

Orientation Resources

Sample schedule

Saturday: Our team	Sunday: Our team	Monday: Personal spiritual life	Tuesday: Home life	Wednesday: Work life	Thursday: Our city	Friday: Corporate spiritual life	Saturday	Sunday: Our team
Team arrives in morning	Worship at host congregation	Personal devotions	Learning component with pastor	Visit work sites	Tour shopping, etc. 9 a.m.	Picture wall: Who's who	Free day!	Worship at host congregation
Lunch at 1 p.m.	Lunch at 1 p.m.	Visit agency	Lunch at 1 p.m.	Dinner at 6:30 at congregation member home	Local museum	Map of church locations	Picnic at 6 p.m.	Picnic with congregation
Visit agency	Free time	Meet pastor: Personal devotion	Cleaning demo		Food shop for picnic at 6 p.m.	Lunch at 12:30 p.m.		Opening worship at 6 p.m.
Mark 16 worship 6:30 p.m.	Set up house	Lunch	Chores discussion at 2 p.m.		Dinner at 7:30 p.m.	Neighborhood cleanup at 3 p.m.		
Picnic dinner	Fun activity (festival/concert)	Eating habits	Build a calendar/policies at 3 p.m.		Meet neighbors	Dinner at 7:30 p.m.		
Dessert out 10 p.m.	Dinner at 8 p.m.	Discussion/work time: growth, changes, goals, conflict, scenarios	Dinner at 6 p.m.		Maps			
Games.		Dinner at 7 p.m.	Go out to discuss travel, learning components, disc/bucket list at 7:30 p.m.					
		Worship at 8 p.m. with congregation member						

Orientation suggested sessions

Objective one: Learning to know self and others

Session 1: Getting acquainted

- Get acquainted games and activities.
- Overview of week (room selections, cooking schedule, activity schedule)
- What is Service Adventure?
- Fears and expectations of service term

Session 2: Preparation for sharing of life stories

- Have participants make a collage using old magazines. Give volunteers very few guidelines, encouraging creativity and suggesting that both abstract and obvious are included.
- Spiritual journey. One suggested idea is to fold a paper in quarters, have participants divide their life into four time periods and then guide them through an exercise by having them describe their spiritual journey during each of those time periods. (See spiritual journey exercise for orientation week later in this section for further details of this exercise.)

Session 3: Personal interest survey or personality inventory (you choose)

- Choose a personality inventory to do with the group such as Enneagram, Myers-Briggs, etc.
- Have each person complete exercise following the instructions.
- Each person has 15 minutes to share their learnings and get feedback from group: a) as reflected in the instrument just completed, and b) as reflected by their experiences in life and in unit activities so far this week. What have you enjoyed the most, the least? What will you want to do in terms of work, play and other activities this year?
- How does this view of themselves check with how members of their group view them thus far?

Objective two: Setting up the household

Session 4: Business details

- Crisis forms
- Take photographs of group and individuals for Mennonite Mission Network
- Discuss home congregations' donations and participants' responsibility to send thank you notes back to them
- Petty cash system

Session 5: Policies

- Go over *Service Adventure Participant Policy Handbook* discussing questions that arise.
- This may be an appropriate place to also discuss issues such as who is allowed in each other's bedrooms, does the group want a suggested quiet time, etc.

Session 6: Scheduling household life

- Develop a system and schedule for meal planning, preparation and shopping.
- Develop weekly and monthly schedules to include worship evenings, learning component evenings and business meetings.
- Develop a schedule of one-to-one check-ins.
- Develop a schedule/system for cleaning house, yard work, vehicle maintenance, etc.

Session 7: House cleaning/yard work

- Suggested activities would be washing windows, cleaning and rearranging kitchen cupboards, game cupboards, linen and towel cupboards, etc., which would begin to acquaint participants with their house.
- Doing yard work during orientation week will help the participants set a pattern for a well maintained yard for their term. (hopefully!)

Objective three: Orientation to the community, church and jobs

Session 8: Neighborhood exploration

Explore your neighborhood. This will give participants a chance to get into their neighborhood around the unit to observe and possibly to talk with people. Meet with someone from the neighborhood who knows the area well and could familiarize your group with the history of the area as well as give information about the people, businesses, etc. Another possible idea is to bake cookies or treats and take them to various neighbors and introduce the unit.

