

## Lesson 4: Getting Started

### Goals/Purpose

This section guides the adult leader through the behind-the-scenes process of getting a group started. The lesson is somewhat different than other lessons in that it includes both activities that rely only on adults, as well as recruitment done in partnership with youth.

### Objectives

- Plan and conduct effective recruitment strategies
- Develop youth-friendly recruitment materials
- Plan a way to welcome new members

### Total Time

6-7 hours over 3-4 meetings plus recruitment activities outside meetings

### Agenda/Activities

- Icebreaker/Introduction
- Recruitment Strategy: A Lunch-Time Display
- Planning Recruitment with Youth
- Recruitment Strategy: Outreach Presentations
- Planning to Welcome New Members
- Welcoming New Members

### Facilitator Preparation

- Provide sample recruitment materials (poster, flyer and display board)
- Create a poster with a list of information to be included on Write out a list of roles that youth may assume at welcome meeting
- Come with possible ideas for the welcome meeting
- Write out a list of roles that youth may assume at welcome meeting
- If you will be recruiting at a school, you will need 1-2 weeks to secure approval
- Create contact list of new members (names, address & phone numbers)

### Materials Needed

- 5-6 clipboards
- Pens/pencils
- Art supplies
- Interest cards
- Display Board
- Newsprint
- Tape
- Sample icebreakers
- Awesome Activities (1 copy per youth, see tools)



- Recruitment Flyers and posters (samples plus your own)
- Presentation Outline (if you are going to do presentations)

## **Tools**

- Sample school letter with teacher referral form
- Sample outline for recruitment presentation(s)
- Sample Memorandum of Understanding with school/probation
- Sample Interest cards
- Sample script to follow up with potential new members



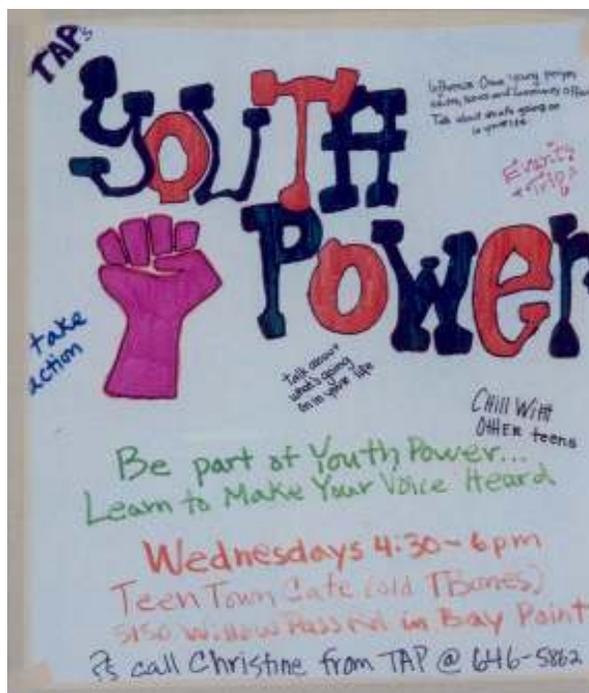
## **The Basics**

Since adults initiate most youth-serving programs, this section is primarily directed to the adult leader for planning purposes. Getting a youth organizing program up and running involves working simultaneously on different levels. What those levels are depends on whether you are launching a new program or continuing work that has already been started. To ensure the program's success, relationships need to be built with key community constituents such as the school or other youth serving agencies. Whether or not you are starting out from scratch, logistics like identifying a meeting site and coordinating transportation need to be planned. Finally, a consistent meeting space that is accessible to public transportation can promote youth participation.

Recruiting youth is a key component for any successful program. A core group of 8-10 youth is a good number to get your group established. In direct action community organizing, recruitment should appeal to a person's self-interest -- or their concern for **their own** priorities, health and safety, and those of people close to them. However, often the area of focus has already been decided, at least broadly. For example, funding is generally made available to address a specific problem like preventing tobacco sales to youth. In this case, you must tailor recruitment efforts to youth specifically interested in your main focus of work. Having a defined problem can be beneficial because youth may like to know upfront what they will be working on.

