

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
CATHOLIC  WOMEN



High School Group Facilitator's Guide

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Section 1: INTRODUCTION – Purpose and Mission Statement

The Mission Statement of the National Council of Catholic Women states, “The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its members to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.”

The purpose is to bring young Catholic women/girls together to share their faith and to develop an action plan to live out their faith.

Be sure to **contact NCCW** (703-224-0990) to inform them that you are beginning a young women’s group. There is a special membership rate for young women’s group. A mentor will be assigned to you, the facilitator, to assist you with any concerns or needs.

All girls in the group need to become members of the National Council of Catholic Women. Membership is offered at a special reduced rate.

Through this membership they receive:

- Representation at the biannual meetings of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.
- Access to NCCW Spirituality, Leadership and Service Commissions programs and resources.
- Representation at the United Nations, The World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO), the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering, and the Religious Alliance Against Pornography.
- Share in partnerships and collaborations with Catholic Relief Services, Cross Catholic Outreach, Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Catholic Mobilizing Network, Bread for the World, National Catholic Educational Association, National Fund for Catholic Religious Vocations, US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking, and Catholic Climate Covenant.
- Invitations to retreats, conventions and other events in their Diocese, Province and from the National Council.

Section 2:

Duties of the Facilitator

Your job is to get the girls organized and to help them grow in their faith formation. You will give them direction and then let them take over (under your direction and that of the Spiritual Advisor).

After a few meetings, so they get to know each other, talk to them about structure. Ask them if anyone has experience as president of a group. Ask them what their gifts are and try to identify who would do well in an officer position with their background. If no one has experience tell them what the duties of the officers are (found in officer duties section of this manual). For the first time ask if anyone would like to fill the position of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. You may know the girls and know who would do well in these positions and you could suggest them as possible candidates. After this, they will nominate the candidates.

Decide with the girls how long the term would be (we suggest one year so as many as possible can hold and learn from this leadership position).

Commission Chairs: Ask if anyone would like to be a Commission Chair (Commissions are Spirituality, Leadership, and Service). If your group is small you may want them to decide as a group on a service project. Something to benefit the school, church, community. Perhaps homeless children in the public-school system. The numbers are surprisingly high. Or they may wish to participate in the NCCW's national project. This is a good opportunity for them to decide how to live out their values. You do not have to work all the commissions. Find what works for your group.

Speakers: You may consider, if possible, having a speaker come each month to talk to the girls. A short presentation, (i.e., if you are considering homeless children, someone from the agency to tell them about the situation; if you are supporting a child in school have the principal tell the girls how important it is to this child; a survivor of human trafficking, or a woman judge to tell about her career, etc.)

The mentor that is assigned to you can help you, along with the staff at the National Council of Catholic Women.

Spiritual Advisor: Your Advisor can be a priest, nun or Catholic layperson who does spiritual counseling. If they cannot come to your meetings, be sure to send them the minutes and give them an update each month.

Spiritual Advisor Job Description

The Spiritual Advisor is a priest, permanent deacon, religious or Catholic lay person who undertakes the role and responsibility for the spiritual growth, development and life of the Council.

The Spiritual Advisor attends the meetings, participates in the discussions and provides guidance to the facilitator and membership on spiritual matters.

If you are in a Catholic School, you can select the person that you feel is best suited to work with you and the girls. This is an option if it fits your needs and situation. Everyone's environment will be different. It is not mandatory that you have a Spiritual Advisor but it is recommended.

Qualities to consider when seeking your Spiritual Advisor:

- A dedication to the call and pursuit of Catholic holiness and spiritual life.
- An ability to listen well.
- A commitment to the value of young women's ministry in the fulfillment of the mission of the Catholic Church.
- An ability to recognize and enable the gifts and talents of young women.

