10.

Young Women

The Young Women organization is an auxiliary to the priesthood. All auxiliaries exist to help Church members grow in their testimonies of Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the restored gospel. Through the work of the auxiliaries, members receive instruction, encouragement, and support as they strive to live according to gospel principles.

10.1

Overview of the Young Women Organization

10.1.1

Purpose and Objectives of the Young Women Organization

The purpose of the Young Women organization is to help each young woman be worthy to make and keep sacred covenants and receive the ordinances of the temple. To accomplish this purpose, Young Women leaders guide each young woman in accomplishing the following objectives:

- 1. Strengthen her faith in and testimony of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.
- 2. Understand her identity as a daughter of God.
- 3. Be worthy by obeying the commandments and living gospel standards.
- 4. Receive, recognize, and rely on the promptings of the Holy Ghost.
- 5. Prepare for her divine roles as a daughter, wife, mother, and leader.
- 6. Understand and keep her baptismal covenants.
- 7. Actively build the kingdom of God through participating in the work of salvation and, when

called, serving in class presidencies. Mia Maids and Laurels may also serve as ministering sisters (see 10.3.9).

10.1.2

Young Women Theme

The Young Women theme provides a foundation for helping each young woman accomplish the objectives listed above.

Young women and their adult leaders repeat the theme at the beginning of Sunday meetings and at other Young Women gatherings. The theme reads as follows:

"We are daughters of our Heavenly Father, who loves us, and we love Him. We will 'stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places' (Mosiah 18:9) as we strive to live the Young Women values, which are:

Faith

Divine Nature

Individual Worth

Knowledge

Choice and Accountability

Good Works

Integrity and

Virtue.

"We believe as we come to accept and act upon these values, we will be prepared to strengthen home and family, make and keep sacred covenants, receive the ordinances of the temple, and enjoy the blessings of exaltation."

10.1.3 Young Women Motto and Logo

The Young Women motto is "Stand for Truth and Righteousness."

The Young Women logo is a torch surrounded by the Young Women motto. The torch represents the light of Christ that can shine through each young woman. Young women are invited to "arise and shine forth, that [their] light may be a standard for the nations" (Doctrine and Covenants 115:5).



10.1.4 Young Women Values

The Young Women values are Christlike attributes. Sunday gospel instruction, Mutual, and other activities help each young woman apply these values in her life.

The following statements and scripture references give insight into the meaning of each value. Leaders should use these statements in lessons. Leaders encourage young women to apply these truths in their lives and use them as resources for talks and presentations.

The colors associated with the values are to help young women remember the values.

Faith (white): I am a daughter of Heavenly Father, who loves me. I have faith in His eternal plan, which centers in Jesus Christ, my Savior (see Alma 32:21).

Divine Nature (blue): I have inherited divine qualities, which I will strive to develop (see 2 Peter 1:4–7).

Individual Worth (red): I am of infinite worth with my own divine mission, which I will strive to fulfill (see Doctrine and Covenants 18:10).

Knowledge (green): I will continually seek opportunities for learning and growth (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:118).

Choice and Accountability (orange): I will choose good over evil and will accept responsibility for my decisions (see Joshua 24:15).

Good Works (yellow): I will help others and build the kingdom through righteous service (see 3 Nephi 12:16).

Integrity (purple): I will have the moral courage to make my actions consistent with my knowledge of right and wrong (see Job 27:5).

Virtue (gold): I will prepare to enter the temple and remain pure and worthy. My thoughts and actions will be based on high moral standards (see Proverbs 31:10).

10.1.5 Young Women Classes

The young women in a ward may be divided into three classes according to their ages: Beehives (ages 11–13), Mia Maids (ages 13–15), and Laurels (ages 15–17).

As a young woman moves to a new age-group, her new Young Women leaders and class presidency welcome and fellowship her.

10.1.5.1 Beehives, Ages 11–13

In January of the year a young woman turns 12, the bishop or an assigned bishopric counselor interviews her. She typically moves from Primary to Young Women and begins



attending Young Women meetings at the beginning

of that year (see 11.4.3). She is a member of the Beehive class.

10.1.5.2 Mia Maids, Ages 13–15

A young woman typically becomes a member of the Mia Maid class in January of the year she turns 14.



10.1.5.3 Laurels, Ages 15-17

A young woman typically becomes a member of the Laurel class in January of the year she turns 16.