Less often, the group's work is to be completely youth-driven and the issue will be undefined. This can be both exciting and challenging when recruiting because youth often want to know concretely what they will be doing. Successful recruitment strategies still involve appealing to self-interest, so, it's a good idea to do some "detective" work of your own like talking to individual youth or small groups to determine if there are any common (self) interests you can appeal to in wider recruitment efforts.

Finally, recruitment is also influenced by how long the group has been operating. When starting a new program, the adult is primarily responsible for conducting recruitment, which will be different than recruiting in partnership with youth. Ideas for how to recruit using both models are included in this section. In either case, youth should be consulted about the recruitment materials --both how they look and what they should say.



#### Tips for Successful Recruitment:

- Remember that youth are looking to belong and develop friendships just as much as to participate in meaningful activities.
- Recruit on multiple levels (schools, parent groups, churches, service providers, community/ neighborhood groups, bus stops, the mall and other places young people hang out).
- Recruit a diverse group of youth from various backgrounds with different leadership abilities. Don't let identified student leaders dominate your group.
- Youth will be attracted to others with whom they can identify, so make sure the group doing outreach is a mix of genders, ages and races.
- Appeal to the youth's self-interest. Remind them that their participation helps ensure that their interests are met. It also looks good on a job or college application. (If a stipend is available, let youth know.)
- When possible, involve youth. (This involves working with the youth to get ready for outreach).
- A safe, accessible, youth-friendly meeting space plays an important role in encouraging youth to check out your group.

## **1. Recruitment Strategy: A Lunch-Time Display (LTD) 30-45 minutes**

Materials: display board, 5-6 clipboards, interest cards, pens/pencils, recruitment flyers, recruitment posters, music, balloons (optional).

Setting up a table during lunch on a high school campus is an excellent way to reach a lot of students who may be interested in joining your group. This works best when you have a group of 4-5 people so one or two of you can stay at the table and the others can “work the crowd.” However, 1-2 people can also do this activity.

A display board with graphics or pictures will attract people to the table. Music and balloons are also a hit. At your table you will want to have interest cards so people can sign up to join the group, and a flyer for people to take home with your group’s contact information. (There are samples in the tools section of this lesson.)

Remember schools usually require advanced permission to use the site.

Beforehand, put up posters about your group. After the event, these can serve as a reminder about your group.

## **2. Recruitment Strategy: Outreach Presentations 1-2 hours**

Materials: poster with key information about the group, tape, interest cards, recruitment flyers.

Brief presentations to classes and community groups are another good tool for inviting youth to join the group. Building relationships with other youth service providers who are respected by youth can help provide you entrée into a group who doesn’t know you.

Make sure to include important information about your group:

- Name of the Group
- When and Where the group meets
- Contact Person and Phone #
- What youth will do
- What youth will get out of participating (Appeal to a variety of self-interests!)

Interactive presentations will help build the energy of the group and let people know from the start that they are valued and an essential part of making the group a success. A sample presentation can be found in the tools section of this lesson.

### 3. Planning Recruitment with Youth

60-90 minutes

Materials: newsprint, markers, sample recruitment flyers and posters, blank poster boards, poster with key information about your group.

If your previous outreach efforts were successful in recruiting a small group of youth to participate in your program or you need to recruit new members to an on-going group, this is a great opportunity to plan recruitment in partnership with youth.

- a. Explain that we need to get other youth to join our fight and to build our group's power.
- b. Brainstorm a list of reasons why youth might want to join the group. You might start off asking the youth ***what they like about the group*** - -and then ask if they think others would join for the same reasons. Make sure your list includes phrases that appeal to a variety of self-interests for a young person (e.g. have fun, meet new people, food, make a difference, trips, new skills, get your voice heard...).
- c. Then, ask for ***suggestions of the best ways to reach other youth***. You could go around neighborhoods in their community, set up a table at lunch on campus, flyer school bus stops, make classroom presentations, visit other clubs or youth groups...
- d. Decide which activities you and other group members have the time and people power to do well. We suggest combining a variety of methods including general recruitment at schools as well as targeted recruitment in classrooms or neighborhoods.
- e. Make posters and flyers. As with outreach presentations, it is helpful for the youth to have a list of the essential information to include on the recruitment materials:
  - ❖ Name of Group
  - ❖ Time and place the group meets
  - ❖ Contact Person and Phone #
  - ❖ What you do
  - ❖ What youth will get out of participating (Appeal to a variety of self-interests!)