Section 3:

Sample Agenda for Facilitator

1. **Welcome** (greet the girls/guests)
2. **Opening Prayer:** NCCW has a book of prayers you can use or use your own. As the group comes together and has officers, then it would be the responsibility of the girls to say the opening and closing prayer. This is a great way to get them used to praying publicly and from the heart. Always ask the girls if they have any special requests for prayers for someone and always pray for each other. You can have them pick a name each meeting and pray for that person every day. Remind them things are confidential in this meeting. If someone shares a prayer request it belongs in this meeting. They have to feel safe and secure in expressing things about themselves.
3. **Ice Breaker:** Do something fun for the girls. You can get ideas from the ice-breaker section in this manual.
4. **Reports:**
 - a) **President and Vice President:** The president and vice president will report if they have anything to share that happened in their position
 - b) **Treasurer:** Reports if you have any funds from events or dues. Be sure to set up with the school how this money gets handled.
 - c) **Commission Chair Reports**
5. **Unfinished Business**
6. **New Business**
7. **Closing Prayer**

Section 4:

Mentoring Guidelines

We included this section on mentoring just to point out how important your position is. The young girls will look up to you and appreciate what you do for their group.

National Council of Catholic Women:

The empowerment of women does not mean control, rather we support and encourage others to realize fully their God given talents and potential. Individually, women feel empowered by the successes in their work and families. Collectively, women feel empowered when united under a common purpose or goal. Mentoring often goes further and deeper than friendships. Goals and accountability are not always the norm in a friendship, but are so in mentoring.

Mentoring:

(Excerpts from the NCCW Guidance and Resource Manual)

Mentoring is used in schools, churches, corporations and organizations. There is no single mentoring program that fits everyone. Some are formal official programs within an organization, while others are more casual, informal and relaxed. It is the casual, informal and relaxed model that seems to work best in Christian women's organizations.

Women seek a mentoring relationship in their lives:

- To strengthen the bonds of friendship
- To serve as a role model
- For encouragement and help to keep going
- For insight beyond their knowledge or comfort zone

Mentoring:

- Allows individuals to recognize their potential contributions to Council
- Engages participants more fully in Council programs and activities
- Enhances Council with new talents, gifts and ideas

Definitions:

Mentor:

A trusted and experienced person who can advise you on personal and business matters. A mentor can serve as teacher, sponsor, guide, exemplar and counselor. Council mentors do not advise on business matters but provide solidarity and advice on Council to women who share our Catholic faith.

Mentee: A person who is advised and counseled by a more experienced person over a period of time.

Mentorship:

Is a relationship in which a more experienced or knowledgeable person helps or advises a less experienced person. It is a learning and development partnership between someone with experience and knowledge and someone who wants to learn.

What to expect from the Mentor and Mentee:

Mentor to Mentee

1. Provide information concerning the structure of Council, responsibilities of various offices, commissions and committees and the general working of Council
2. Share your own experiences of mistakes, struggles, failures and success
3. Give friendly, unbiased support and encouragement
4. Be a sounding board for her ideas
5. Listen and provide constructive advice or feedback
6. Correct any misunderstandings when they happen
7. Maintain and respect privacy, honesty and integrity

Mentee to Mentor

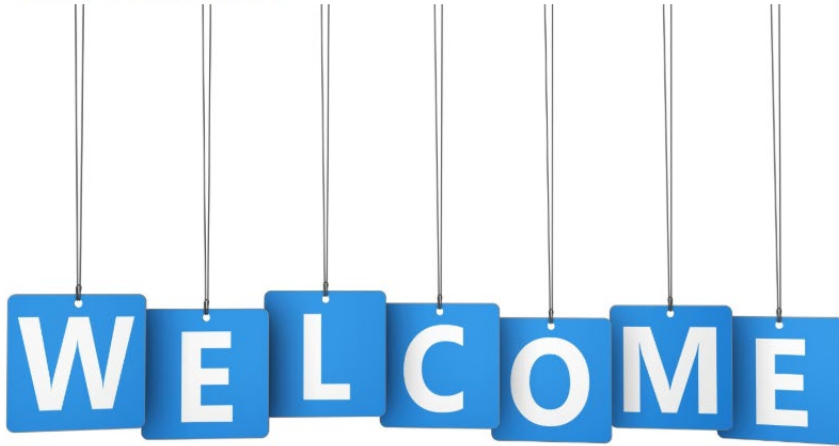
1. Communicate clearly with her as to your needs or questions
2. Initiate questions and be curious about the structure and running of Council
3. Share your feelings and insights about Council
4. Accept the support offered
5. Be open to advice
6. Correct any misunderstandings when they happen
7. Maintain and respect privacy, honesty and integrity

Section 5:

NCCW Resources and Programs

Access exclusive member resources by logging in to the member site! You can set up your account by joining as a member online at www.nccw.org, or the NCCW office can set it up for you through phone or email. There, you can access resources such as our prayer services, mini retreats, and more.

