

BUILDING MEN

Leading with
Integrity and Skill

THE BATTALION CHAPTER



Since 1937

A Leader's Guide to the Discipleship
of **Young Men** for Jesus Christ

BUILDING

MEN **Leading with Integrity and Skill**

A Leader's Guide to Discipling Young Men and Boys for Jesus Christ

You then, my son, be strong in the
grace that is in Christ Jesus.

And the things you have heard me say in the
presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable
men who will also be qualified to teach others.

Endure hardship with us like
a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

No one serving as a soldier gets involved
in civilian affairs—he wants to please his
commanding officer.

2 Timothy 2:1-4

Battalion

Where Leadership is Learned

BATTALION
BOYS AGE 12-18

Battalion for teenage boys is ideal for a church to develop its future leaders. If today's teens are to become tomorrow's leaders, they must be given opportunities to observe examples of leadership and test their leadership abilities. Battalion offers this opportunity.

How? First, by mobilizing Christian men to participate with teenage boys in an active program geared for growth. The friendship of these men will shape the lives of individual boys and encourage many to follow Christ.

Second, by providing leadership opportunities for teenage boys. Adults share the leadership of the weekly meetings with young men whom they have carefully trained.

Third, by offering a well-rounded Achievement experience for boys that guides their growth into Christian manhood.

Like other Brigade programs, Battalion emphasizes evangelism and discipleship. The unique feature is that teenage boys begin to demonstrate leadership themselves. In this way, they help reach other boys with the Gospel and show them how to follow Christ. The fact that Christian men are discipling these teen leaders, helping them grow in their love for Christ and their ability to serve him, makes the Battalion a powerful program.

There's no right or wrong size for a Battalion. Many effective units exist with less than ten boys, and many successful programs have more than 30 members. No matter how many are involved, evangelism, discipleship and leadership development are the keys.

A BATTALION LEADER...



The Leadership Team

Teenage boys make up a Battalion unit in a local church. In some areas, this will include boys in sixth grade who have entered a middle school. All boys from ages 12 to 18 are potential members of Battalion.

Recruiting a team of adult and teen leaders is the most important place to begin.

Consider these guidelines as you select members of the leadership team.

Captain

The Captain is the key man in Battalion. He should be a mature Christian (at least 21 years of age) with a strong desire to reach boys for Christ. He should relate comfortably with all kinds of boys and know how to be a friend and counsellor. Explaining the Gospel and exploring the Word of God with boys should be a pleasure to this man. The

Captain should also be able to work effectively with other adults.

The Captain directs the Battalion. He is primarily responsible for all that it does. While he must oversee the planning of all Battalion activities, he must also keep the Brigade Coordinator and the church informed about group's progress and specific needs. His authority should be clear and unquestioned. The wise Captain, however, exercises his authority in such a manner that the Battalion seems to run by itself. He works through the Noncoms, with the assistance of the Lieutenants and Brigademans.

Adult Leaders/Senior Leaders

Besides the Captain, there are two key adult leadership roles in the Battalion: Lieutenants and Brigademans. A healthy Battalion needs perhaps one other adult leader for every eight to ten boys. These senior leaders should be mature Christian men.

The Lieutenant

The Lieutenants assist the Captain in many ways. Leading games, telling a story at Council Ring or organizing a special outing are the most obvious examples. They also cultivate personal friendships with boys and help them with their Achievement.

The Lieutenant...

1. Is an extension of the Captain, and works together in "coaching the team";
2. Takes a personal interest in each of "his" boys, seeking to build a true friendship with them;
3. Helps his boys with their Achievement, both during the meeting and at other times;
4. Visits each boy's home;
5. Talks with each boy's parents and/or guardians;
6. Attends each meeting, and notifies the Captain well in advance of being absent;
7. Maintains the Achievement Records for each of the boys in his care;
8. Attends Planning Meetings;
9. Joins in with Battalion outings and camps;
10. Participates in local, regional and national CSB events, including Leadership Training and BMC's;
11. Supports the efforts of Christian Service Brigade.

The Brigademan

All men of the church who have an active or potential interest in boys become a resource for the Battalion. Some men pray for individual boys, some help on special projects, some share financially and some participate in outings with the group.

These are Brigademans. Their backing provides not only a strong foundation for Battalion, but also a potential resource for future leadership.

The Brigademan...

1. Builds a special relationship with the boys;
2. Supports and promotes the efforts of the Battalion;
3. Attends the portion of the meeting that he is responsible for;
4. Notifies the Captain in advance of being absent;
5. Participates in local, regional and national CSB events, including Leadership Training and BMC's;
6. Supports the efforts of Christian Service Brigade.

A Word to ALL Adult Leaders... but especially Graduating Stockade, Tree Climber and Tadpole Leaders:

Leaders who have worked in club programs designed for younger boys have had the responsibility for virtually every aspect of the meeting. But now, as a Battalion leader, you must share that responsibility with the boys. You serve more as a consultant and a guide. **You must allow your teen leaders the opportunity to lead**, to make mistakes, and to learn how to fix them. This may mean that you will even have to limit your involvement in certain activities, and thus ensure that your Noncoms are stretched to doing their very best.

Teen Leaders

A nucleus of teen (or junior) leaders is the heart of a Battalion. The more leadership they assume in the weekly meeting and in all other Battalion activities, the more successful your ministry will be.

There are several vital roles that teen leaders play. One is to serve as Corporal or Squad leader. The Squad meeting is the occasion when the Corporal exercises his leadership with a group of four to six boys. Usually, he's assigned to lead a Squad for the entire year so that he can develop close friendships with those boys. One of the Squad members who shows potential for teen leadership can be assigned as assistant Squad leader (or Lance Corporal). The Corporal should assign specific duties to his Lance Corporal, such as keeping Squad records and helping individual boys with their Achievement.

The teen leader with the most maturity and experience fills the role of Sergeant. This includes keeping the meeting on schedule and directing the formation of Battalion. This young man functions much like a senior leader. In some ways, he is both one of the boys and one of the men. (Some Battalions operate without a Sergeant if they don't have a qualified teen leader for this position.) Incorporate these ranks of teenage leadership as your program develops and your leadership team grows.

What do you look for in boys who are to be your Battalion's teen leaders? The first step is getting to know them. Check with the youth pastor or sponsor for their suggestions.

In order of priority, take these steps:

1. Choose boys who know Jesus Christ as Saviour and who will work toward the spiritual objectives of Battalion. Attitude and direction of life are significant considerations.
2. Seek to recruit boys who are eager to assume responsibility and who are respected by others.
3. Find young men with a combination of natural leadership potential, acceptance from other boys and enthusiasm for Christian service.