10.1.5.4 Eighteen-Year-Old Young Women

A young woman normally moves into Relief Society on her 18th birthday or in the coming year. By age 19, each young woman should be fully participating in Relief Society. Because of individual circumstances, such as personal testimony, maturity, school graduation, desire to continue with peers, and college attendance, a young woman may move into Relief Society earlier than her 18th birthday or remain in Young Women longer. Each young woman counsels with her parents and the bishop to decide what will best help her remain an active participant in the Church.

Young Women and Relief Society leaders work together to make the transition into Relief Society successful for each young woman.

Roles of Parents and Church Leaders

Parents have the first responsibility for the spiritual and physical welfare of their children (see Doctrine and Covenants 68:25–28). The bishopric and Young Women leaders support but do not replace parents in this responsibility. They offer support in the following ways:

They assist parents in helping their daughters prepare to receive the blessings of the temple by following the guidelines listed in 10.1.1.

They encourage communication between young women and parents.

They ensure that Young Women activities and other youth events do not put undue burdens on families or compete with family activities.

Leaders should be especially sensitive to young women who come from homes that lack strong support for gospel living.

Ward Young Women Leadership

This chapter focuses on administering the Young Women organization in a way that will strengthen individual young women and their families. Young Women leaders frequently review chapter 3, which outlines general principles of leadership. These principles include preparing spiritually, participating in councils, ministering to others, and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

10.3.1 Bishopric

The bishop and his counselors provide priesthood leadership for the Young Women organization. They watch over and strengthen individual young

women, working closely with parents and Young Women leaders in this effort.

10.3.1.1 Bishop

The bishop calls and sets apart a sister to serve as Young Women president. He also oversees the calling and setting apart of other Young Women leaders. He may assign his counselors to call and set apart these leaders.

The bishop interviews each young woman who completes the Personal Progress program (see 10.7.3).

10.3.1.2 Bishop and His Counselors

The bishop and his counselors regularly participate in Young Women meetings, service, and activities. The bishop works with the Laurels. He assigns his counselor who works with deacons to work with the Beehives and his counselor who works with the teachers to work with the Mia Maids.

The bishop assigns one of his counselors to oversee the ward Young Women organization. This counselor meets regularly with the Young Women presidency. He reports on Young Women matters in bishopric meetings.

The bishop interviews each young woman at least annually. If possible, he interviews each Laurel twice annually. If this is not possible, he assigns a counselor to conduct some of these interviews. After each young woman who is a Beehive or Mia Maid has her annual interview with the bishop, she has an interview with the counselor in the bishopric who oversees her class at another time during the year.

In these interviews, the bishop and his counselors follow the guidelines in *Handbook 1*, 7.1.7. They may also refer to the Young Women Personal Progress Tracking Sheet for Leaders, which they receive from the ward Young Women secretary.

The bishop and his counselors recognize each young woman in sacrament meeting when she receives the Young Womanhood Recognition.

Members of the bishopric counsel together prayerfully to determine whom to call as class presidents. They do not select leaders merely because of age or seniority in the class. The Young Women presidency may recommend young women to serve as class presidents (see 19.1.1 and 19.1.2).

When a member of the bishopric calls a young woman to serve as a class president, he asks her to recommend whom to call as counselors and a secretary. He counsels her to approach this responsibility prayerfully, seeking guidance from the Lord about whom to recommend. However, the bishopric member also helps the class president understand that final responsibility to receive inspiration on whom to call rests with the bishopric.

A member of the bishopric seeks permission from a young woman's parents before asking her to serve in any of these callings.

After extending these callings, a member of the bishopric presents the young women to their class for a sustaining vote. Then the bishop or an assigned counselor sets the young women apart. A member of the bishopric announces these callings in sacrament meeting but does not ask for a sustaining vote.

A Young Women leader may communicate with the bishopric regarding any changes that may be needed in class presidencies.

10.3.2 Ward Young Women Presidency

The ward Young Women presidency consists of a president and two counselors. They work under the direction of the bishopric. They also receive orientation and ongoing support from the stake Young Women presidency.

Each member of the ward Young Women presidency is responsible for one of the Young Women classes, as follows:

President: Laurels

First counselor: Mia Maids

Second counselor: Beehives

10.3.2.1

Ward Young Women President

The Young Women president has the following responsibilities:

She serves as a member of the ward council. As a member of this council, she participates in efforts to build faith and strengthen individuals and families (see chapter 4). She is also a member of the bishopric youth committee (see 18.2.9).

