

**Summer Camp
Volunteer
&
Volunteer Assistant
Training Manual**

**Jackson
Conference Center**

2601 Greer Road
Goodlettsville, TN 37075



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Mission Statement

Jackson Conference Center camping ministry provides a Christian setting with a Pentecostal perspective, encouraging student excellence, creating an environment for Spiritual Renewal, Recreational Activities, and Lasting Relationships.

Our Goals

• **Spiritual Renewal**

1. **A worship service consisting of praise, worship, and anointed preaching that draws the student to the altar.**
2. **Biblical teaching that instills Christian principles and values through a variety of settings.**
3. **Quiet time for reflection, spiritual growth and intimacy with God.**

• **Recreational Activities**

1. **Fun activities that promote teamwork, unity & sportsmanship.**
2. **Enable and empower the student to build character, gain self-esteem, and develop a sense of accomplishment.**

• **Relationships**

1. **Create a safe environment for healthy relationship building.**
2. **Provide opportunities for leaders to develop quality relationships with his/her students.**

Camp Staff

◆ **Paid Staff**

Paid camp staff is defined as an individual who is contacted by the TN District Office directly to help run and/or manage a week(s) of the summer camping program. If you are a paid staff member at your local church that does not automatically qualify you for the title or privileges of a paid camp staff member.

◆ **Volunteer**

Volunteer is defined as any adult individual—age 21 or above—who comes to any week of the summer camping program with a local church to act as a chaperone for the students. All adult volunteers are required to have a background check completed and submitted to the TN District Office prior to arriving at camp. Volunteers are subject to approval by the District Youth Director.

◆ **Volunteer Assistant**

Volunteer assistant is defined as any adult individual—ages 19 to 20—who comes to any week of the summer camping program with a local church to act as a chaperone for the students. All volunteer assistants are required to have a background check completed and submitted to the TN District Office prior to arriving at camp. Volunteer assistants are subject to approval by the District Youth Director.

◆ **Kids Camp Intern**

An intern is defined as any individual—ages 15 to 18—who comes to any week of Kids Camp with a local church to act as a helper for the students. Due to the age requirements for interns, this position is not applicable during youth camps.

Helpful Hints for Volunteers & Assistants

1. Clearly establish limits of the camp with your students upfront.
2. Listen attentively
3. Watch carefully for potentially tense situations and diffuse them before they fully materialize
4. Be patient and empathetic, placing yourself in the camper's shoes and understand their needs.
5. Understand that your attitude and approach will set the tone for your students and is the most significant key in determining the success of the camp for them

Preparation

Prepare Spiritually

Pray for a genuine burden for young people and their problems. Pray for wisdom and discernment. Seek a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. We rely heavily upon His leadership during each camp.

Prepare Mentally

Come ready to participate in all camp activities. Expect to be fatigued, but determine to have a positive attitude anyway.

Prepare Your Wardrobe

Casual is the rule of thumb! During the days, modest shorts may be worn. During the evening, dress neatly. Casual long pants & shirts are fine for the camp services.

Prepare To Love Students

Students are your reason for being at camp so approach it with the mindset that you're giving yourself totally to your students during camp. They deserve your undivided attention. Spend time with each student, listening to and discussing the things that are important to him or her. Challenge yourself to discovering their unique qualities.

Prepare To Lead

The most important quality young people can observe in adults is spiritual growth. We should never give off the impression that we have “arrived.” Be honest about your weaknesses and admit your mistakes. All of us deal with temptation every day to keep our values and priorities, so let the kids know that they should and that they can keep pressing forward in their relationship with Christ.