Age is also a consideration when recruiting teen leaders. A 12-year-old, in most cases, is too young to command the respect of boys older than him. By the age of 14 or 15, most boys are ready for the challenge of leadership, although they should not be expected to lead a Squad of older boys.

When you have identified the boys you wish to approach, meet with them to discuss the matter. Explain the responsibilities and privileges of the leadership team. Mention the qualities which the adult leaders are seeking. Then, let them know that you want them on the team and are confident they can do a good job.

His appointment then depends on his commitment to do his best to fulfill the responsibilities, both for the Lord and for the Battalion. Through this recruiting process, he learns what's expected of him, he sees how important you think his job is and he makes a personal commitment to it.

Finish the interview with prayer. In some cases, you may want to invite him to think and pray about this decision for a few days.

The responsibilities as a teen leader are to plan and lead the Squad meeting, help conduct the game period, and to set an example to the rest of the boys by his cooperation, Achievement progress and spiritual interest. He may also take on other assignments when the Captain believes he is ready (for example, lead Council Ring).

In some Battalions, teen leaders may conduct their own Squad outings, although one of the adult leaders should accompany them. This requires careful planning. The Captain should encourage any teen leaders who are willing to spend extra time with the boys of their Squad.

Training Your Teen Leaders

The Battalion Achievement manual, *Leadership Trails*, is a valuable tool in training and discipling your teen leaders. Not only does it help senior leaders teach teens to be Lance Corporals, Corporals and Sergeants, it also guides teens into God's Word and experiences that will help them progress in their quest to be stronger leaders.

The manual is divided into three sections: First Star for Lance Corporals, Second Star for Corporals and Third Star for Sergeants. Each section is designed to be completed in about one year. As a teen goes through each section, he will work very closely with one of the senior leaders. As with other Brigade Achievements, the design is to build a strong Christ-centred relationship between a teen and Christian man.

Leaders can take advantage of retreats, conferences and camps designed for training teen leaders. Serving as a junior counsellor at a Brigade camp during the summer is a tremendous way [or a teen to strengthen his leadership and to grow in his walk with the Lord.

Battalion leaders find that a teen leader retreat more than repays the time, effort and expense involved. Going away to a cabin, lodge or campsite allows the leadership team to concentrate on their common ministry with boys. The value of these experiences has been proven in terms of spiritual development, growth in teamwork and increasing friendships.

A BATTALION LEADER...



The Weekly Meeting

The weekly meeting is where a boy regularly joins with his friends and where he finds adults who want to establish a caring friendship with him.

This meeting is a carefully planned, rapidly moving action program. More important, it provides opportunities for men and boys to do things together, and to discover each other as persons. That is the heart of a discipleship ministry.

6:45	Pre-Meeting Activities	15 minutes
7:00	Battalion Formation	5 minutes
7:05	Squad Meetings	20 minutes
7:25	Report Formation	5 minutes
7:30	Captain's Special	20 minutes
7:50	Battalion Games	20 minutes
8:10	Council Ring	20 minutes
8:30	Dismissal/Leaders' Huddle	10 minutes

An effective Captain will keep an eye on the clock and push the meeting along according to schedule. This helps to preserve the boys' interest and attention.

A handy formula to remember when planning these meetings is "**Always the Same; Never the Same.**" This means follow the schedule as it is outlined above, but make the parts of the meeting new and interesting each night. For example, inviting a man from the church to give a Council Ring talk or to present his vocation or hobby will add a fresh feature to the meeting. Boys appreciate routines of organized meetings, but they get restless with boredom.

Get acquainted with this description of the meeting and suggestions to make them exciting and worthwhile.

Note: These times are general. Some evenings will require longer Squad Meetings. Be flexible, but don't allow things to drag into boredom.

Boredom leads to chaos!

A BATTALION LEADER...



Pre-Meeting Activities (15 minutes)

- Action begins as soon as the first boy arrives.
- Informal, drop-in games and contests; tests of strength; personal or group challenges; or just talking with a Battalion buddy.
- The Sergeant is in charge.
- The Lieutenants help the boys with Achievement.
- The Captain does a final preparation for the meeting.

Tips

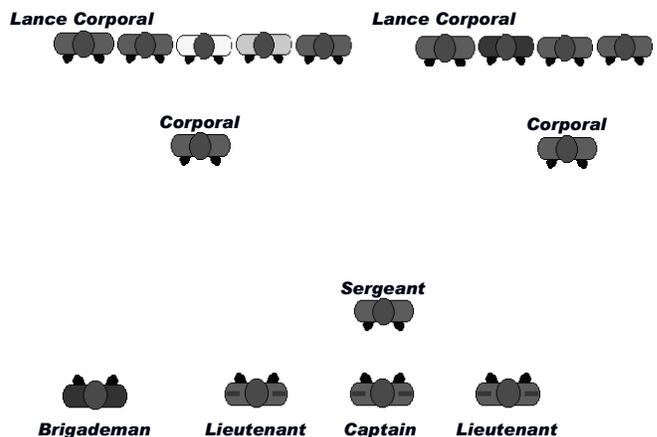
1. Check the "100 Games for Guys" resource book for a selection of games suitable for Pre-Meeting Activities.
2. Avoid the temptation to let boys shoot baskets while the men stand around and talk. Organized games create closer friendships and help everyone feel at home.
3. Give different teen leaders the opportunity to plan and lead the Pre-Meeting Activities. Use every part of the meeting to develop leadership!



Battalion Formation (5 minutes)

- By raising his arm, the Captain signals the Battalion to come to "Attention". He then asks the Sergeant to call the Battalion to order.
- The Sergeant directs the Battalion into its formation, with the Noncoms ensuring that all is correct.
- The Captain receives the Battalion from the Sergeant and opens the meeting with prayer, followed by any special instructions. He then asks the Sergeant to dismiss the Squads to their Squad Meetings.

The Typical Formation:



Battalion Formation (continued)

Tips

1. For your first meeting, place lines of masking tape on the floor to indicate where boys and men should stand.
2. Avoid lengthy discussions or detailed presentations during formation. Keep your comments brief. Build enthusiasm by giving some hints about the evening's events.
3. If your unit feels uncomfortable with this style of lineup, use a "huddle" for the opening prayer and announcements.

Squad Meetings (20 minutes)



- **The Noncoms are in charge – the Corporal or Lance-Corporal – for the individual Squad Meetings; the Sergeant is responsible for the entire group during this time.**
- **The Noncom opens in prayer.**
- **“Shares” are collected; Squad business is attended to.**
- **One of the Noncoms then leads in a devotional, focusing on a need from within the group.**
- **After the devotion, boys are encouraged to meet with the adult leaders to pass Achievements.**
- **Achievement, special activities and unusual events are reviewed. Announcements are made.**

This is "prime time" for the teen leaders in Battalion. Each will lead a brief meeting of his Squad. This could include a devotional, attendance, review of Achievement progress, and a special activity or discussion. Senior leaders need to be available to help but should not interfere as these teenage boys learn to be leaders.

