, the CPC program seeks to take the Pathfinder Club to the community while recognizing the need to adapt the Pathfinder curriculum to suit the needs of the community; and

Whereas, the implementation of the CPC will be left to the discretion of the local conference and local church. The SID will produce a resource that will offer guidelines on how to implement the program with the intention of integrating the CPSs into the Pathfinder Club after a period of 6-8 months;

Voted, to adopt the CPC program for implementation.

Further, that local churches be educated to receive and welcome with love youth who will be integrated into the church.

Further, that caution be exercised with regard to the Pathfinder uniform to avoid giving the members of the CPC a full Pathfinder uniform before they have fully assimilated and applied in their lives the principles of the Pathfinder club. **ONLY** after 6-8 months, at the discretion of the local conference and the local church, members of the CPC should wear **ONLY** the Neckerchief.”

The following is a step by step guide on how to go about this:

A. Consultation with the church and the leaders (Elder, Pastor, Conference Director)

Since we have already said the Pathfinder club belongs to the local church. Then the church should add its blessing and counsel on any intention to establish a CPC in the community. We propose that any Pathfinder director or person interested in starting CPCs should read the

²² *SID Youth Advisory* held at Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg, South Africa, on 18-21 April 2016. Action: AYM 2016 – 023 COMMUNITY PATHFINDER CLUBS (CPC)

*Pathfinder Administrative Manual.*²³ The director and his executive committee will wisely choose the relevant portions in the book that will help them to establish a CPC. Some things in the manual may not be relevant to the CPC.

This consultation also entails the Pathfinder director collaborating with his/her counterparts in AYM and the youth committee should also be consulted for their support.

B. Prepare the parents and the children for this mission

A wise leader will not take the youth and their parents by surprise. Of course, since the parents and the youth would have been informed by the church of the intention to establish a CPC, they will not be hearing about it for the first time. But it is imperative for the Pathfinder director to prepare the club leadership team and the children for this endeavor. The objective should be clearly spelt out (evangelism and *TYI*).

The club leadership would do well to request the local pastor or elders to provide Spiritual Gifts workshops to the youth to prepare them for this mission.

Special prayer sessions should be held to indicate that such a mammoth task can't be undertaken without earnest prayers.

C. Identify the community to be reached and inform the community leaders

The club leadership should identify and do a feasibility study of the community to be reached. This will help the church to ascertain the magnitude of the work before them. Communities have varied needs and challenges and the church should be ready with strategies that will suit that community.

A courtesy call to the community leaders should be done by the club leadership. This may be tribal authorities in rural settings or councilors in urban areas. One should first establish the protocol requirements of that community before we penetrate it. This is important because we do not want the community to engage in protest actions against the church and the youth if they are not fully briefed by their leaders of the intention of our church to start a CPC. Neither should we agitate other denominations and be accused of being 'sheep stealers'. In fact, in some instances we may need to approach the religious bodies in that community to assure them we are not planning any malicious attack on any denomination but we intend to enhance what is already there.

In our agenda when we approach community or religious leaders, we should emphasize that we are bringing community development programs that impart life skills to their youth. These skills will combat poverty, crime, disease and will build families. This is essentially what the Pathfinder club is all about.

D. Find a suitable venue for the CPC

Since the CPC will be an ongoing program, you do not have to hire a venue. If the church has funds, this may be the best thing to do. But many of our churches are cash strapped. The best thing to do may be to identify a family that is willing to host these meetings. It may be an

²³ The section entitled *Steps in Organizing a Pathfinder Club*

Adventist family in that community or any other family that is willing to host a CPC. In my experience, I have discovered that people are willing to be part of a winning formula.

Another option may be to approach the city council or any community leadership to offer you a community hall since you will be empowering the community. The community leadership or school governing body may also grant the club permission to use a school for such purposes.

As we prepare to form CPCs in our communities, let us remember, the devil will create obstacles but “Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us, of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service and honor of God supreme will find perplexities vanish, and a plain path before their feet.”²⁴

E. Recruit and enlist interested youth

The club leadership should now be ready to call a meeting of those families that are interested in enlisting their children. Door to door campaigns should be conducted and invitation cards, where necessary, must be handed out to the people with the CPC objectives clearly spelt out.

Pathfinders marching in full regalia should be deployed in that community to attract attention.

“Guest night is on a general activity night approximately two or three weeks before an interim enrollment night. Each Pathfinder may invite one of his special community friends to this “guest night” club meeting. The director should acquaint himself with each visiting young person. During the conversation, the director should ask, “Would you like to join our Pathfinder Club?” If the answer is “Yes,” he should visit the home the very next week and explain the complete program, showing a willingness to work with the family about their Sunday or Sabbath feelings.”²⁵

The parents of the children who wish to join the CPC should be informed that they are also welcome to be part of the CPC not as members but by way of supporting the program. This will benefit the leadership of the CPC because these parents will be available to lend their support to the club in any way necessary.