She submits recommendations to the bishopric for sisters to be called to serve in the Young Women organization. In making these recommendations, she follows the guidelines in 19.1.1 and 19.1.2.

She teaches other Young Women leaders their duties, using this handbook as a resource.

She oversees the records, reports, budget, and finances of the ward Young Women organization. The Young Women secretary helps with this responsibility.

10.3.2.2

Ward Young Women President and Her Counselors

The Young Women president and her counselors have the following responsibilities:

They get to know each young woman and become familiar with her talents, interests, and challenges. They look for ways to strengthen young women individually, help them grow in their testimonies, and encourage them to participate in the Young Women

organization. They give special attention to young women who are new members and young women who are less active.

They support each young woman in her family.

They help young women work on Personal Progress. They are also encouraged to work on Personal Progress themselves.

They may counsel with parents and priesthood leaders about the needs of young women.

They support Mia Maids and Laurels who serve as companions to adult sisters in ministering.

They ensure that the ward Young Women program is organized and functioning properly. As part of this effort, they oversee and instruct ward Young Women advisers and specialists.

They often teach lessons in Sunday classes, though they may share this responsibility with Young Women advisers. They oversee efforts to improve gospel learning and teaching in the Young Women organization. They participate in and encourage other leaders to participate in teacher council meetings (see 5.5.7). In these efforts, they follow the principles in 5.5.3 and 5.5.4.

They attend class presidency meetings and provide guidance as needed.

They work with class presidencies to plan and carry out activities, including Mutual activities. They help class presidencies build unity among the young women.

They teach leadership skills and qualities to class presidencies and other leaders in the Young Women organization (see 10.9).

They hold Young Women presidency meetings. They also meet regularly with the counselor in the bishopric who oversees the Young Women organization.

10.3.3 Ward Young Women Secretary

The Young Women secretary has the following responsibilities:

She consults with the Young Women presidency to prepare agendas for presidency meetings. She attends these meetings, takes notes, and keeps track of assignments.

She instructs class secretaries and oversees their work in keeping attendance records. At least quarterly, she compiles attendance information, reviews it with the Young Women president, and submits it to the ward clerk.

She ensures that the bishopric and the Young Women presidency are aware of young women who are not attending meetings regularly and young women who will soon advance to another Young Women class.

She uses the Young Women Personal Progress
Tracking Sheet for Leaders to record the progress
of individual young women as they participate in
Personal Progress and other activities and as they
fulfill leadership callings. When a young woman is
scheduled to have an interview with a member of
the bishopric, the secretary may give him a copy of
the young woman's tracking sheet.

She helps the Young Women presidency prepare an annual budget and account for expenses.

10.3.4 Ward Young Women Advisers

The bishopric may call Young Women advisers to help the Young Women presidency with their responsibilities. Each adviser works with a specific age-group of young women and works under the direction of the presidency member who is assigned to that age-group. Advisers have the following responsibilities:

They help the Young Women presidency and class presidencies plan and carry out activities, including Mutual.

They may teach Sunday lessons. They also may help teach leadership skills to class presidencies.

They may help record the progress of individual young women in the Personal Progress program.

They attend ward Young Women presidency meetings as invited.

10.3.5 Young Women Class Presidencies

A class presidency is normally called for each Young Women class. In a ward or branch with few young women, one presidency may be called for the combined age-groups until the young women are able to be organized into their respective classes.

Class presidencies have the following responsibilities:

They watch over and fellowship class members, especially those who are new members or less active and those who have disabilities or other special needs. They pray for them, spend time with them, and become genuine friends.

They help class members establish close friendships, learn leadership skills, and live the gospel.

They help each young woman know that she is welcome when she becomes a member of their class.

They support class members' efforts in the Personal Progress program.

They support class members who serve as ministering sisters.

They hold regular class presidency meetings.

They conduct the Sunday meetings for their classes.

They help plan activities, including Mutual.

The class presidents serve on the bishopric youth committee (see 18.2.9).

10.3.6

Young Women Class Secretaries

Class secretaries have the following responsibilities:

They compile and review attendance information and submit it to the Young Women secretary.

They consult with the class presidency to prepare agendas for presidency meetings. They attend these meetings, take notes, and keep track of assignments.

They may help class presidencies and Young Women leaders plan activities.