When a Battalion is working on an Activity Patch or interest area from one of the *Battalion Leader's Guides*, the plan for the Squad meeting is provided. On these weeks, each teen leader studies the plan in advance, gathers any needed materials and then presents the Squad meeting to his Squad.

When a Battalion is not working on an interest area, the teen leader is also responsible for planning his Squad meeting. If the teen is just beginning to create his own Squad meetings, he may need considerable help from a senior leader. As he gains more experience, he will need less and less assistance.

When he plans his Squad meeting, the teen leader should select a few verses from the Bible to read. He may want to assign one of his Squad members to keep record of who's present and also collect money for a missionary project or Battalion outing (these are called shares). Most of the Squad

meeting should be devoted to an Achievement project to be done by the group. The Captain may suggest a project.

Each Squad meets in a designated room or location in the meeting area. While the Squads meet, the senior leaders prepare for the next part of the meeting, help boys with Achievement and remain available to assist the Corporals if needed.

If the Battalion isn't large enough to form two or more Squads, have the group function as one Squad led by one teen leader. If none of the boys in the group are mature enough to lead a Squad meeting, have one of the senior leaders handle the responsibility until one of the boys has been groomed.

Tips

1. Teen leaders should refer to Leadership Trails for guidelines on leading Squad meetings.
2. Squads may wish to choose names for themselves. This helps build team spirit.
3. One of the senior leaders will contact the teen leaders before the meeting to be sure they are ready. Follow up the meeting with encouragement and counsel, especially if the teen leader had a difficult time.
4. Senior leaders who are Achievement mentors can use the Squad meeting as a time for working on Achievement with their boys.

Report Formation (5 minutes)



- **The Sergeant brings the Battalion back into formation.**
- **After presenting it to the Captain, he gives a verbal report on Attendance, Shares, and Achievement, along with any helpful explanations.**
- **This is an important transition from Squad to group activities. Announcements are made here.**

Captain's Special (20 minutes)



- Also called "Battalion Action"

- **This segment allows for a wide variety of activities, including demonstrations, videos, Achievement contests, challenges, stunts, and skill development.**
- **The Battalion usual meets as a whole, but may be split into smaller groups (not necessarily as Squads) to focus on the particular needs of those groups.**
- **This is where Activity Patch "Action" takes place.**
- **The Captain takes responsibility for this portion of the meeting, but he doesn't have to lead it. He simply ensures that it happens and meets his high standard.**

Captain's Special/Battalion Action (continued)

Every Battalion meeting needs a special feature to capture the interest of boys and enable them to grow in some aspect of their lives. Battalion Action provides this.

During Battalion Action, one of the leaders guides the entire Battalion through a demonstration, discussion or hands-on project. When the Battalion is working through an Activity Patch or interest area from one of the *Battalion Leader's Guides*, the plan for the Battalion Action is provided as a guide for the leader. When the Battalion isn't working from these materials, he may present anything that will be helpful and interesting to the young men. The more action that can be included, the better! A hands-on project (e.g. making fire-starters) or a presentation (e.g. chemistry experiment) is always better than a lecture.

Every leader can teach boys a few things. Every leader can also learn a few things in order to teach them to boys. Often, however, leaders will want to look to men outside the group to provide knowledgeable instruction. For this reason, a leader may invite guests to Battalion Action periods.

There's tremendous flexibility with this portion of the meeting. You can take one week to prepare for an outing such as a campout, or you can pursue a topic for four weeks or longer. A Battalion can choose from the many interest areas provided in Brigade materials, or they can create their own topics.

Most units will find that the Activity Patches or interest areas from the *Battalion Leader's Guides* are very helpful. It's suggested, however, that between Activity Patches/interest areas, a group sets aside one or two weeks to emphasize each young man's progress in the *Adventure Trails* Achievement Manual. An extended Squad meeting or an activity led by one of the leaders will be needed as senior leaders have one-on-one Achievement interviews with as many Battalion members as possible. This is an excellent way to encourage Achievement and to disciple each member of the Battalion.



Battalion Games (20 minutes)

- While fun is a must, these games should focus on developing teamwork, sportsmanship, skill and alertness, both for the group and for the individual.
- Usually three games are played, some which may be led by the Noncoms. A fast game first, then a middle, then a slow game. These move from physical to mental action.
- See "100 Games for Guys" for ideas, available through CSB.
- These games should be designed to build to the climax of the Battalion meeting – the Council Ring. For example: British Bulldog could help introduce a story such as the Israelites entering the Promised Land;

Steal the Bacon would be appropriate before a talk on stealing or sexual impurity.

The action-packed game period gives boys a time of physical action that will develop skills, alertness, friendship and sportsmanship. These activities enable men and boys to relax and be themselves. In the process, they may reveal more of their character and needs. In the heated competition of games, for example, the mask of courtesy is stripped away, perhaps to reveal a selfish attitude, a hot temper or dishonesty. Both boys and leaders can observe areas of need in each other. Games also help break down personal barriers, enabling boys to develop confidence in their leaders.

Give teen leaders opportunities to plan and lead the game period. The other leaders should participate regularly but also use this time to talk with individual boys.

Games and sports require planning and leadership. Some games test alertness, others test skill or strength. A balanced approach is needed to meet the variety of sizes, ages and interests within your Battalion.

Starting games require the most physical activity and are played first. Middle games call for less activity but more concentration. Closing games finish the game period, often end in a circle, providing a smooth transition to the Council Ring.

Tips

1. Use CSB's resource "100 Games for Guys" for ideas for games and guidelines for conducting games. When necessary, modify the game so that it is suitable for space available to you.
2. Plan games in advance and have the equipment ready to use.
3. If the game is somewhat complicated, do a demonstration of it with all or some of the boys.



Council Ring (20 minutes)

- The climax – *the focal point* – of the meeting.
- It is an exciting presentation of the Gospel, or a challenging call to Christian growth and service.
- Led by the Captain, Lieutenants, guests and even Noncoms.
- All the leaders sit amongst the boys, participating with them, setting an example. They are not babysitting.
- The Council Ring ends with prayer which may lead into the Brigade Watchword.

Sharing the Gospel and the challenge to Christian growth and service is both a privilege and a responsibility for leaders. The senior leaders share the Council Rings

according to their ability and preparation. However, they could also involve teen leaders, giving them opportunities to witness.