- f. Plan a time when you can go around campus or the community *together* to hang your recruitment posters. Take pictures of the posters and your group members doing the outreach. If you want to hang the posters on school property, you will probably have to get the materials approved by the principal or the school district – make sure to leave 1-2 weeks for the approval process.
- g. Give youth a chance to practice what they would say to invite other young people to join the group. Some youth may be naturals at talking to peers they don't know, but many are uncomfortable doing so at first. Talk about what could be some positive and negative responses they might get from others, and how they could handle difficult situations.

#### **4. Planning to Welcome New Members**

**60 minutes**

Materials: newsprint, markers, sample icebreakers, poster on how to lead an activity

Now that you have a list of youth who have expressed interest in joining your group, the next step is planning a way to welcome new members. It's always better to invite new members to an event, but this may not be possible. Instead, you could host a special orientation for new members.

- a. Together with the youth who helped with recruitment, decide what your goals are. For example, youth will:
  - Begin to get to know each other – they will have fun, feel welcome and valued.
  - Find out about the group – what's been done so far & what you will be working on.

Then decide:

- What kinds of activities you want to do at the meeting (icebreaker, introductions, get-to-know-each-other activity, background or history of the group, and team-building). See the *Icebreakers, Energizers and Team-building Activities* section for sample activities that have worked well for other groups.
- What atmosphere you want to create (music, food, decorations, etc.).
- Who wants to lead which activities.
- Who can volunteer to help call new members to invite them to the meeting.

Record the agenda you made together on newsprint so everyone can see it. Include who will lead which activities and how much time you plan to spend on each.

b. Break into small groups by agenda item to plan specific activities. It is helpful to have resources like sample icebreakers, and guidelines on how to lead an activity (See *Icebreakers, Energizers and Team-building Activities*). Choose less threatening or lower risk activities for groups that don't have a history of working together. Make sure each group makes a list of needed supplies.

c. Follow up with the volunteers who are helping to call new members to tell them about the meeting. Spend a few minutes together developing a script for people to use so they feel prepared to make their calls. (See Tools for a sample script.) Give each person a list of names and phone numbers to track their responses.

## **Welcoming New Members!**

**90 minutes**

Materials: sign in sheet, agenda, snacks, decorations, music, name tags, pens, ice breaker & team building supplies (determined by the planning group)

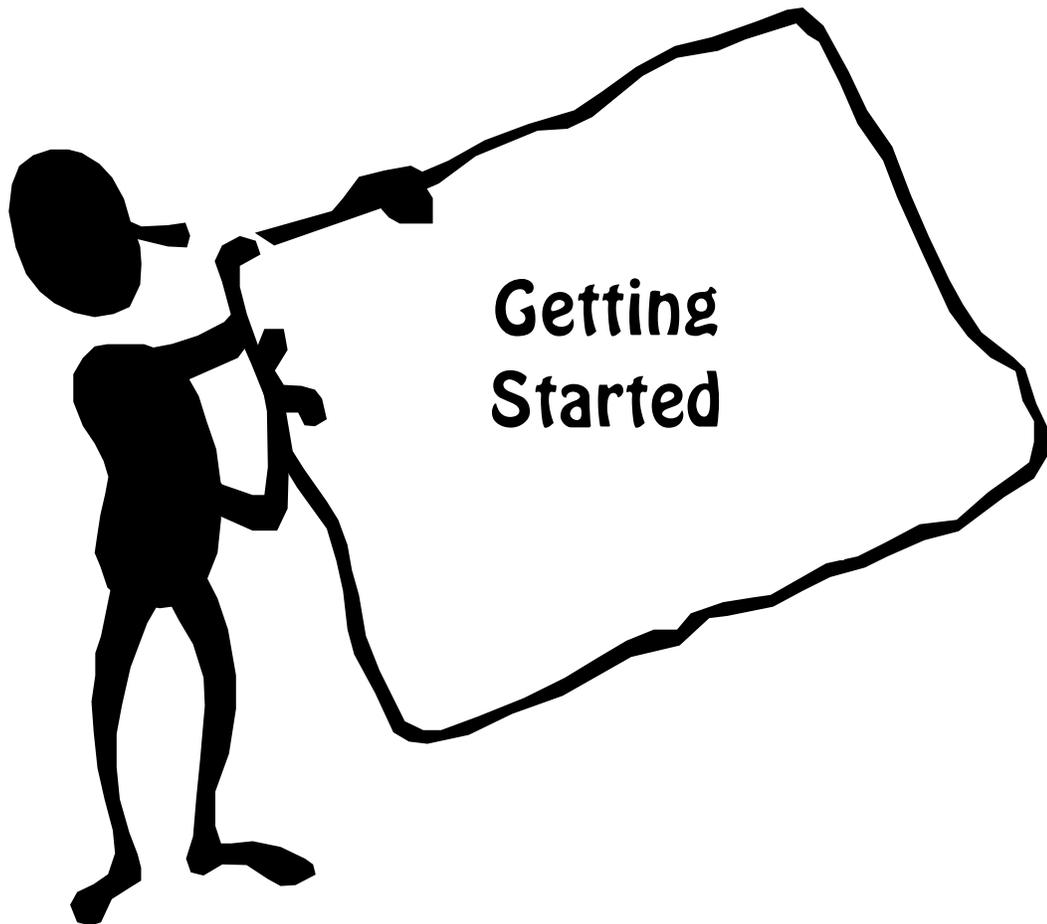
Before the meeting, it is helpful to call new members and send them a reminder flyer.