Your membership is currently active. [Details](#)



What would you like to do?

- [My Membership](#)
- [My Donation](#)
- [My Orders](#)
- [Gift Store](#)
- [Update My Profile](#)
- [Current Events](#)
- [Setup My Login](#)
- [My Registered Event](#)
- [Manage My Addresses](#)
- [Member Only Resources](#)
- [Board of Directors Only](#)
- [Login Home](#)
- [Log out](#)

Section 6:

Ice Breakers

It is always fun to do a group activity that helps the girls get to know each other a little better. Listed are some things you may want to try with your group.

The NAME GAME With a Twist (or a Shake or a Snap!)

With the group standing in a circle, have the participants each choose an action for every syllable of their name. Example: Mary has 2 syllables, so she does a hip shake with “Ma” and snaps her fingers for “ry”. Once Mary has done her action while saying her name, the whole group repeats. After the 2nd person does her name, the whole group repeats, then does Mary’s again. And so on ‘til everyone has done it.

NOTE: All Mary’s will use the same motions, etc.

It happened HOW?

A group tries to create a unified story from a set of sequential pictures. The pictures are randomly ordered and handed out. Each person has a picture but cannot show it to others. The pictures may be photos or from magazines. Success requires patience, creativity and communication.

- OPTIONAL---Pictures may relate to a specific event in your school or a program of one of the commissions.



BALLOON BOP!

Only one balloon is needed, and the group stands in a circle.

One person is called to keep the balloon in the air using only her right hand. The balloon is not caught but kept in the air and controlled. Control is determined by 3 consecutive taps.

When the first person has gained control, she calls the next person and what body part she may use---left elbow, head, right foot, index finger, and so on.

If the balloon is dropped, another name is called to use the same body part. (If Mary can’t keep it up with her left elbow, Joyce is called in, but must also use her left elbow.) Success requires coordination, communication and cheering support!

THIS IS A WHAT?

This is a fun circle activity and can easily be done sitting down. The LEADER has a basket of common objects. Taking one out she turns to the person on her left and says "this is a spoon."

To which the person replies "A What?" And the Leader repeats,



"A Spoon."

The 2nd person then takes the spoon and says



"OH, a Spoon!"

The 2nd person then passes the spoon with the same dialogue to the 3rd person, seated on HER left.....at which point the LEADER takes out another object and begins with that one.....

Lots of laughs and fun as the objects go around and the repetitions get louder and louder and the responses confusing! Try using some religious items for more fun.

The Great Balancing Act

Each participant needs a medium sized balloon. Balloons should be the same shape and size.

The object is to balance a balloon on the end of your finger. Have a competition to see who can do it for the longest. The balloon must not be held, only balanced, and it must not be tapped. The finger must always be in direct contact with the balloon. Good for focus, concentration and physical movement; sure to promote laughter.

CIRCLE FUN

Split the group into two equal circles. Have them form two concentric circles, with partners facing each other.

The facilitator explains the rules to the group:

When you hear me say "speak," partners speak to each other either about a predetermined topic. (The topic may remain the same or change during the game. Choose something simple "your middle name," "where you were born" or "your favorite dessert" and move on quickly. If some are newcomers, this is a great way to introduce the members).

When you hear me say "stop," everyone must immediately stop talking - even if you are in the middle of a sentence (This may be the greatest challenge!).

When I say "switch": the entire outer circle moves will move one space to the right. No one may begin talking again until you hear me say SPEAK!

The “trick” to a good ice breaker, or a team building game, or a just plain “get to know you” activity is not really the activity. The “trick” is to have FUN WITH IT. If the leader is having fun, the group will catch the spirit and the game will become secondary.

Always choose games/activities that have simple RULES

and promote LAUGHTER!