The Bible is the foundation of every Council Ring. Its message is presented in the form of a story, talk, discussion or Bible exploration. The person who speaks should prepare his thoughts in advance and present it passionately. Guest speakers are appropriate, though they should appreciate the time limit of the Council Ring.

An invitation to follow Christ or review one's faith and obedience should be made from time to time. Leaders should follow up personally with boys who wish to make decisions.

When the Battalion is working through an Activity Patch or interest area from one of the *Battalion Leader's Guides*, the plan for the Council Ring is provided as a guide for the leader. Leaders are encouraged to modify the plan if needed to better meet the needs of their group.

You may conclude Council Ring by repeating together the Brigade Watchword.

The Brigade Watchword

Now we trust in God
To keep us Bright and Keen for Christ,
Because we love Him,
Because we want to serve Him,
Until we see Him face to face... Amen

Tips

1. Sit in a circle on chairs. Senior leaders should sit among the boys and especially beside those who are easily distracted.
2. Stories, talks and Bible studies for Battalion boys are found in the interest area plans from the Battalion Leader's Guides.

**This concludes the official meeting
and the boys are dismissed.**



Leaders' Huddle (10 minutes)

- With the rest of the Battalion heading home, the adult and teen leaders meet for a brief evaluation of the meeting and for prayer.
- Plans are also discussed but the focus should be on the needs of the boys and how they were met.
- *If supervision by one of the leaders is needed for stragglers, this is done on a rotating basis. You will want to maintain the unity of the leadership team during the Huddle.*

There is a lot of flexibility in the weekly meeting.

In fact, you should expect to change the times for all the elements according to the purpose of the meeting. Be aware that Activity Patches (Leader's Guide Activity Units) have longer Squad Meetings, Captain's Specials, and Council Rings – Games are often shortened and must sometimes be eliminated. Sometimes, and perhaps permanently, you can move the segments of the meeting around to fit the needs of your particular situation. Don't be afraid to experiment. This is where Battalion truly is...

Flexible.

A BATTALION LEADER...



Topics of Interest to Battalion:

Grow Your Battalion

Any program designed to produce leaders doesn't emerge overnight. It takes time and dedication, built upon a solid foundation.

Start with yourself. You're a Christian man with a personal concern for teenage boys. You sense that God wants you to be involved with a ministry to boys, and you know that through his Spirit, he'll give you the power to succeed.

Ask yourself, "Am I prepared to make the necessary commitments?" You will see some immediate results, but it may take several years for you to see the real fruit of your labour. Discipling boys takes time, but the investment pays off.

Look around and consider the teenage guys you know. You may have a son. He has friends and acquaintances. Involve teens in your church. Survey your neighbourhood as well. You may know some teen boys who live near you casually. All of these boys are potential members. Those who already know Jesus as Lord are potential leaders. They could benefit greatly if you were to launch a Battalion.

Identify several of these teenage boys whom you think are ready for leadership. Choose a few likely candidates and speak to them personally about your vision. Invite them to be teen leaders in Battalion.

What follows is a look at four different Battalions and suggestions for each. Remember, the number of members doesn't determine the success of a Battalion. A very effective ministry can be run in both a small and a large Battalion.

No Teen Leaders ... Yet!

If a Battalion has not yet developed any teen leaders, senior leaders fill the role of Corporal for each Squad. This will be true for new Battalions or those without older high school members. Not having teen leaders is fine, as long as it's only temporary.

Run your meetings just like you would if you had teen leaders. This will help make the transition smooth when the teen leaders are added.

Watch for those who demonstrate responsibility, maturity, leadership and spiritual growth. You may want to ask them to assist you with an occasional Squad meeting.

Small Battalions

Two men and a teen leader can form a very effective leadership team. Here are some suggestions for Battalions that have up to seven or eight boys:

1. As soon as you've identified even one teen leader, give

him a copy of *Leadership Trails* and begin working through it together. Appoint him Lance Corporal or Corporal and work with him very closely. He'll need a lot of support and encouragement as he begins to lead. Give the guy as much responsibility as you think he can handle. Don't worry that he will make mistakes; be patient. Keep your expectations high, and thank the Lord for every sign of growth.

2. The Squad meeting will include all the boys. The teen leader leads it as soon as he is ready. Always review his plans before the meeting and evaluate after.
3. Informally invite boys from the church and community to join the Battalion. If the number of members grows to around ten, it's time to divide into two Squads. If no other teen leader is ready, a senior leader should act as Corporal for the new Squad.
4. The small size of the group permits you to be flexible about meeting locations. The church building may be the best but your home may also be suitable. Consider space requirements for games and projects.

Battalions with Two Squads

More boys will require more leaders, both teen and senior. If there are 10-12 boys attending a Battalion, there should be at least two teen leaders and two senior leaders. Two Squads should be formed, each led by a teen leader. Designate a boy in each Squad as an assistant Squad leader. You need to be looking for new teen leaders at all times, anticipating growth.

Once you have one or more teen leaders, you should begin conducting Leadership Team Meetings. These will serve the purpose of planning and discipling. They will be the means by which you can influence and help these young men on their way to Christian maturity.

Larger Battalions

If you have more than 12 boys attending your Battalion meeting, more than two teen leaders and two or more senior leaders, you'll need to organize more carefully and share responsibilities. Here are some suggestions.

1. Leadership Team Meetings are important for all Battalions. Planning for large Battalions will take more time. You'll need these occasions to talk with your teen leaders since the weekly meetings will be very busy.
2. Your teen leaders will need to have clearly-defined roles in the weekly meetings. They will assume specific positions (Corporals, Lance Corporals and Sergeant). Squad meetings will be an important aspect of their leadership. You may want to encourage them to do some special activities with their Squads outside weekly meetings. They can begin to disciple boys in their Squads just as you are discipling them. They may also be ready to take on additional responsibilities, such as

leading games, Battalion Action or some of the Council Rings.

3. Weekly meetings should be well-planned if they are to fulfill their purpose. The Captain (and the Sergeant) watch the clock and keep the meetings on schedule. Your formations need to be crisp and prompt and perhaps used more frequently if you have important announcements or awards to present. Keeping records of attendance and Achievement progress (not to mention collecting fees and registering boys for special Battalion events) will be an important function, perhaps one that a teen leader can handle.

Leadership Team Meetings (Planning)

The primary way to disciple a teenage boy for Christian leadership is to spend time with him. A friendship must be established before an adult leader can focus on the young man's relationship to God.

