



# LEADER'S GUIDE

## **Mission:**

The mission of LIFECYCLES is to build young men of character in a Christ-centered bicycle touring adventure experience.

## **What does this mean?**

It means meeting our teens where they are and helping them to take the next steps to become the men that God created them to be. Some will take these steps and some won't. But the process belongs to the Holy Spirit and we are His tools in the process.

## **How do we do it?**

Through Christ-centered bicycling adventure, curricula, and mentoring.

**Bicycling:** Many of our teens struggle with self-image. They have been told what they can't do far more often than they have been told what they are good at. By encouraging them to ride distances they don't think they can do, our teens learn goal setting and get an immense lift to their self-esteem when they finish the ride.

**Curricula:** The curriculum is designed to help develop good character. There are incentives built into the curricula for teens to earn the privilege of rides outside of the evening training rides. Saturday rides, event rides, and even a weeklong challenge ride are all within their reach. Each chapter ends with a couple of questions for the teens to answer. They discuss their answers with a leader after rides. The leader is looking for at least one idea that the teen has learned from the lesson. Upon completion of the entire curriculum they are awarded a LIFECYCLES jersey.

**Mentoring:** Mentoring occurs while riding bikes, during mealtime conversations, and going over the curriculum. It is vital to be encouraging during all interactions. Our teens face criticism from all angles in their lives. They don't need to hear it from us. In regards to riding it is fine to point out unsafe habits and give them tips on how to ride more safely. Please use an approach like "would you like to be better at that?" as opposed to "you're doing that wrong." Remember that our teens learn more from watching what we do than from what we say.

## **How can I make a difference?**

1. Show up consistently, as your schedule allows. If you like to ride on Tuesdays, try to be there as often as possible. The stability and continuity of regular attendance helps build relationships with the teens.
2. Help set up and clean up. Help the boys/girls get their bike, pump the tires and get into their groups.
3. While riding give your attention to the teens (as opposed to other leaders) and listen to their stories.
4. Leaders eat with their ride groups. This is a great time to get to know more about their family, school, hopes and dreams. It is also a good time to encourage them regarding that night's ride.
5. Be familiar with the curriculum so that you can interact with the teens and go over lessons with them.