You've done all the hard work – your planning is sure to pay off! Arrive at the meeting space early so you have plenty of time to set up and be ready to greet people (a few people are likely to show up early.)

Have fun and enjoy getting to know your new group members! Together, you will make some important changes – and hopefully make some new friends.



## **Tools – Lesson 4**



**SAMPLE**  
**School Follow-Up Letter**  
**(Print on letterhead)**

Date

Teacher  
High School  
Street address  
City, State zip code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me about **(insert subject of the meeting)**. I am happy to be working with \_\_\_\_\_ **(insert name of school)**.

As I mentioned during my presentation, I would like to give a brief introduction to an exciting new program --**(insert program name)**-- in your classes, inviting students to become part of the group. The program aims to foster youth leaders to stand up for issues that affect them and create real changes in their lives and community.

Participants will learn a variety of skills such as goal setting, problem solving, communication, conflict resolution, public speaking, and building relationships that will help them make a positive impact on the community.

The presentation will consist of a **10-minute introduction** to the program and allow students the opportunity to sign up to participate.

We will be visiting your classroom on: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would prefer that we do not come to your class, or if the scheduled time does not work for you, please leave me a voicemail at **(insert phone #)** by **(insert date)**.

I am also including a referral form for you to use if you know students who could benefit from participating.

Thank you for your support. I look forward to working with you to meet the needs of students at your high school.

Sincerely,  
Name  
Adult Coordinator

# SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Agency Name  
Program Name

This Memorandum of Understanding is between \_\_\_\_\_ (insert **Coordinating Agency**) and \_\_\_\_\_ (insert **School or Probation Department**).

## **Purpose:**

The youth initiative aims to foster youth leaders to organize and use their collective power to create real changes in their community. Youth learn community organizing skills and develop into strong leaders through youth-led community action projects. The purpose is to provide young people from different backgrounds with a means to unite and empower themselves, stand up for issues that affect their lives, and develop solutions that incorporate their vision of a positive community.

## **Activities**

- Weekly Meetings (after school in \_\_\_\_\_)
- Community Action Planning and Events (decided by youth)
- Skill-Building (community organizing, youth leadership, critical thinking, decision making, goal setting, problem solving, communication, conflict resolution, public speaking, building relationships, media advocacy)
- Other activities to augment the teambuilding and the learning process (e.g. trips, retreat, activities with other youth groups)

## **Agreements:**

The coordinating agency commits to:

- Providing on-going support and facilitation of youth group, including weekly meetings, training on specified topics listed above, and other youth development opportunities
- Fostering on-going consistent relationship with youth participants
- Referral to school and/or community resources as needed
- Documenting youth participation
- Provide a stipend for participation

~Over~

**SAMPLE  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

Youth commit to:

- Participation in 2-hour weekly meeting or activity
- 2-10 hours outside meetings per month as needed

School Administration/Probation Department commits to:

- Supporting student participation through providing school credit or community service hours with documented participation.
- Providing meeting space for the group.