A monthly meeting of the Battalion leadership team is an excellent way to combine informal recreation and conversation with Bible exploration, prayer and discussion about the ministry. There are five parts to a typical Leadership Team Meeting:

- **Relate.**
These activities and experiences build a sense of unity and an ability to minister to each other. Relate activities are often games designed to help people get to know each other better and work together more easily.
- **Review.**
Discuss the needs of the boys and men in your Battalion and analyze how to meet them. Observe the growth and progress of individual teens in Battalion.
- **Research.**
This allows for practical input from leadership sources and the Word of God. One of the teen leaders or men presents a leadership issue for the group to consider. Then, do an in-depth Bible study relating God's Word to what's happening in the Battalion ministry.
- **Refuel.**
Your leadership team prays together for the needs of Battalion boys and leaders. As you share your own needs, the teen leaders will learn to share their own. Then you can guide them into broadening the focus of their concern to include other boys, whether or not they are in your Battalion.
- **Refine.**
Review plans made earlier. The Captain assigns

responsibilities for upcoming meetings, and those who are organizing certain activities can report on their progress. This is also an opportunity to brainstorm ideas for future events.

The *Battalion Leader's Guides* provide detailed Leadership Team Meetings for each Activity Patches or interest areas.

The benefits of Leadership Team Meetings are tremendous, but often the demands on both boys' and men's time make it difficult to schedule such a meeting. This dilemma can be overcome in several ways.

One practical alternative is cancelling one regular Battalion meeting per month (or every other month) and using it for a leadership team meeting. Another alternative, especially helpful if Battalion activity is tied to an all-church "family night" is having the Leadership Team Meeting after a regular Battalion meeting.

Though this may run late, it is often preferable to another night out. Don't neglect this vital part of the Battalion program. The Leadership Team Meeting is where discipling teenage boys becomes a reality.

Battalion Resources

CSB strives to make you successful in your ministry with the entire Battalion and with each individual young man.

Battalion Leader's Guides

Battalion Leader's Guides are tools to assist you in running effective, interesting regular Battalion meetings. Each *Battalion Leader's Guide* contains five to six interest areas. The Activity Patches or interest areas cover a wide range of topics including: Rock Climbing, Astronomy, Fishing, Prayer & Spiritual Warfare, Track & Field, Skit Production, Trail Biking, Service Ventures, Backpacking, and many others.

Each Activity Patch or interest area is designed to be worked on over four regular Battalion meetings. (Some may need five or six weeks.) Plans for each part of each meeting are provided in the *Battalion Leader's Guide*. This means that suggested Squad Meetings, Battalion Action, Games and Council Rings are included, and they are all built around the interest area.

Some Activity Patches or interest areas contain handouts that may be copied for your members and several of the topics have a video tape supplement that will help you both in preparation and in presentation of the topic. A Leadership Team Meeting is provided at the beginning of each unit. It isn't surprising that most Battalions find *Battalion Leader's Guides* very helpful. (An embroidered patch is available for each interest area.)

Battalion Achievement

Battalion Achievement is a growth activity. It's designed to be challenging, yet fun and meaningful to boys. Most importantly, it's a tool designed to bring men and boys together.

There are several parts to the Battalion Achievement program. It's important that all senior leaders be familiar with each part so they can put them to use in their group.

Observer

This introductory rank links a boy with a Battalion leader and gives him a taste of what's ahead in Achievement. Boys may complete Observer rank either as a final step in Stockade or their first in Battalion.

The *Observer* booklet is a self-contained introduction to Battalion. It presents basic information including a presentation of the Gospel. Many groups give it to a boy at his first Battalion meeting. Parents can also get a glimpse of the program from the booklet.

Observer helps Battalion leaders and new boys get to know each other quickly.

When a boy completes the booklet, Battalion leaders should have a good idea of where he is spiritually.

Award an Observer Patch when the boy completes the booklet, indicating membership in Battalion. Then, it's time to begin *Adventure Trails*.

Adventure Trails (USA)

The American version of *Adventure Trails* is very much a discipleship tool to help an adult man interact with a young man to bring him to Christ, and then strengthen his faith in Christ. *Adventure Trails* contains three Ranks (Explorer, Trailblazer and Guide), with a total of six Adventures. Each Adventure has seven or eight steps or individual Achievements. When a young man completes a rank, a large embroidered emblem and a pin should be presented to recognize and encourage his progress.

Overview:

Explorer: Understanding Your Faith

- Adventure 1: You and Your Faith

Trailblazer: Growing in Your Faith

- Adventure 2: You and God's Word
- Adventure 3: You and Prayer

Guide: Sharing Your Faith

- Adventure 4: You Serving Others
- Adventure 5: You Building Others
- Adventure 6: You Telling Others

As a young man progresses through each Adventure, he works closely with a man he chooses to be his mentor. A young man is instructed by his Captain to choose a Christian man to whom he thinks he could relate. The mentor may be

the boy's father, a Battalion senior leader or another Christian man. He should be told that he'll be spending time with the mentor, on a repeated basis, to talk about spiritual matters. The Captain must approve the choice.

The mentor should take the initiative to do the Achievements along with the boy.

As he completes an Adventure, the boy may choose a new mentor for the next adventure.

Adventure Trails (Canada)

The **Explorer** rank invites a young man to explore his world, himself, God's Word, service and action. Encouraged by his leader or discipling mentor, he is searching for his place in the world, finding out how he fits in as a growing young man. He learns that he is an integral part of Battalion, the Church and society. These Achievements are designed for the 12 year old.



Action: The "Action" section includes Outdoor Adventure, Sports and Games and Personal Physical Action.



God's Word: The focus here is on reading God's Word, memorizing God's Word and putting that Word into action through Prayer.



Service: The young man is encouraged to help others through Service Projects, one in Explorer, two in Trailblazer and three in Guide.



Your World: This is the nuts and bolts section of Achievement; the Projects of Battalion. Age-graded challenges help the young man stretch his mind around problems, simple and complex.



Your Self: This section helps a young man focus on his relationship with others. He learns about whom he is and who he wants to become. By the time he's completed Guide, he will have considered many of the aspects of being a man.

The **Trailblazer** rank shows a young man that he can "blaze" a trail for others. He is still learning about his world, himself, God's Word, service and action, but now with a focus outside of himself. This rank is designed for 13 year olds.

The **Guide** rank encourages the young man to become a Guide to others. The learning themes are the same as in the earlier ranks, but they are geared to a maturing 14 year old. The Achievements are much more in depth. This rank would be the equivalent of "the wall" that marathon runners experience. This is where a discipling mentor must give a great deal of encouragement. The next three ranks will be

easier in preparation for the final “wall”, the Herald of Christ.

Leadership Trails

Leadership Trails is a discipleship tool to help Battalion senior leaders work with a young man to further develop his spiritual gifts and leadership abilities. As a young man progresses through this journey, he'll take on more and more responsibility in his own Battalion unit, and grow in his faith and ability to share that faith with others.