Session 9: City tour

- Have someone familiar with the area such as a support committee member or member of the congregation lead this tour.
- Include such places as the public library, grocery stores, recreational facilities, job sites, etc.
- This session could include a city-wide road rally where a map and phone book are given to the group along with quiz questions and places to find and they are given a time period in which to complete the exercise with a unit vehicle.

Session 10: Visiting service assignments

Arrange a half-day (preferably the same day) when all participants can get to their job sites to meet their employers and have a brief tour. Since participants usually have anxiety about their job placement, it is important that they at least briefly visit their place of employment during orientation week.

Session 11: Church involvement

- Have the pastor, or another member of the leadership team from the hosting Mennonite congregation where the unit will be worshipping, lead this session at the church or the unit.
- Have the pastor acquaint the unit with the church, a brief overview of the worship service/style and a list of committees/areas where the volunteers can be involved.

Session 12: Meet support committee

Arrange with the support committee when they and the unit can meet to become acquainted. This could be a potluck picnic, ice cream social, game night, etc.

Session 13: Covenant/celebration (often not done in the first week, but the group talks about it during this time)

- Have the group together develop a covenant which would include group goals which will cover any or all aspects of Service Adventure. Could refer to policies and incorporate those of importance or potential importance.
- Decide as a group how this can be attractively displayed somewhere in the house where it is easily visible. Call on creativity of unit members--make a photo display or poster.
- Complete the session with a time of celebration and worship which could include a formal time where everyone signs the covenant, a time of singing, prayer, etc.
- Some groups have gone through the unit house, praying in each room, i.e. having a house blessing service.
- Writing the covenant and the celebration/worship could be two separate sessions. The celebration/worship could happen on the first weekly worship evening.

Session 14: Setting individual goals (during first one-on-one)

Leader would meet with each participant individually towards the end of orientation week or early the next week to discuss goals for the term related to group life, job assignment, church involvement, personal/spiritual growth. These goals would be evaluated regularly and revised as appropriate.

Session 15: Finances

- Discuss simple lifestyle, sources of unit income, rationale for limited budgets in Service Adventure, unit expenses, etc.
- Challenge participants to live within their \$40 per month stipend and to encourage their families to not send gifts of money during their service term.
- Discuss use of learning component money.

Further sessions: Fun!

- Check out city/town and recreate as a group both using recreation allowance and doing free activities.
- Allow free time and personal time during the week being sensitive to the needs of the group and individuals within the group. However, keep the schedule fairly busy to help alleviate homesickness and constant communication with home.

Who are you

- What needs should others know about sharing a room or home with you? (loves a clean house / alone time / early riser / night owl)
- Pet peeves? We all have them...what are yours?
- Do you like practical jokes? Do you like when they're done to you?
- Do you mind if people borrow things from you?
- When you go on a trip, do you like to see as much as possible or stay at one place and relax?
- What do you like to do with your free time?
- What do you do to relax?
- How much and how do you exercise?
- How many hours a week do you generally spend doing each of the following on the internet?
 - General web browsing
 - Facebook/social media
 - Emails
- What genre of music do you like to listen to?
- How much TV / Netflix do you watch a week?
- How often do you plan on talking / texting on the phone to family and / or friends?
- What is your favorite (or one of your favorites):
 - Memory
 - Holiday
 - Season
- On the following continuum plot where you consider yourself:
Introverted (being alone is life giving and energizing) ---> Extroverted (being with others is life giving and energizing) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- How much time alone do you prefer each week?
- If you go to your room and seem upset, irritated, or down, do you want someone to come in and check on you/try to make you feel better or people to leave you alone?
- Do you like hugs?
- From what source do you prefer to receive your news?
 - Newspaper
 - Internet
 - Magazine
 - Friends
 - Talk Radio
 - TV

- What news?

Food preferences – Circle as many as apply to you or fill in the blank.