F. Agree on a suitable day to run the CPC

It will be counterproductive to impose a day on the parents and the youth who will be expected to support the program. It is always wise to choose a day that will enjoy the support of all stakeholders.

G. Agree on the day or evening in which you will launch the CPC

This day will serve as the induction and enlistment moment of the new students. This day should be advertised well in advance to get maximum support from the church and the community. Such an event should also enjoy the support of the conference, in fact it would

²⁴ Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*, p. 330

²⁵ *The Pathfinder Administrative Manual*, p. 29

be great to have the conference Pathfinder director present at this historic event. The church Pathfinder club induction could also be conducted together with the CPC induction if the leadership sees wisdom in that.

On this occasion students and parents should be given all the information they need to know about the Pathfinder club and all the necessary forms should be handed out to the parents to be filled and returned to the church Pathfinder director. Indemnity and insurance forms should also be given to the parents to fill in and append their signatures. Where possible the forms could be adapted for that community without compromising the vital information.

The local church should inject funds into this project so that students in the community may get class workbooks and that needy families may be assisted. Some parents in the community may not mind contributing something if they see the value of the program.

H. Starting the CPC

Logically, the CPC cannot be run the same way a conventional club is run in the church. Firstly, the Pathfinder handbooks indicate that members of the club should procure all the necessary uniforms. Secondly, the Pathfinder club in the church has as its members, children who have grown up in families where worship is conducted and the Word of God is read as part of the Adventist tradition. On the other hand, we should bear in mind that starting a CPC will require a lot of ground work. A good spiritual foundation should be built first to prepare the children for the Pathfinder content. The Pathfinder curriculum assumes that children have been given a firm spiritual foundation in their homes. But when we conduct CPCs this assumption should be discarded.

In this regard, the Pathfinder leadership may wish to work hand in glove with Children's Ministries leaders to help them lay the necessary foundation before the Pathfinder club content is introduced to the youth. We should exercise wisdom and caution when we introduce spiritual teachings to the children in the community. While the assumption should be that they are not familiar with basic Christian teachings, we should guard against undermining what they have been taught in their homes. Some of them may be coming from Christian homes albeit not Adventist homes. Of course, some of them may be coming from homes where God is not known. Respect for other people's religious orientations should be paramount in our minds. We do not want to agitate the parents of these young people by bringing controversial teachings and trying to make their children Adventists. Remember, our goal is not to make anyone an Adventist. The Biblical injunction is clear, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations..."²⁶ We are not mandated to make people Adventists but to teach them about God and His will and that His Son, Jesus, is coming back again. That is our mandate!

Just to reiterate what the SID Youth Advisory has already stated above, the CPC members should not be given the Pathfinder uniform until the period of 6-8 months has elapsed and they have been fully assimilated into the church. The reason is that the Pathfinder uniform represents Adventist values and we wouldn't want to see young people in the community wearing it as common clothes.

The conference or local church leadership will determine the appropriate time for the CPC members to be integrated into the church.

²⁶ *Matthew 28:19, KJV*

I. The CPC Curriculum

Since the CPC is an adapted version of the Pathfinder club program, we recommend that the Pathfinder director and his team utilize the existing Pathfinder curriculum. When teaching the curriculum, the ages of the young people who are members of the CPC should be considered carefully. Most churches do their progressive classes every fortnight in the afternoons. So, the ideal time to do CPC classes would either be on Sundays or during the Sabbaths when the church progressive classes are not conducted. The local church leadership are at liberty to choose the suitable time for CPCs.

The GC Pathfinder curriculum has this 9-point outline for each of the 6 classes (Friend, Companion, Explorer, Ranger, Voyager and Guide):

- General
- Spiritual Discovery
- Serving Others
- Friendship Development
- Health and Fitness
- Organization and Leadership Development
- Nature Study
- Outdoor Life
- Lifestyle Enrichment

Each one of these requirements has an Advanced section. We recommend that the CPC members not be expected to do advanced work.

Some of the class requirements like camping and others may be fulfilled in conjunction with the church club.

The CPC leadership should ensure that each child has a workbook, pen, and class record card. For now, that would be all that is needed by each child.

J. The role of Adventist Pathfinders in the CPC

Let us remember that the reason for establishing the CPC is to get our young people involved in the mission of the church. It will be futile for Pathfinder leaders to leave out our young people when they reach out to the community.