Leadership Trails contains three ranks (First Star, Second Star and Third Star) with 12 Action Steps in each rank. Each rank is designed to be completed in approximately one year. As in *Adventure Trails*, a large embroidered emblem and pin is earned when a young man completes a rank.

Overview:

First Star

- Training as a Lance Corporal

Second Star

- Training as a Corporal

Third Star

- Training as a Sergeant

Many of the Action Steps in *Leadership Trails* should be carried out at a regular Battalion meeting. Therefore, to monitor and guide a teen’s leadership development, one of the senior leaders should serve as his mentor as he works through each of the Star ranks.

When should a young man begin working on *Leadership Trails*? He should begin, as soon as he is appointed as a teen leader.

What if he hasn't completed *Adventure Trails* yet? Start him in *Leadership Trails* and later he can go back to *Adventure Trails* and finish up if needed. (All six ranks will need to be completed for a young man to be eligible to begin the Herald of Christ.)

Herald of Christ

Herald of Christ is the highest award in Christian Service Brigade. It differs from all other levels of Achievement. It represents a level of Christian maturity rather than just an earned rank. Therefore, a boy shouldn't begin working on Herald standards until he is at least 16 and has completed all the ranks of *Adventure* and *Leadership Trails*.

A maturing young man's mentor will likely be the one to suggest that he become a Herald of Christ candidate. Herald standards primarily evaluate leadership development and Christian character. The basic requirements include a Bible exploration, a study of Bible doctrine (with the pastor of the church), a ministry project, a community service project, Bible memory and a 1,000 word essay. A nine-month internship program is outlined for the candidate by the

church that tests his maturity and responsibility. Complete information and application procedures are available from the CSB office. Captains should request the packet when any Battalion member is nearing completion of Third Star.

Discipling through Battalion Achievement

Battalion leaders and other Christian men may serve as mentors for a Battalion teen. A mentor encourages and guides the young man in his Achievement progress. It's you and him, him and you, building up each other in Christ. “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” God will bless you in this endeavour as you commit it entirely to the Lord.

The following are some helpful hints in fulfilling this exciting task:

- Commit to helping that young man grow spiritually. Provide a Christ-like example for him. Seek to positively impact his life and be aware that he is watching you. Recognize that developing this relationship is as valuable as the Achievement material he is working on. This will take time, require sensitivity, and demand attention on your part.
- Plan to work with the young man until he completes an entire Achievement unit. It should take between two and six months. It'll be necessary to meet with him at least seven or eight times for at least 10-20 minutes each, in order to oversee his Achievement progress. Make every effort to augment these times with additional informal times and phone calls as you are able.
- Look over the Achievement manual *Adventure Trails*. You'll be working with the young man to not only complete the requirements, but to determine how and when he will do them. Use a special Battalion meeting to get the process started.
- Discuss the Achievement as a whole and in detail, where appropriate. He doesn't need to follow the exact order. He may ask you questions. Don't feel you must be an expert on the subject. Allow him to talk. Listen to him. Help him to feel at ease.
- Encourage the young man whenever possible. Because you are his mentor, you have a great opportunity to share with him even when he his progress begins to slow. Find out what you can do to help him complete the next step.
- Become a learner yourself. In each rank, there are Bible memory verses. Try to quote them to him before he says them to you. Allow him to make as many mistakes as you do, but ensure that he fully understands the meaning of the passage. By all means, preview the Bible studies ahead on your own so you are familiar with them.

- Allow him to do the work. You determine if he's done an acceptable job. Ask yourself, "Did he complete the assignment to his ability, even though it may not be perfect?" You may need to substitute a similar assignment that is more appropriate for his talents. When you've seen his work and determined that the Achievement is complete, sign his book. Look over the next Achievements and help determine when he will be completing them. Pray together.
- Figure out if you need to provide some external incentives to help him finish the unit. These young men are busy and do get distracted. Keep a positive attitude, even though he may appear to be losing interest. Your positive attitude and occasional "push" may be the best encouragement to him. If you need some assistance or ideas on how to motivate him, speak to the Battalion leaders.
- Report back to the Battalion leadership when the unit has been completed. Keep adequate records and turn them in. Realize that another man may be discipling him in his next Achievement. Continue to pray for him.

Battalion Outings

Activities such as *camping, sports, service projects* and *outings* provide *leadership opportunities* for teens. These kinds of adventures create a bridge between men and boys.

Sometimes the chat by a stream or the discussion around the campfire becomes a time of deep sharing or soul searching in the lives of individuals as they come to know each other better. Of course, experiences such as climbing a mountain, canoeing a river, giving a program at a home for the elderly, touring a factory or visiting an historical site, round out what might otherwise become a humdrum routine.

Older teenagers appreciate experiences which open up educational or vocational opportunities for them. A visit to a college may help a young man set his educational sights. Touring a shop or industrial plant may influence a boy's vocational direction. Especially significant for boys from minority groups, is seeing a man of their ethnic background in an occupation they may have thought unreachable.

Service projects take boys beyond themselves and help them understand the meaning of self-denial. Service projects can bring boys face-to-face with people whom Christ loves and wants to love through them. Christian commitment thus becomes a matter of practical reality. Teen leaders who share in planning and leading such projects have opportunities for increased personal growth.

Today's teens are not only the source of tomorrow's leadership, many are setting the pace for their generation right now! Young leaders learn from watching others. When guided by concerned Christian men, their vision and abilities can be put to work for Christ. Helping a group of committed junior high and high school boys develop in Christian leadership and outreach is what Battalion is all about.

Battalion and the Church's Youth Program

Battalion is an important part of a well-rounded youth program. Battalion compliments the church's coed group by meeting specific needs of older boys which coed programs aren't designed to meet. Battalion's emphasis is on leadership training, challenging activities and discipling by Christian men, the perfect compliment to a coed youth ministry.

A youth minister is strongly encouraged to serve Battalion as a senior leader or even as Captain. This will provide him with more contact with the boys. If this isn't possible, he and the Battalion leaders need to stay in touch with each other. This will prevent scheduling conflicts between the two groups and unnecessary competition to attract boys to their activities.

The Battalion Captain can establish a cooperative relationship by doing the following:

1. Communicate regularly with the other youth and Christian education leaders. Let them know about your plans and upcoming activities. Share your short-term and long-term goals with them.
2. Check with youth leaders, the Sunday School director and the Christian education director for their important events. Get those on your calendar so you can avoid unnecessary scheduling conflicts.
3. Meet regularly with the youth pastor or sponsor to talk and pray for individual boys. In this way, both leaders will be better equipped to meet the needs of specific boys.
4. Attend all administrative meetings to which you are invited and show an interest in the whole youth program. Keep in touch to share prayer concerns.
5. Invite youth leaders to speak in the Council Ring. Ask them to join the group on special outings.
6. Encourage all the Battalion members to get involved in Sunday School, worship services and the coed youth group.