- Milk: I like to drink skim/ 1% / 2% / whole / soy / almond and I drink ____ cups each day.
- Coffee/Tea: I drink ____ cups of coffee / tea a day when I am at home.
- Peanut Butter: When I make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, I use creamy / crunchy / ewwww peanut butter is gross with grape / strawberry / raspberry / apricot / other jelly / jam / preserves / marmalade.
- Bread: When I am making a sandwich, I grab the brown / white store bought / homemade bread.
- Toast: When I put something in the toaster for breakfast, it is bread / English muffins / bagels / I don't toast my food.
- Cereal: Besides milk in my bowl in the morning, I like oatmeal / sweet cereal / granola / bran cereal / cheerios / muesli.
- Breakfast: I eat mostly eggs / cereal / toast / other for breakfast.
- Sack lunch: For my lunch I like to take cold cut sandwiches / pb and J / leftovers / yogurt / other.
- My level of spicy food is none / mild / medium / hot.
- Foods and meals that I really like and remind me of home:
- Foods that I don't like:
- Food I'm allergic to:
- Other information about yourself you want to share???

Orientation week tips and ideas

Things to emphasize and attend to

- Give participants ownership of household life as much as possible as early as possible: involve (require!) participant participation in group decision-making on unit life-cooking rotation, cleaning responsibilities, household arrangement, weekly schedule, house meetings, etc. That way you can later hold them accountable to their own decisions! But make clear that any decisions made during orientation week can be reviewed in a few months and altered if there is consensus to do so.
- Pay attention to how the group functions in making decisions-who leads, who speaks, who mimics others, who's passive, etc.-and guide the process (if necessary) to make sure good process happens (all voices are heard, the same person doesn't lead all the time, etc.). This will set a good precedent for later decision-making.
- Emphasize good communication patterns within the unit household-among participants and with leaders.
- Emphasize that program policy, while necessary, does not define all aspects of unit life-most importantly, how participants and leaders relate. Participants are free to choose what kind of relationship they will have with leaders. Likewise, leaders can define boundaries on their relationship with participants-but be careful of the unintended signals you might give to participants from the start.

- The program policies do not exhaust all possibilities! (The program policies set boundaries-here is what you must, and must not, do. But it does not say what participants can or cannot do within those boundaries. They leave considerable room for participant freedom of choice. But, typically, participants think of program policy as limiting what's possible: "If the policy manual does not say I can do x, then x is not permitted.")
- Be careful in making definitive interpretations of program policy, whose unintended consequences you may not foresee and which you thus might later regret.
- Pay attention to local traditions-ask support committee, or check orientation week schedules from previous years of your unit, but be wary of people in the congregation saying, "They've always done it this way"!
- Remember participants will not retain everything from orientation (you may have to review certain things, more than once, later on in the year)
- Spread policy things throughout, but cover the whole thing
- It's easier on leaders if you start out the year a bit "stricter" then loosen up, as opposed to starting out "looser" then trying to get stricter.
- Mix work with fun
- Keep participants busy, don't build in too much down time
- Involve your support committee
- Involve as much of the host congregation as possible (i.e. pastor, host families)
- Pace yourselves
- Have fun
- Be flexible
- Create time for group to process feelings about change, throughout the week
- Model positive behaviors (i.e. authenticity, openness, honesty, accountability)

Ideas

- Give everyone time to share their "life story"
- Do some kind of group/relationship-building activities
- Have participants plan, shop for, cook, and clean up after a group meal.
- Have participants compare prices for a list of typical items at various grocery stores (prediction: Aldi is cheapest!).
- Have participants plan one of the orientation activities (e.g., a public transportation adventure).
- Send participants out on their own with some assigned task in which they must collaborate (e.g., a "scavenger" hunt in the city).
- Have participants eat at homes of some support committee members or congregation members that live in the neighborhood (if appropriate).
- Ropes course
- Service Project
- Faith journey sharing
- Have some sessions over ice cream or around a camp fire
- Sing and pray together
- Visit each other's' service assignments
- Discuss and practice survival techniques specific to your location
- Trips
- Eat with a different family every night

- Progressive dinner
- House beautification project
- Re-arrange furniture
- Tour of the city
- Public transportation scavenger hunt
- Drive them somewhere, drop them off, have them find way back
- Get library cards
- Tour of pet peeves
- Make Service Adventure i.d. or get local identification cards (i.e. name, address, phone, etc.)