10.3.7

Ward Young Women Activity Specialists

The bishopric may call specialists to serve temporarily in planning and carrying out specific activities. For example, specialists may be called to help with activities such as Young Women camp, youth conference, and sports. These specialists serve under the direction of the ward Young Women presidency.

10.3.8

Young Women Music Director and Pianist

These callings have been discontinued.

10.3.9

Serving as Ministering Sisters

Serving as a ministering sister is an opportunity for a young woman to act on her baptismal covenant and to participate in the work of salvation. Parents and leaders counsel with each Mia Maid and Laurel, and she may be assigned as a ministering sister when she is willing and able to serve. Young women serve as companions to Relief Society sisters. For detailed information about this service, including instructions about giving assignments to young women, see 9.5.

All young women belonging to the Mia Maid or Laurel class may receive assignments as ministering sisters. They need not wait until their 14th birthday.

The guideline that two responsible adults be present with youth does not apply to the assignment of ministering companions. However, under the direction of their bishop, leaders should use wisdom and seek inspiration when assigning youth as companions to adults (see 9.5.3).

Adult companions should avoid situations that might be misunderstood. They should use care regarding isolated one-on-one situations so that young women have a safe and rewarding experience with ministering. Additionally, leaders should use wisdom in not assigning young women to difficult home or family situations. When youth are assigned to a companion who is not a parent, leaders should confirm that parents do not object to the assignment.

10.4

Leadership Meetings

10.4.1

Ward Council Meeting

The Young Women president serves as a member of the ward council (see chapter 4).

10.4.2

Bishopric Youth Committee Meeting

The bishop presides over the bishopric youth committee. This committee is composed of the bishopric, one of the bishop's priests quorum assistants, the teachers and deacons quorum presidents, the Young Women class presidents, and the Young Men and Young Women presidents. For more information, see 18.2.9.

10.4.3

Ward Young Women Presidency Meeting

The Young Women presidency holds a presidency meeting regularly. The president presides at the meeting and conducts it. The secretary attends, takes notes, and keeps track of assignments.

The agenda may include the following items:

- 1. Evaluate how the young women in each class are accomplishing the objectives listed in 10.1.1. Plan ways to help individual young women accomplish those objectives more completely.
- 2. Read and discuss scripture passages and instructions from Church leaders that relate to their callings.
- 3. Make plans to instruct class presidencies in their duties.
- 4. Discuss the effectiveness of Young Women activities. Discuss ways to include young women in planning activities that help them incorporate the Young Women values in their lives.
- 5. Discuss gospel instruction in Sunday classes and plan ways to improve.
- 6. Review attendance records. Plan ways to help new members and less-active young women participate.
- 7. Review the Young Women budget and expenditures.

The Young Women presidency may invite advisers and specialists to attend these meetings as needed.

10.4.4 Meeting with a Counselor in the Bishopric

The Young Women presidency meets regularly with the counselor in the bishopric who oversees the Young Women organization. In these meetings they counsel together about the progress and needs of individual young women. Members of the Young Women presidency give reports, make recommendations, and review plans for meetings and activities. When appropriate, Young Women advisers and class presidencies may be invited to attend this meeting to give reports and receive instruction.

10.4.5 Class Presidency Meeting

Each class presidency holds a presidency meeting regularly. The class president conducts the meeting. The secretary attends, takes notes, and keeps track of assignments. The Young Women presidency member and class adviser who are responsible for the class also attend.

The agenda may include the following items:

- Plan ways to strengthen class members, including new members and less-active members.
 Also plan ways to fellowship young women of other faiths.
- 2. Read and discuss scripture passages and instructions from Church leaders that relate to their responsibilities.
- 3. Plan to visit class members as needed.
- 4. Discuss ways to help each young woman succeed in Personal Progress.
- 5. Plan class meetings and activities.
- 6. Consider items to discuss in bishopric youth committee meeting (see 18.2.9).
- 7. Receive leadership training from ward Young Women leaders.

10.4.6 Stake Young Women Leadership Meeting

Stake Young Women leadership meeting is generally held once a year, as explained in 18.3.11. Ward Young Women presidencies and secretaries attend. Advisers, specialists, and the bishopric member

assigned to the Young Women may be invited to attend as needed.

10.5

Standards

Standards provide sure direction to strengthen and guide members of the Church. As young women keep gospel standards, they will be of great service in the Church and the world. They will also be worthy to receive the ordinances of the temple.

In the booklet *For the Strength of Youth*, the First Presidency outlines gospel standards and teaches youth how to apply them. Every young woman should have a copy of *For the Strength of Youth*. She should review the standards often and consider how well she is living them.