It is recommended that the church youth be present whenever the CPC is in session. Let the Holy Spirit lead the CPC leaders as to how to involve our youth in the CPC. We need to ensure that our youth forge ties with the youth in the community. Through the Pathfinder units, our youth could schedule home visits to their CPC counterparts. I remember the joy I used to feel when my local church deployed us as Pathfinders to accompany our parents who were sent by the church to knock on doors with the intent to do Bible studies. Remember what was already said before, youth learn by example and by involvement. As our youth mingle with CPC members, they will identify their needs and be able to share their clothes and other things with the community youth.

I was thrilled to discover that in the Friend class, under the *Serving Others* section, this is what is recorded:

“By consultation with your leader, work out ways to spend at least two hours expressing your friendship to someone in need in your community by doing any two of the following:

- a. Visit someone who needs friendship.
- b. Help someone in need.
- c. With the help of others spend a half day on a community, school, or church project.

Prove yourself a good citizen at home and at school.”²⁷

If we involve our youth in CPC ministry, they will also be fulfilling their own class requirements.

K. Welcoming the CPC members into the church club

When the leadership of the CPCs are satisfied that their young people are ready to be introduced to the local church, the church should be prepared for such an action. Weeks leading to this occasion should be used to educate our members about the value of friendship ministry. People are not won through doctrinal teachings but through friendship.

Depending on the situation. Some CPCs may not need to be assimilated into the church but may be organized as Sabbath School branches or companies where regular worship meetings are conducted every Sabbath. Some places may not be ready for this. Let us not be hasty in making CPC members Adventists.

The annual *Pathfinder Day* may be a suitable day to welcome CPC members.

L. CPCs established by Individuals

We have indicated that the Pathfinder club belongs to the church but there may be individuals who are passionate about establishing a CPC in the community. As a matter of fact, this is already happening in our division. There is nothing wrong with this practice. No one needs permission to evangelize but collaboration is important. Our counsel would be for such individuals to keep the church in the loop and be ready to hand over their CPC project to the church. This is important for practical reasons: sustainability, stability, if the youth choose to become Adventists, the church will have to be involved anyway; and glory should not go to individuals but to God.

However, the church should not wrest CPC projects from individuals but should be sensitive and courteous to them as they seek to be partners with the individual in serving the community. If that individual enjoys some rapport with the community, the church needs that person to sustain the CPC. Hence, the need to be tactful and sensitive to human relations.

If tension arises between the individual who has established the CPC and the church Pathfinder leadership, then the local church pastor and conference should be asked to resolve the impasse. Remember, the CPC is an evangelism initiative not a platform for supremacy.

M. What happens in the community when the CPC is part of the church club?

²⁷ *Friend Achievement Class: Curriculum, Requirements and Achievement Resource*, p. 9

The community leadership should be consulted when the period of the first CPC training expires. If we have done a good job in that community, then we may be challenged not to leave. This would present another opportunity to conduct another CPC since the first CPC training possibly did not include all young people in the community. Depending on the situation, big churches may run simultaneous CPC programs. This will mean human resource would need to be spread across those projects without compromising quality.

N. A Combined Pathfinder Club

Now that members of the CPC are part of the local church Pathfinder club, we need to be careful how this is done. To afford a smooth transition, we suggest that:

- No pressure should be exerted on the young people to decide for baptism.
- They are not joining the Adventist church but they are members of the church Pathfinder club, this is in accordance with the Pathfinder guidelines.
- Since the church youth have been involved in the CPC ministry, there will be minimal or no culture shock when the new young people join the church club. It is unlikely that anyone would feel they have been invaded by outsiders. As the church youth participate in the CPC, they should be prepared for this time when their friends will be part of the church club.
- The church Pathfinder curriculum should not be disrupted by the coming in of new members. The class instructors should ensure a smooth integration to foster continuity.
- The church should assist new members to get the uniforms.
- The new club members should be involved in the next CPC cycle to give them the privilege to serve others.
- As we know the climax of the Pathfinder curriculum in any calendar year is the investiture. Let no prejudice be exercised against the new members. If they have fulfilled all their requirements, then they deserve to be invested.

Establishing the CPC in the church

This is the second model of CPCs. This model is not as demanding as the first one. But we also call it a CPC because it would require an intentional drive by the church Pathfinder leadership to go out into the community to recruit young people to come and join the church club. This is a radical departure from the norm where some of our church members or youth invite their friends to join the club. This model requires that we do the following to realize our goal of enlisting young people from the community:

- The church leadership should be informed and involved in creating awareness among the church members.
- In preparation for the new year, door to door campaigns should be conducted and invitation cards, where necessary, must be handed out to the people with the CPC objectives clearly spelt out.
- In anticipation of launching the CPC in the ensuing year, Pathfinders marching in full regalia should be deployed in that community to attract attention.

