

On Children

from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran

Your children are not your children.
They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.
They come through you but not from you,
And though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts,
For they have their own thoughts.
You may house their bodies but not their souls,
For their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow,
which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.
You may strive to be like them,
but seek not to make them like you.
For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children
as living arrows are sent forth.
The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,
and He bends you with His might
that His arrows may go swift and far.
Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness;
For even as He loves the arrow that flies,
so He loves also the bow that is stable.



Middle School Friends Working Group

The Middle School Friends (MSF) Working Group (WG) works with the Coordinator to provide the vision and practical support that enables the MSF program to achieve its goals. The working group meets four times a year to pursue, support, and ground the MSF program's goals:

- to nurture the faith, practice and witness of Quakerism in our young people and the adults who work with them
- to support our youth in their spiritual and personal growth and awareness
- to provide a safe and fun environment for quality Quaker programming and an age-appropriate community for PYM Friends in 6th-8th grades
- to provide an emotionally and physically safe and loving, supportive opportunity for retreat so that our youth can together build a sanctuary to live fully into themselves spiritually, socially, and emotionally.

The Middle School Friends Working Group

features the following structure:

Clerk: Collects agenda items and puts together agenda, convenes the WG meetings, facilitates/clerks the meetings, helps with recruitment of new WG members.

Recorder: Takes minutes of meetings of the Working Group, and distributes these minutes to everyone on the Group after each meeting, as well as MSF staff and the Education Standing Committee.

Members: Participate worshipfully in MSF-WG meetings

Committee Responsibilities

The working group serves in partnership with the MSF coordinator to create a groundwork in pursuit of the goals of the program, in particular:

- Developing a "big picture" sense of where we are steering the MSF program in the long-term sense, and strategizing about how to get there
- Playing a role in publicizing the MSF program, as well as engaging in
- Personal networking to spread the word about the program
- Inviting in new Middle School Friends (MSFs) and new Friendly Adult Presences (FAPs)
- Providing accountability, support, and feedback to coordinator to better the MSF program
- Providing support to parents of Middle School Friends
- Discerning the themes for the gatherings held over a year
- Envisioning inspirational ideas to manifest the gathering themes, and researching the necessary information to accompany these themes.

Who might fit well

- Anyone who is passionate about using play, song, theater, and other creative mediums to help Friends grow spiritually
- Friends who feel the need to get back in touch with their inner-child (the fun, playful one -not the immature tantrum-throwing one), and can comfortably model being their authentic self.
- Someone who is looking for a way to be connected inter-generationally and better understand the diversity and richness among Friends of different ages.
- A Middle School Friend who wants to take on some leadership and self-determination in their MSF program
- A High School Friend who loved being a Middle School Friend and wants to ensure that future Young Friends have a great program.
- A Young Adult Friend interested in having an arena to exercise their servant leadership skills and possibly receive an Emerging Leadership Scholarship (contact MSF coordinator for details)
- Parents of current or former Middle School Friends.
- Relatives of Middle School Friends who are interested in finding new ways to engage and support their nephews, nieces, grandchildren, etc.

We would love for you to join us in this inspirational, creative endeavor to envision the spiritual faith, practice, and witness of tomorrow's Quaker adults. The future of our faith is in our hands—let's seize the moment!

For more information contact:

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