Young Women leaders should study the standards in the booklet and exemplify them. They should find ways to teach and reinforce these standards often in lessons and at Mutual activities, camp, youth conference, and other activities.

Members of the bishopric and Young Women leaders can encourage parents to study gospel standards, exemplify them, and discuss them with their daughters. They can also encourage young women to use *For the Strength of Youth* as a resource for family home evening lessons and talks.

10.6

Sunday Gospel Instruction

Young Women classes are held on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. They last 50 minutes.

The purposes of these classes are to help young women strengthen faith in Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ; increase their gospel understanding; recognize how the gospel answers their daily questions; have opportunities to feel the Spirit; and strengthen and share their testimonies.

Young Women classes usually meet separately by age-group. However, leaders may consider the following alternatives as needed:

- In a ward with a large number of young women, more than one class may be organized in an age-group, with an adviser and class presidency called for each class.
- 2. In a ward or branch with few young women, age-groups may be combined for Sunday gospel instruction, and advisers may not be needed.
- 3. In any ward, when a special need exists, Young Women classes may occasionally meet together briefly before class members go to individual class meetings.

A member of the class presidency conducts. She reminds young women of the *Come*, *Follow Me—For Individuals and Families* home study materials for that day and the following week. In each class, young women repeat the Young Women theme.

Lessons in Young Women classes focus on gospel topics found in *Come, Follow Me—For Young Women*. Leaders, assisted by class presidencies, select the lesson outlines that best meet the needs of class members. These outlines are provided at ComeFollowMe. ChurchofJesusChrist.org and in the printed *Come, Follow Me—For Young Women* manual. Leaders encourage each young woman to bring scriptures where possible.

Lessons are usually taught by members of the Young Women presidency or by Young Women advisers. Presidency members and advisers may divide this responsibility as needed. Young women should be given opportunities to teach. When young women give instruction, a member of the Young Women presidency, an adviser, or a parent helps them prepare. Priesthood leaders and other faithful ward members may also be invited to teach on occasion. Those who teach should follow the principles in 5.5.4.

Young women and young men may occasionally meet together, as directed by the bishopric. When a special need exists, Young Women classes may meet together briefly before class members go to individual class meetings.

Classes do not begin with a hymn or prayer, but they conclude with a prayer. Hymns may be used to enhance a lesson as appropriate.

10.7 Personal Progress

Personal Progress is an achievement program designed to help young women strengthen their testimonies of Jesus Christ, prepare for their future roles, and prepare to be worthy to make and keep sacred temple covenants.

The goals of the program are outlined in the *Young Women Personal Progress* book. Young women work with their parents and Young Women leaders to set and accomplish goals that are based on the Young Women values.

After careful consideration, parents and leaders may modify the program to help young women with special needs. For example, they may consider the needs of young women with disabilities or educational limitations, young women who join the Church or become active in Young Women after age 16, and young women who are not Church members. When making any changes or exceptions for one person, leaders should consider the effect those changes may have on others.

10.7.1 Personal Progress Activities at Mutual

Young Women leaders and class presidencies may plan some Personal Progress activities for Mutual (see 10.8.1). For example, all young women could assist with another young woman's value project. Such group activities should be planned prayerfully

and selectively to ensure that the Personal Progress program remains personal for each young woman.

10.7.2 Emblems, Certificates, and Recognition

Ward leaders may obtain Personal Progress certificates and awards through Church Distribution Services. They use ward budget funds to purchase these items.

10.7.3 Personal Progress Responsibilities of Leaders

10.7.3.1 Young Women Leaders

When a young woman moves from Primary to Young Women, the second counselor in the Young Women presidency and the class adviser for the Beehives arrange to meet with her and her parents. A member of the Beehive class presidency may also attend.

The leaders give the young woman a *Young Women Personal Progress* book and explain the program to her and her parents. They encourage her parents to work with her in selecting and completing Personal Progress experiences and projects. They explain that her mother may also work on Personal Progress and earn an award. Other women may also help and participate in the program themselves.

Young Women leaders give the young woman copies of For the Strength of Youth and True to the Faith (if the bishop has not already given them to her). They also give her a pendant with the Young Women logo on it, which can be ordered through Church Distribution Services.

Young Women leaders also give this orientation to young women who enter the organization later than age 11.

Additional instructions for parents and leaders are included in the *Young Women Personal Progress* book.