Battalion is a youth program.

Hey Church, Where are the Teens?

As you know and have seen, and as pollsters like George Barna have confirmed, boys raised in the church tend to drop out of church activities sooner and in greater numbers than girls. You also recognize that it is much harder to attract boys than girls to your youth activities. This is especially true of boys between 14 and 16 years of age. This is a great concern because our future Christian men, the fellows that we used to think of as our next generation of pastors and missionaries, are seemingly turned off by the church at a very young age. While the reasons are varied, research has revealed some common causes. Let's look at a few of these.

The Lack of Male Role-Models

First, boys have a more difficult time than girls in finding their male identity in today's family and societal structures. Most children spend their early years at home with their mothers. They don't spend much time with their dads at all. This problem is magnified when the father is not around, such as in the single-mother family. In these situations, the boy, without an appropriate role-model, struggles to grasp who he is, and what he is to become in life.

When a younger boy, especially one from a fatherless or non-Christian home, goes to church, he should expect to find several good male role-models to emulate, but this just isn't the case. Men are scarce, especially godly ones, and those that are around, are often unavailable to boys. Those men may serve very effectively on church committees and boards, or act as ushers, musicians, and staff workers, but in terms of relationships, those men are remote and inaccessible.

Sadly, in many churches, boys often view the preacher-pastor as a distant enigma who always carries a Bible, wears a tie and speaks in sophisticated English. Where pastors do dress in casual attire, they often want to connect with the adults, or the older teens, but not the younger boy. Each boy needs to know that his pastors and the men of his church can get down to his level, wear torn jeans, talk about sports and get their hands dirty from time to time. He needs to know that he has significance with these real men.

The problem is made more difficult when the youth pastor or children's pastor is a woman. Even though she is a wonderful person, with excellent skills and a thorough understanding of boys, a boy is often uncertain about how he is to relate to her. At eight years old, a boy wants to be set apart as a man-in-training and have nothing to do with "those icky girls". By twelve, he's afraid of how he is perceived by the female gender, and will either withdraw from them or act as the fool. By sixteen, he knows that he is capable of doing as much as any man, but hasn't had the opportunity. And by nineteen, when he wants to be a leader

and assume his rightful role in society, he realizes that he hasn't been taught the skills.

Manhood is not achieved by osmosis, time or benediction, it must be taught, and then through example. It is the wise minister, youth pastor and children's director who encourages the less-capable boy into the leadership role. Without this conscious effort, a boy may conclude that a Christian man is not very manly, and that perhaps the church is for women and children, not real men.

The Unrealistic Demands on a Boy

A second reason that boys fall away from the church is to do with the rigid expectations adults place on those who participate in typical church programs. "Sit down," and "Be still" are two directives that children, especially boys, hear repeatedly. Let's face it, how many normal, fun-loving boys get excited about a program where they have to sit down and be still? But many church programs are fashioned to be like school, which is often the most disliked part of a boy's life.

As we see the growing number of ADD and ADHD boys in our communities, we must consider the possibility that the sedentary lifestyle that we force on our children is having a detrimental effect. Boys can no longer play out of doors; it's far safer to be in the house, but don't let him jump around or be physically active, he may get hurt. It's far better to watch TV, play video games or surf the net. But, God didn't design boys to sit still.

Lately, many churches have added physical activities into their Sunday School program and Junior Church. While this does address a boy's physical needs, these activities tend to draw the child away from the church-service model that we were preparing them for. We are now teaching our kids that it's okay to walk out of church when they feel fidgety.

The Co-ed Environment

A third reason, and there are more, is our unrealistic expectations that boys want or need the co-ed environment. We often hear people say that "the boys won't attend if the girls aren't there." And yet we know from our own experiences that our best friends were the same gender. Boys haven't changed; their best friends are still boys, long after they have graduated High School.

Boys and girls are markedly different physically, mentally, socially and even spiritually well into their later teens. However, we want to be fair and treat them the same way, disregarding these differences. Usually, a girl will mature earlier than a boy. She may be as much as two years ahead mentally and socially, than a boy the same age. If we maintain the fairness, the girl will get the leadership roles, and the boy will learn to follow. The problem is, at nineteen, the girl is looking for a man who will take the lead role in their life-long relationship, but that man has learned little about leadership. Dr James Dobson, and many other learned people, both Christian and secular, have said this: men and women, boys and girls, are different - God made them that

way - and they have different, but complementary, roles in life. Today's men of the Church are not wild and dangerous, they are safe and boring, and that's not very appealing.

Some Solutions:

Robert Lewis in *Raising A Modern Day Knight* states: "Our culture is in deep trouble, and at the heart of its trouble is its loss of vision for manhood. If it's difficult for you and me as adult males to maintain our masculine balance in this "gender-neutral" culture, imagine what it must be like for our young sons, who are growing up in an increasingly feminized world. ... Your son and thousands like him are presently being stripped of their maleness by a modern, secular, feminist culture... this culture has steadily and relentlessly undermined healthy notions of what it means to be a man. ... Manhood is no longer a unique calling; it's now seen more as a problem to be overcome. ... All this has created an acute masculine identity crisis."

Mr. Lewis in one of many Christian authors who are sounding the alarm, and praise God, it is being heard. The Church is slowly returning to a more traditional understanding of men and women, boys and girls, and we are having an influence in our wayward society. The School Boards of secular, public schools are seeing the benefits of dividing classes on the basis of gender, especially for kids between 13 and 16 years of age. Changes are coming, but they will take time. Here are some things that we can do as we focus on building tomorrow's Christian men:

- 1. We can emphasize the father and son relationship.**
Fathers need to seize every opportunity to spend time with their sons, listening, talking, praying, and working together. The Church needs to prepare and encourage dads to be faithful to their roles as the male parent. When a boy's dad is unavailable, we need to find men who can come alongside the boy and be that male role-model.
- 2. We can provide activities that build relationships.**
These activities will help show boys that Christian men really do care about them. Joint service projects, such as maintenance work at the church; father and son retreats; and church sponsored sports outings are all opportunities for men and boys to interact one with another.
- 3. We can have friendships between teenage guys and godly men.**
Teenage boys want and need adult male role-models, and they need to have access to vibrant Christian men. Men need to take on their share of service in the church, from the nursery, to teaching Sunday School at all age levels. The male identification process is strengthened by dividing Sunday School classes by gender from Grade 2 on up through the end of high school, with Christian men doing the teaching of the boys. Christian Service Brigade's Tree Climbers, Stockade and Battalion programs are designed to develop a wholesome sort of hero-worship, encouraging deep interactions between

Christian men and boys. These programs fulfill a need which is difficult to meet in any other way.