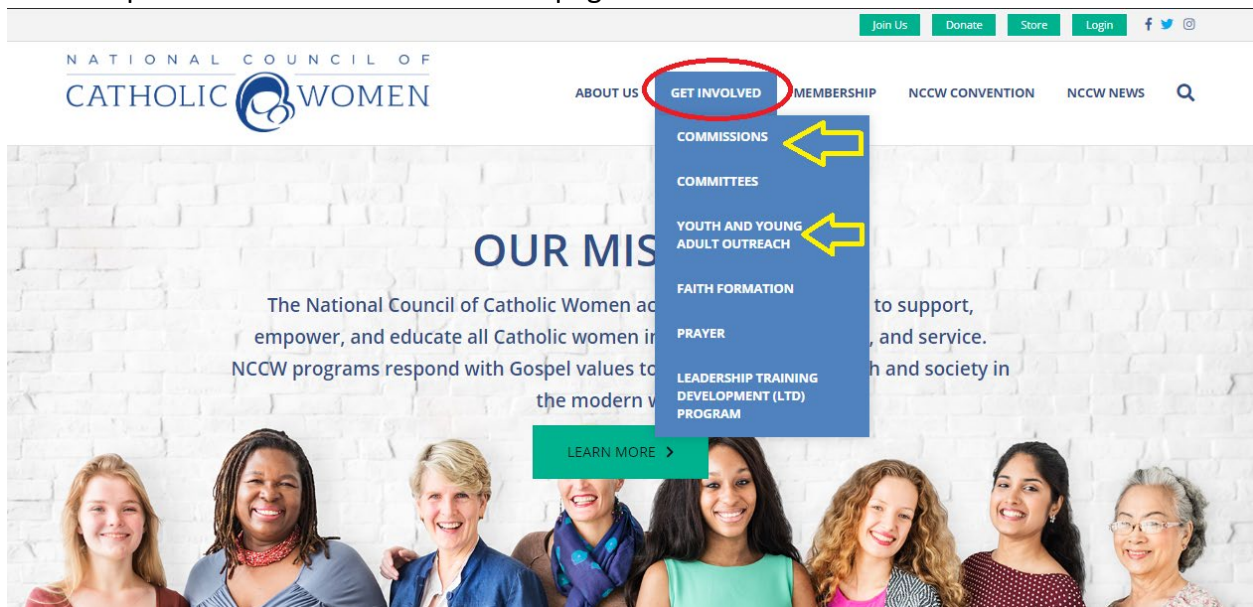
Prepared by JANE CARTER

jcarter@att.net

Section 7:

PROJECTS

A great place to get started with some project ideas are through the Commissions and Youth and Young Adult Outreach Pages on the NCCW website. Simply mouse over the “Get Involved” tab on the top ribbon of the site to find those pages:



Some great projects and resources that we have available on these pages include:

- **Creating a Sleeping Mat for the Homeless**
- **Spiritual Adoption of the Unborn**
- **Human Trafficking Youth Mentoring Guide**
- **Youth and Young Adult Start Up Booklet**

Council of Young Catholic
 Women

The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its members to support, empower, and educate all Catholic Women in spirituality, leadership, and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world. Founded by the United States Bishops in 1920.



◆ **Affiliate Group Membership** ensures that your group will receive our quarterly magazine, *Catholic Woman*, that reports on the issues and activities that are being addressed by your National Council of Catholic Women in today's world — locally, nationally and globally. You will also receive a monthly newsletter and communiques via email to keep you and your group informed.

Group Requirements:

- Ten or more high school age students
- A permanent faculty or staff advisor
- Annual Fee: \$50.00

High School

- ◆ **All Memberships are Represented:** The NCCW Board of Directors, Staff, and other volunteers work closely with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the United Nations and World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO); representing the interests of Catholic women in service to the Church. Your membership ensures the united voices of Catholic women will be heard.
- ◆ **Leadership, Service, Spirituality:** NCCW members incorporate gospel values in their activities with a commitment to the dignity of all human life, to strengthen families, build better communities, and address societal problems at home and abroad. NCCW provides leadership, education, and advocacy on many contemporary issues, including social and economic justice, domestic violence, homelessness and human trafficking. NCCW offers their members resources for personal spiritual growth and development.

Member Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

High School / Parish: _____

High School/ Parish Address: _____

Advisor Name (Affiliate Registration Only): _____

Advisor Email: _____

Advisor Phone Number: _____

Payment Information:

_____ **Affiliate Group \$50.00**

_____ Check made payable to NCCW

_____ Credit Card: MasterCard Visa Discover Am Ex

Name on card: _____

Account #: _____

Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____

Signature