10.7.3.2 Bishop

When a young woman completes the entire Personal Progress program, the bishop interviews her. This can be part of his annual or six-month interview with her. He may use the standards in *For the Strength of Youth* as a guide. He may also verify her attendance at sacrament meeting and in seminary (where available) and her reading of the Book of Mormon. When he determines that she is ready to receive the Young Womanhood Recognition, he signs her Personal Progress book. He may present the award to her in a sacrament meeting.

10.8

Activities and Events

Young Women leaders, including class presidencies, plan activities based on the needs and interests of the young women. They make a special effort to reach out to all the young women, including those who have recently joined the Church and those who are less active. Activities may help young women accomplish their goals in the Personal Progress program. Class presidencies should participate as much as possible in planning and carrying out activities.

Plans for Young Women activities should be approved by a member of the bishopric and should follow the guidelines in chapter 13.

10.8.1 Mutual

Most Young Women activities occur during a time called Mutual. The term *Mutual* suggests shared experiences in which there is mutual respect and support for one another and opportunities to learn together. Mutual activities should provide youth with a variety of opportunities to serve others and

to develop spiritually, socially, physically, and intellectually.

Mutual is generally held weekly. If travel or other restrictions make this impractical, Mutual may be held less frequently, but it should be held at least monthly. Mutual should be 1 to 1½ hours long and should take place on a day or evening other than Sunday or Monday.

The Young Women presidency, under the direction of the bishopric, oversees Mutual for young women.

Young Men and Young Women presidencies may occasionally use Mutual activities to prepare for stake or multistake activities (see 13.3).

10.8.1.1

Annual Theme for Mutual

Each year, the First Presidency announces a theme for Mutual. Leaders emphasize this theme in Mutual opening exercises and in other youth activities.

10.8.1.2

Opening Exercises

Mutual usually begins with brief opening exercises presided over by a member of the bishopric. The bishop's priests quorum assistants and members of the Laurel class presidency take turns conducting. Adult leaders prepare youth leaders for this responsibility.

Opening exercises include a hymn and prayer and may also include musical selections and opportunities for the youth to share their talents and testimonies.

10.8.1.3

Quorum and Class Activities or Combined Activities

Following opening exercises, Aaronic Priesthood quorums and Young Women classes generally hold separate activities. In a ward or branch with few young women, all the young women may meet together for activities. Activities may also be planned for any combination of quorums and classes.

Combined activities for all young men and young women are normally held once a month. Members of the bishopric youth committee schedule, plan, and review these activities in their meetings. The activities are carried out under the direction of the bishopric.

Some examples of appropriate activities are service projects, music, dance, drama, cultural events, sports or athletic events, career exploration, and outdoor activities.

10.8.2 Bishopric Youth Discussions

Bishopric youth discussions are planned and carried out by the bishopric. These discussions, which are held occasionally, give the bishopric opportunities to address subjects that are interesting to the youth and that strengthen the youth spiritually. Topics in *For the Strength of Youth* and *True to the Faith* are especially appropriate. Occasionally the bishopric may invite guests to participate. Guests are usually members of the ward or stake.

Bishopric youth discussions may be held with all of the youth together or with the youth of a certain age-group. They may be held during Mutual, on Sunday during the time for quorum meetings and Young Women classes, or at another time that does not put undue burden on families. The bishopric determines their frequency. They are scheduled in bishopric youth committee meetings.

10.8.3 New Beginnings

New Beginnings is an annual event for young women and their parents, priesthood leaders, and Young Women leaders. It may be held shortly before or after young women move from Primary into Young Women. It may be held during Mutual.

This event helps young women and their parents learn about the Young Women program. It includes an explanation of Personal Progress and a presentation of the Young Women theme, logo, motto, and age-group purpose statements and symbols (see 10.1). It should help young women and their parents plan for events in the coming year.

New Beginnings provides opportunities for leaders to express love for the young women, encourage parents to help their daughters in Personal Progress experiences, introduce young women who have moved from Primary into Young Women, and welcome young women who have joined the Church or moved into the ward. It is a time to recognize young women and their accomplishments in Personal Progress. The Young Women presidency invites a member of the bishopric to give concluding remarks.

Class presidencies plan the program under the direction of the Young Women presidency. The Young Women presidency may ask specialists to help (for example, to direct a choir or instrumental group, rehearse speakers, or direct a skit). A member of the Laurel class presidency may conduct.

