



YOUNG EAGLE FLIGHT RALLY PLANNER

One of the reasons EAA's Young Eagles program is successful is the simplicity of the concept – a pilot and child go flying. While our ultimate experience is for a child to have a one-on-one experience with the pilot, that is not always possible. There are advantages to scheduling a group event or "flight rally". The flight rally is a popular activity for a number of reasons. A chapter can concentrate volunteer resources to fly Young Eagles, handle paperwork and safety. It is often times easier to handle groups of children, such as from a youth group or school; and there is a social aspect of participating with other volunteers on a flight day.

Please read through the following flight rally checklist. Feel free to adapt these ideas to your local airport. If at any time, you have questions or concerns about the Young Eagles Program, please contact our office; yeagles@eaa.org or 877-806-8902. We are here to assist you in any way we can. We look forward to hearing from you.

What is the definition of a flight rally? A flight rally is an organized event and must be sponsored by an EAA Chapter (or Field Representative). The Chapter must be actively involved in the planning and execution of the event to be a sponsor. We define a rally as more than two planes participating. The size of the event is not what matters; it is the quality and safety of the event — that always comes first. We suggest that you start with a small first time effort to develop procedures that work best for your area.

YOUNG EAGLES FLIGHT RALLY CHECKLIST

HOW MANY VOLUNTEERS DO YOU HAVE?

- How many pilots and ground support volunteers are available? This will help you determine the number of Young Eagles your chapter can fly.
- Consider assigning volunteers to handle individual elements of the rally, like pilot recruitment or publicity. This is not always necessary, but can help make your job easier and build involvement of other chapter members.

CONTACT AIRPORT MANAGEMENT

- Involve your airport manager, FBO operator and FAA Tower staff. Contacting them early can avoid planning problems later on.

SELECT A DATE/TIME

- Think about other scheduled events involving children and families that might conflict with your rally.
- When are your volunteers available?
- Most rallies are scheduled for three – four hours, on a Saturday morning.

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REGISTRATION

- Pre-print labels with the pilot's name, EAA number, date of flight and type of aircraft. These can be attached to the pilot information section of the form at the time of the flight. This will save time and help keep you organized. When returning the forms to the Young Eagles office, staple forms from individual pilots together. It will speed the data entry process. Please return the completed forms to the Young Eagles office as soon as possible. All Young Eagles receive follow up information from EAA and the sooner the forms are returned, the sooner they hear from EAA. Will you pre-register participants or take them on a first-come, first-served basis?
- Pre-registration involves more work before the event, but provides an idea of how many children to expect.
- Using first-come, first-served can backfire if you have too many children and not enough pilots.

PUBLICITY

- A sample news release is available. It can be customized for your event and provided to your local media outlets.
- Recruit scout or youth groups as a "base" for the event. They can help the pre-registration process, since they know who would be interested in flying.
- Distribute Young Eagle brochures in schools or other places where children and their parents frequent.
- Chapters have produced posters to promote an event.
- Don't forget local calendar of events listings

TAKE CARE OF EAA "PAPERWORK"

- Add your event to EAA's Calendar of Events: www.eaa.org/calendar
- File for your event insurance on line: www.eaa.org/eventinsurance
(please file at least 30 days in advance)
- Order your Young Eagle supplies: www.eaa.org/ordersupplies
(allow at least two weeks for delivery)

DAY OF THE EVENT

GROUND OPERATIONS

- *Welcome/Registration.* Establish a clearly marked area where parents and Young Eagles can check in and begin their experience. Take time to answer questions and, if needed, help the parent complete the release/registration form.
- *Ground School.* Many chapters use a dedicated "ground school" utilizing a static airplane for a group walk-around. This is not necessary, but has been effective and limits movement on the ramp.
- *Dispatch.* A dedicated clipboard for each pilot can help you quickly match Young Eagles to their pilot. A small mailing label (Avery 5160, for example) with the pilot's name; EAA #; type of aircraft and number of available seats can be attached to the clipboard. This makes it easy for a dispatch volunteer to introduce Young Eagles to their pilot and for the pilot to sign the forms before the flight. The forms remain on the ground in a folder for the pilot. The pilot is now responsible for the Young Eagles until after the flight.
- **Safety first. No child or parent should be allowed in the aircraft movement area without an escort. Remember that the general public is not familiar with airplanes, how they move and spinning propellers.**
- *Post-Flight.* Set aside an area where returning pilots and Young Eagles can talk about the flight, sign the logbook and explain EAA's Flight Plan. The Young Eagles' parent should be a part of this process,

so they know what EAA can offer their child. Take time to answer questions and thank them for sharing the flight.

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FLIGHT OPERATIONS

- *Pilots.* All pilots should check in upon arrival with the event coordinator. Pilots should make sure their registration information is up-to-date (mailing address, EAA number, aircraft).
- *Pilot Briefing.* All pilots must attend a pilot briefing prior to flying. Ground support volunteers should also attend. The coordinator, a designated pilot or even a local ATC representative can provide the briefing. A sample pilot briefing is included at the end of this document.
- *Route of Flights.* Successful chapters have established Young Eagle flight routes and altitudes, so all participating pilots know where traffic may be. Coordinate routes with local Air Traffic Control.
- *Volunteer Care.* Make sure there are plenty of refreshments available for your volunteers. You should also consider providing lunch or snacks for your volunteers. It is also important to monitor the health of your pilots and ground volunteers. Volunteers are often very dedicated and will fly until the last child is flown. Often they don't think about keeping hydrated. If a pilot is starting to look tired or stressed, you should gently suggest they take a break and relax.

POST EVENT:

- *De-brief.* Gather as many of your volunteers post-event to find out what went right and what didn't. Most important is how can you learn from the experience and improve your next event. Often chapters hold a cook out or social gathering after an event -- a great opportunity to de-brief and have fun.
- *THANK YOU!* Take time to thank your volunteers and express appreciation to any others who helped make the event possible. Don't forget the airport manager, host FBO or FAA tower staff. A simple "thank you" note goes a long way!

This checklist is a guide to help you plan your first rally. As you become more comfortable with your volunteers and airport, feel free to adapt these ideas to your location.

If you have any additional questions or concerns please contact us; yeagles@eaa.org or 920-426-6114.

Sample Pilot Briefing topics:

Welcome/introductions

Review of Pilot Requirements – including completion of EAA Youth Protection Program

Weather

Who will we be flying?

Ground flow for paperwork (dispatch)

Ground flow for aircraft (taxi routes)

Flight route

Altitudes and airspeeds

NOTAMS

Ramp Safety

Flight Safety

Questions?