**Signatures:**

**Agency Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**School Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Probation Representative:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Contact:**

Adult Coordinator Name

Agency Name

Street address

City, State zip code

Tel: ( )

Fax: ( )

Email:

**SAMPLE**  
**School Letter for Recruitment Presentations**  
**(Print on letterhead)**

Date

High School Faculty and Staff  
Street address  
City, State zip code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am glad I had the chance to meet you at the last staff meeting. I am happy to be working with \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of school) this year.

As I mentioned during my presentation, I would like to give a brief introduction to an exciting new program --(insert program name) -- in your classes, inviting students to become part of the group. The program aims to foster youth leaders to stand up for issues that affect them and create real changes in their lives and community.

Participants will learn a variety of skills such as goal setting, problem solving, communication, conflict resolution, public speaking, and building relationships that will help them make a positive impact on the community.

The presentation will consist of a **10-minute introduction** to the program and allow students the opportunity to sign up to participate.

We will be visiting your classroom on:

\_\_\_\_\_

If you would prefer that we do not come to your class, or if the scheduled time does not work for you, please leave me a voicemail at **(insert phone #)** by **(insert date)**.

I am also including a referral form for you to use if you know students who could benefit from participating.

Thank you for your support. I look forward to working with you to meet the needs of students at your high school.

Sincerely,  
Name  
Adult Coordinator

## Youth Development Program: Referral Form

**Help spread the word... We are recruiting new members for our after-school, youth development programs!**

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### Youth Power

#### What is Youth Power about?

- Youth Power aims to foster youth leaders to stand up for issues that affect them and create real changes in their lives and community.
- Students pick projects they want to work on and implement them with support from a trained adult facilitator.

#### What's involved?

- Weekly Meetings (after school in \_\_\_\_\_)
- Community action planning and events (decided by youth)
- **Skill-building (goal setting, problem-solving, communication, conflict resolution, public speaking, building relationships)**
- **Team-building activities (trips, retreat, activities with other youth groups)**

Contact: **Adult Coordinator @ ###-####**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Person referring student: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to student: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT FIRST & LAST NAME	GRADE IN SCHOOL	BEST WAY TO CONTACT STUDENT (& TELEPHONE # IF POSSIBLE)

# **SAMPLE**

## **Classroom Recruitment Presentations**

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Materials:** poster with meeting information, newsprint, tape, interest cards, flyers

**Before the presentation: Put up the poster explaining key points about your group (meeting time, place, location, what you do, what the benefits are to being part of the group...)**

### **Presentation Outline:**

Hi my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I work for \_\_\_\_\_. Some of you might know of our organization/program from \_\_\_\_\_. Today I am here to invite you to join a new program... it's called \_\_\_\_\_. So you can understand a little about what the group is about, we are going to do a short activity.

### **Youth Stand Up**

**I am going to read different statements and if the statement applies to you, I ask that you stand up. The exercise is done in silence. And you decide for yourself what the statement means. I will repeat if you did not hear it. You have the right to pass.**

Please stand up silently if...

- You have ever felt like adults just don't understand but get to make all of the decisions
- Your personal privacy has ever been invaded by an adult
- You were ever ignored, served last, or watched suspiciously in a store because you were a young person
- People are always trying to get you to keep your mouth shut but you won't because you know what you have to say is important
- You like to meet new and interesting people
- You ever said no to, interrupted, or resisted being hurt by an adult or someone your age
- There are things at school or in your community that you think need changing
- An adult or someone your age has ever stood up for you.

### **After, process as a large group:**

- Were there any statements that particularly stuck out to you?
- What do you think it says about how youth are treated by society?
- What was different about the last statement? (It was positive. Explain that as the adult leader of the group, you are the person who stands up for youth – you're their adult ally.)
- If you stood up for any of these statements you have what it takes to be part of \_\_\_\_\_ (insert name of group). This is a group for young people to come together to stand up for yourselves and each other. Instead of adults

making decisions all the time, **you** will decide what we should do, and together as a group we will make a plan to get what we want. And mostly the group is for teens to have fun and kick-it with each other.