10.8.4 Young Women in Excellence

Young Women in Excellence is an event in which young women are recognized for the good things they are doing. It is a celebration of Personal Progress. Each young woman shares a value experience or value project she has completed during the year that exhibits excellence. Her presentation may include talents and skills she has developed through her Personal Progress goals. Young Women leaders invite parents to attend.

At the beginning of the year, leaders encourage each young woman to give serious thought to the values she might focus on for this event. She may work with a family member, another young woman, or others on the projects, which may take several months to complete.

This event is usually held during Mutual at the ward level, but it may be held at the stake level. Adult leaders include the young women in planning it. The date and plans for the event should be announced early in the year.

10.8.5 Standards Events

Standards events are special programs that emphasize moral values and eternal goals. They encourage young women to live the standards in *For the Strength of Youth*, which will bring them closer to the Savior.

These events are held annually, or more often as needed, usually during Mutual. They may be held on a class, ward, multiward, or stake level. Depending on how a subject is presented, these events may include any combination of Young Women age-groups. They may also include mothers, fathers, mothers and fathers together, and young men.

10.8.6 Young Women Camp

The Church encourages camp for young women. Ward and stake Young Women presidencies determine the frequency and extent of the camp program. They make this determination under the direction of priesthood leaders and with consideration of the needs of families. A multiday camp is generally held each year on a ward or stake level. To meet local needs and interests, other day or overnight camps may be held at the discretion of Young Women and priesthood leaders.

Camp is for all young women who are eligible to participate in the Young Women program. Young women who are not members of the Church may also participate if they are willing to abide by Church standards.

To plan camp, Young Women leaders and youth camp leaders use the *Young Women Camp Guide*. Camp should help young women explore their interests and increase their self-reliance and outdoor skills. Camp should also help them develop leadership skills, build friendships, and grow in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Priesthood leaders may call stake and ward Young Women specialists to be camp leaders and young women ages 16 and 17 to be youth camp leaders. Together, these adult and youth camp leaders organize and conduct the camp program under the direction of the Young Women presidency. They may work with ward leaders and the stake activities committee to arrange for equipment, transportation, and other assistance.

For information about financing camp, see 10.8.9. For information about safety at camp, see 13.6.20, safety. Churchof Jesus Christ.org, and the *Young Women Camp Guide*. For additional guidelines regarding camp, see 13.6, "Policies and Guidelines."

10.8.7 Stake and Multistake Activities

See 13.3.

10.8.8 Youth Conference

See 13.4.

10.8.9 Funding for Activities and Events

Funding for Young Women activities and events should come from the ward budget (see 13.2.8).

10.8.9.1

Funding for an Annual Camp or Similar Activity

If the ward budget does not have sufficient funds to pay for an annual Young Women camp or similar activity, leaders may ask participants to pay for part or all of it. If funds from participants are not sufficient, the bishop may authorize one group fund-raising activity each year that complies with the guidelines in 13.6.8.

In no case should the expenses or travel for an annual camp or similar activity be excessive. Nor should the lack of personal funds prohibit a member from participating.

10.8.9.2

Funding for Equipment and Supplies

If possible, equipment and supplies that the ward needs for annual youth camps are purchased with ward budget funds. If these funds are not sufficient, the bishop may authorize one group fund-raising activity annually that complies with the guidelines in 13.6.8.

Equipment and supplies purchased with Church funds, whether from the ward budget or a fund-raising activity, are for Church use only. They are not for the personal use of individuals or families.

10.9

Teaching Leadership Skills and Qualities

Young Women leaders teach leadership skills and qualities as they work with class presidencies, camp leaders, and other young women in leadership positions. This teaching occurs as leaders help young women plan and carry out activities and participate together in service projects for Personal Progress. In this effort, leaders may refer to chapter 3 in this handbook.

10.10

Stake Young Women Leadership

10.10.1 Stake Presidency

Members of the stake presidency oversee the Young Women organization in the stake. As part of this responsibility, they instruct bishops in their responsibilities for young women.

The stake president assigns one of his counselors to oversee the stake Young Women organization.

For more information about the stake presidency's responsibilities relating to auxiliary organizations, see 15.1.

10.10.2

High Councilor Assigned to the Stake Young Women

The stake president assigns a member of the high council to work with the stake Young Women presidency. This high councilor's responsibilities are outlined in 15.3.