4. We can grab on to the lost generation.

Boys need programs that they enjoy - Battalion, for example. A boys-only program during the teenage years, under the leadership of concerned and trained men, will sustain and even increase the average boy's interest in godly pursuits. Each boy needs a group of peers with whom he can be physically expressive, where he can engage in aggressive, vigorous, competitive, physical and mental challenges which require ingenuity as well as muscular dexterity and skill to complete.

Of course, co-ed programming does develop social relationships between the sexes, and churches have to help prepare our teens to work and live together with members of the opposite sex. But this must be balanced with a male-focused, discipling program that will attract boys. Most 12 to 15 year old boys and many 16 to 19 year olds prefer a boys-only environment over the more common co-ed approach! Only a minority are really comfortable with a total diet of co-ed programs. Dr. Nicolosi, a psychiatrist noted for his work with reformed homosexuals, links homosexuality with the preponderance of mixed-gender activities.

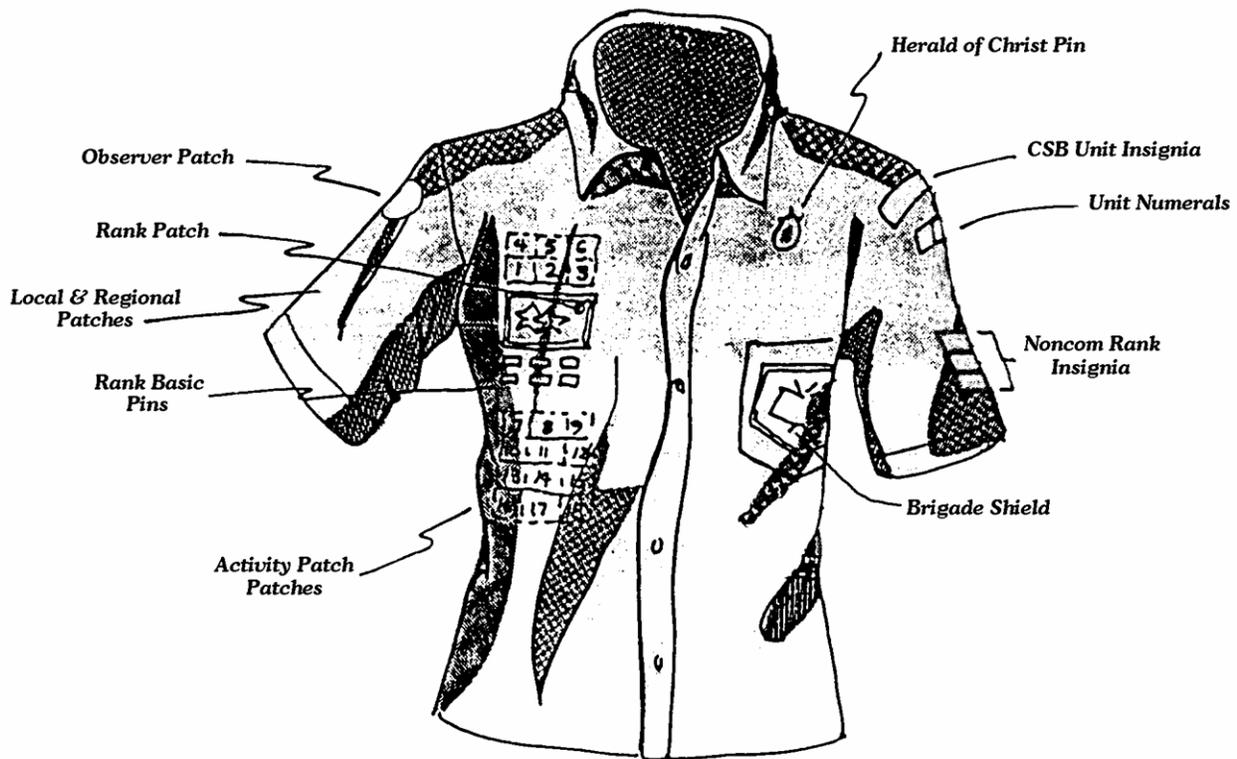
5. We can plan with a long-range point of view.

Pastor, this is where the rubber meets the road... We take our boys and give them gender-specific programs until they are just into their teen years. And, as they are starting to understand themselves and their place in the church and society, we throw them into a co-ed youth environment. This is a tragic error as it can easily destroy a boy's self-image and set him back years in his development as a leader. For some reason we think that manhood will be learned in the presence of young women, but the truth is just the opposite. Teenage boys need to know who they are as men-in-training and to do the things that only they like to do. These boys need Battalion, in cooperation with the youth group, to become the men that God wants them to be. Let them grow to maturity through a male focused group, and they will graduate as a men dedicated to the things of Christ, and of His Church. Take the opportunity to work closely with your Battalion, in fact, sign on as a leader. If our goal is to win and train men (boys) for Christ, this is the place to do it, and your presence in Battalion will grow the Church in ways that you may not even imagine.

A Final Note:

Programs are fine things to have, but a boy is not a program and a man is not produced by a program. Men produce men as iron sharpens iron. It is the relationship between men and boys, as guided by God through His Word, His Spirit and prayer, that real manhood is developed and achieved. Battalion helps build these relationships

The Battalion Boy's Uniform



Shirt: Forest green, short sleeved.

Brigade Shield: Sewn on the centre of the left-hand pocket.

“CSB Unit” Patch: Sewn on the left sleeve and centred directly below the yoke of the shirt.

Unit Numerals: Sewn on the left sleeve and centred directly below the ends of the “CSB Unit” Patch in a straight line, leaving no space between numerals.

Observer Patch: Sewn on right sleeve and centred directly below the yoke. This emblem is awarded upon completion of Observer.

Rank Patch: Sewn on centre of right pocket, 1¼ inches below top edge. Newest patch replaces the previous one. Third Star Patch is never removed.

Rank Basic Pins: Located evenly ½ inch above the bottom of the right pocket in two rows of three: Explorer, Trailblazer and Guide; One Star, Two Star and Three Star.

Herald of Christ Pin: Located above 3½ inches above centre of left pocket.

Activity Patch Emblems: Numbers indicate order of application.

Noncom Rank Insignia: Located about 2 inches below unit numbers. One stripe for Lance Corporal, two stripes for Corporal, and three stripes for Sergeant. Stripes point up in USA, down in Canada.