Then, ask the group:

- What is 'people power?' (Answer: The power people have to come together and make change.)
- Do you think youth have people power?

Tell them you know that youth have people power! How do you know this? Youth all over the Bay Area are organizing for their rights, against the incarceration of youth and making real changes in their communities! They have been successful at blocking prison expansion in Alameda County, getting a school or skate park in their community, making their schools better... all kinds of things! Youth are speaking out to let adults and corporations know they will not be targeted – they will only spend their money on products that support youth and not target them.

Youth are going to continue to be heard ... that's what \_\_\_\_\_(insert group name) is all about. It's about being a part of the youth movement here in \_\_\_\_\_(insert your school and city) and throughout the area. It's a chance to make your voice heard and stand up for issues that affect YOU!

**I am passing out cards for you to write down your name and contact information. There is also a space to check if you are interested in participating. Please pass card to front when you are finished.**

So you have an idea of the kind of activities we might do, things like:

- Having fun events for teens
- Using art, hip-hop or spoken word to get the word out about youth issues
- Standing up against targeting – for example, police targeting in your neighborhood or because of how you look
- Talking to school or community officials
- Taking field trips

Right now, the group meets \_\_\_\_\_(insert meeting time, day and location). (Let people know the meeting time may change if that is not a good day or place for most people. Also tell people things like transportation can be worked out.)

I am going to leave some flyers with my name and phone number. If you have questions or want more information you can call me at \_\_\_\_\_ (insert phone #). The next meeting is \_\_\_\_\_ -- I hope to see you there.

The last thing I want to let you know is that I will be on campus \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in time, date and location) if you want to talk to me more.



Have fun! Get Involved! **Be Heard!**  
Make real changes in your community and life!

- I am interested in joining Youth Power:
  - ❖ standing up against community or school problems
  - ❖ having fun and chilling with other teens
  - ❖ speaking out to let other teens and adults know about youth issues
  - ❖ events and trips
- Only contact me for special events (like teen dances, speak outs, spoken word events, rallies, community meetings or whenever a crowd of youth is needed).
- I am not interested at this time.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade/Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you able to meet after school on Wednesdays?  Yes  No

If not, what's the **BEST** day for you to meet (check one):

Monday Tuesday Thursday Friday

NOTES

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**SAMPLE – script to follow up  
with new members**



# Memo

To: Recruitment Volunteers  
From: Adult Coordinator (phone #)  
Re: New Member Phone Calls (phone list attached)

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**Hi!**

Thanks for volunteering to help out calling new students who want to join our group. I am sure that a call from another young person inviting them to the meeting will make people even more interested in being part of our group.

Please make the calls 1-2 days before the meeting either after school or at night (before 9:00) – you might need to call back if the person isn't home. Remember to leave me a voice message after you've finished all calls, and tell me the # of students coming and how many you didn't get to talk to.

Below is a guide to follow when making the calls. The pick up time and place for transportation is \_\_\_\_\_.

Please call me if you have any questions. Thanks again for your help! We need you to make it happen!

\*\*\*\*\*

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am part of the \_\_\_\_\_ group that meets in \_\_\_\_\_. You signed up to be part of the group. You may have filled out a card during a classroom presentation or you may have signed up at a lunchtime table.

~over~

I am calling to invite you to a meeting for new members. You also may have received a notice in the mail. The meeting is:

**Date**  
**Time**  
**Place**  
**Street Address and City**

Do you know where the meeting location is? ***(You may need to explain where the meeting location is. It may be helpful to tell them a few common landmarks.)***

Do you think you can come to the meeting? ***(If they can't make it, tell them they can still be part of the group, they should just come to the next meeting. Write down Y for YES or N for NO on the phone list depending on whether or not the person can attend.)***

Do you have a way to and home from the meeting? ***(Write down if they need a ride to and/or from the meeting. If they need a ride to the meeting, tell them the meeting place and time for transportation/car pooling.)***

Do you have any questions? Can I tell you anything about the group? ***(If you know the answer, try to answer their question. If you are not sure, tell them that the adult leader knows more about that and you can either ask him/her at the meeting or call him/her at (insert phone #). If they ask about the group, tell them something you liked about being part of the group – besides getting paid.)***

Thanks! I will see you on \_\_\_\_\_ (insert meeting time and place).