10.10.3

Stake Young Women Presidency

The responsibilities of the stake Young Women presidency are outlined in 15.4.1.

10.10.4

Stake Young Women Secretary

The responsibilities of the stake Young Women secretary are outlined in 15.4.2.

10.10.5

Stake Aaronic Priesthood-Young Women Committee

The stake president assigns a counselor to preside over the stake Aaronic Priesthood–Young Women committee. Other committee members are the high councilors assigned to the stake Young Men and Young Women organizations, the stake Young Men presidency and secretary, and the stake Young Women presidency and secretary.

The stake presidency may invite youth to attend the committee's meetings as needed. Youth should be included as much as possible in planning and carrying out activities such as youth conferences, dances, devotionals, and multistake events. Youth may also participate in discussions about challenges that the youth in the stake are facing.

10.10.6 Stake Young Women Activity Specialists

The stake presidency may assign stake members to serve temporarily as Young Women specialists, helping plan and carry out stake activities or programs. Specialists may be assigned for such activities as Young Women camp, stake and multistake events, and sports. They serve under the direction of the stake Young Women presidency.

10.11

Adapting the Young Women Organization to Local Needs

In a ward or branch with few young women, all the young women may meet together for instruction (see 10.3.5 and 10.6.2). They also may meet together for activities.

If adult leadership is limited in a ward or branch, the Young Women presidency may teach the Sunday lessons and administer the activity program without advisers. In a very small unit, the Young Women president may be the only adult leader in the Young Women organization. In this case, she teaches the Sunday lessons and oversees activities for all young women. When possible, counselors and a secretary should be called.

In a very small branch that does not have a Young Women president, the Relief Society president may help parents organize instruction for the young women until a Young Women president is called.

Because youth often benefit from socializing in larger groups, the young men and young women in two or more small wards or branches may meet occasionally for combined activities. If neighboring wards and branches have few young women, the bishops and branch presidents may authorize the young women to meet together for weekly activities. When considering these options, bishops and branch presidents take into account factors such as distance and travel cost.

In a small stake or a district, the Young Women president may be the only stake or district Young Women leader. When possible, counselors and a secretary should be called.

For general information about adapting to local needs, see chapter 17.

10.12

Additional Guidelines and Policies

Participation in Camps, Youth Conferences, and Dances

Youth in a class or quorum may enjoy the privileges that are appropriate for that class or quorum. With their parents' approval, Beehives and deacons may attend camps before their 12th birthdays. Likewise, Mia Maids and teachers may attend dances and youth conferences before their 14th birthdays. However, a young woman or young man should be

at least age 16 before beginning to date (see For the Strength of Youth [2011], 4).

10.12.2 Young Women of Other Faiths

Young women of other faiths who agree to abide by Church standards should be welcomed warmly and encouraged to participate in youth activities. They may also participate in the Personal Progress program and earn the recognition. Expenses for their participation should be handled the same as for young women who are members of the Church.

10.12.3 Young Women Who Have Disabilities

Young women who have disabilities are normally included in their regular classes. Exceptions may be made with the approval of the parents and the bishopric.

For information about understanding, including, and teaching young women who have disabilities, see 21.1.26 and disabilities. Churchof Jesus Christ.org.

10.12.4 Young Women Who Are Pregnant out of

Wedlock or Who Are Unwed Mothers

If a young woman is pregnant out of wedlock, the

decision to participate in Young Women classes and activities is left to the prayerful discretion of the young woman, her parents, and the bishop.

If a young woman age 17 or older has a baby out of wedlock and chooses to keep the child, she is welcomed into Relief Society, where she can be taught and helped in her new responsibilities. She no longer participates in Young Women.

If a young woman under 17 has a baby out of wedlock and chooses to keep the child, the decision to participate in Young Women is left to the prayerful discretion of the young woman, her parents, and the bishop. If the young woman participates in these classes and activities, the child should not accompany her.

For information on the Church policy discouraging single young women from keeping a child born out of wedlock, see 21.4.12.

10.12.5 Two Responsible Adults

When adults are teaching children or youth in Church settings, at least two responsible adults should be present. The two adults could be two men, two women, or a married couple. Where it may not be practical to have at least two adults in a classroom, leaders should consider combining classes.

The guideline that two responsible adults be present with youth does not apply to the assignment of ministering companions. However, leaders should use wisdom and seek inspiration when assigning youth as companions to adults (see 7.4.3).

10.12.6 Age-Group Progression

See 11.8.9.