- In the new year, interested parents should be invited to come to church on the day induction and enlistment are done and they should be encouraged to fill all the necessary forms.
- The difference between this model and the previous model is that young people may be allowed to wear the uniform from the beginning since this is common practice and they may feel they are not part of the church club if they are wearing the uniform.
- Then the rest of the Pathfinder club requirements will continue as normal throughout the year.
- There is no need for the integration of the community youth into the church since they will be part of the club from its inception.

The Community Pathfinder Club Program

The church should ensure that before the CPC is launched in the community they have adequate counsellors and instructors to assist in managing the club and teaching the progressive classes. For the devotional exercise, the classes could be combined and thereafter the classes should be separated. The CPC program should not exceed two hours.

The following is a recommended program for the CPC in the community:

- Opening Prayer
- The Pathfinder Song
- Short devotional (10 minutes)
- The Pathfinder Law and Pledge
- Instructions and Announcements
- Classes split
- Progressive Classes and Activities (1 hour)
- Announcements/Remarks
- Closing Prayer

Challenge

Since the dawn of the democratic dispensation in 1994, South Africans pride themselves in having the best constitution, the best statesman and democrat Nelson Mandela, 3 Nobel Peace Laureates (Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu and F.W. de Klerk). While that is noble, it takes more than just these things and pedigree to run an efficient democratic government.

Similarly, the Adventist church has the best machinery (AYM) to train our young people. Our Motto is *The Love of Christ Compels us*, the Pathfinder Pledge says; *By the grace of God, I will be pure kind and true, I will keep the Pathfinder Law, I will be servant of God and a friend to man*, the AYM Mission statement says; *Leading young people into a saving relationship with Jesus, and to help them embrace His call to discipleship*. We have many handbooks to guide anyone who wishes to implement AYM teachings but it takes more than this to engage the young people in evangelism. It is not the handbooks that will finish the work, it is the young people.

Let us go out and mobilize our youth. The local church is under the radar of the GC AYM. The SID is echoing the same call to all youth leaders to galvanize the forces of our young people around a common goal-evangelism. “40% to 50% of SDA teenagers are essentially

leaving the church by their mid-20s:

- 1) alienation
- 2) irrelevance
- 3) intolerance
- 4) inconvenience”²⁸

The theme for this quinquennium is *Pass It On*. This is a rallying cry from the GC AYM to involve our youth in evangelism to curb the hemorrhage we are experiencing in our churches. Idle young people will certainly leave the church. “Young people do not leave the Conference, Union, Division or the General Conference; they leave the local church.”²⁹

The only way to keep young people in the church is to involve them in the mission of the church.

Jesus gave a startling promise to the disciples before He was translated to heaven: “Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father”³⁰.

One would have thought that Jesus’s ministry in the New Testament serves as a benchmark for evangelism and outreach. I still believe it is, but His promise to the disciples is startling because He’s saying to them what He did is a miniature form of what they could do if they allow the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to guide them.

I cannot wait to do ‘greater’ things for God. I am sure our youth and their leaders also desire to do ‘greater’ things for God. I believe the CPC ministry presents to us a mammoth challenge to utilize this untapped possibility that will see thousands of young people accepting Jesus as their personal Savior. We believe the CPC initiative will engage our young people in TYI. In the words of Joshua, I pass this challenge to you: “But if you refuse to serve the LORD, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD.”³¹

²⁸ Taken from *Pass It On* document published by GC, the excerpt is by Roger Dudley, p. 7

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *John 14:12*, NIV

³¹ *Joshua 24:15*, NLT

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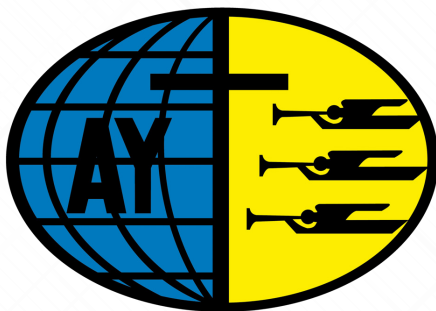
The Mission Statement of the Adventist Youth Ministries is:

“To lead young people into a saving relationship with Jesus and to help them embrace His call to discipleship.”

The AIM says:

“The Advent Message to all the world in my generation”

The main objective of this document is to remind youth ministries leaders that the reason for the existence of this ministry is to train young people to have a connection with Jesus and to challenge them to be instruments and conduits that will bring other youth into the church. The Pathfinder Club entails a holistic program that we can utilize to reach our communities. These guidelines will provide our churches and youth leaders with practical tips on how to establish CPCs



Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division

27 Regency Drive
Route 21 Corporate Park
Irene, Pretoria
South Africa