Prepare To Have A Good Attitude

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

Attitudes are far more potent than actions. It is entirely possible to do the right thing in the wrong way. As a volunteer, your attitude towards the camp program, the director, and the evangelist will be reflected over and over again in the attitudes of your campers. Here are some “tips” that might help you keep your attitudes healthy:

- ◆ Remember you are setting an example for your students in everything you do and say.
- ◆ Be mindful that a leader shares in all camp tasks.
- ◆ Have faith in each student and communicate it often.
- ◆ Avoid criticism of the program and other volunteers. If you feel a complaint is in order, please talk with the program director only.
- ◆ Cooperate with altar methods presented from the platform. Remember, you are the key to successful altar ministry.

Spiritual Goals

1. A worship service consisting of praise, worship and anointed preaching of the Word that draws the student to the altar.
2. Biblical teaching that instills Christian principles and values through a variety of settings.
3. Quiet time for reflection, spiritual growth and intimacy with God.

The Bottom Line

The reason we are here at camp is to see every young person have a genuine experience with God. As a member of our leadership team, it is important that we keep this in focus at all times. As staff members, we must use every available minute possible to break down the walls that could keep a young person from receiving from God.

The Worship Service

We have designed our services for students! We intentionally use high energy worship and messages geared to grab their attention! Our goal is to create an atmosphere where the Holy Spirit can encounter their lives in a positive way. Here is how you can help as a volunteer:

1. BE A WORSHIPPER!

Students will follow your lead. If you freely worship and focus on God, it will help them to join

2. BE AN ENCOURAGER!

Challenge your students before you arrive at camp and during camp about moving up spiritually. Challenge them to worship in every way.

3. BE READY FOR ALTER MINISTRY

With the large amount of students responding to the message, it takes everyone to effectively minister to them. Follow the directions given from the platform and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Standard operating procedure at Jackson Conference Center is for volunteers to pray with the students of your own group while they are at the altar.

Biblical Teaching

We are committed to discipleship. To this end, we will be providing opportunities for the student to be disciple. Every day there will be a chapel session designed to teach specific Biblical principles. Additionally, there will be designated quiet time for devotions and reflection; seek to use this time as teaching moments with your students.

Recreational Goals

1. Fun activities that promote teamwork, unity and sportsmanship.
2. Enable and empower the student to build character, gain self-esteem, and develop a sense of accomplishment.

Teamwork, Unity & Sportsmanship

In the effort of promoting teamwork and unity, students are divided in to teams that will create a team name and compete in team sports throughout the camp. This is an opportunity for them to burn excess energy, exercise, integrate with their friends, and have some healthy competition and fun, while learning how to play "friendly and fair."

Christian sportsmanship is a value that we wish to teach our young people. Just as it is important to learn how to win, it is important to learn how to lose. Here are some ideas to help you accomplish these goals.

- ◆ Set a positive, cooperative atmosphere on the team
- ◆ Involve all team members
- ◆ Support each other
- ◆ Play hard and fair

Character, Self-esteem & Sense of Accomplishment

As we mentioned, it is important to learn how to win with a good attitude and lose with a good attitude. When you put students into the recreational framework, there will always be those who are more advanced and athletically inclined, than others. In the traditional sense, we gravitate toward these types of people because they help us win.

Now, this is not entirely bad, but we must gear our activities so that a young person who may not be as advanced, has the opportunity to get better and gain some self-esteem. As a volunteer, you must identify these people and find creative ways to make them feel needed and accepted.

Activities

Throughout the course of the week, we will be primarily playing a wide variety of games and sports that young people like. Traditionally, some of these events can get messy, so bring old clothes to wear throughout the day, just in case! Young people love to see and participate in these types of messy games. It's a load of fun and usually a great show. Come prepared to go with the flow and enjoy the messy fun.

Relationship Goals

1. Create a safe environment for healthy relationship building.
2. Provide opportunities for leader to develop quality relationships with his/her students.

The Method

Relationship building is a BIG part of camp. Many students make lifelong friendships as a result from camp. It is good for Christian young people to meet other Christians from across the state. It reinforces their faith and strengthens their ability to stay the course.

As a leader, we realize that you cannot form a relationship with all of the students, however, we would like you to focus on your students and on your cabin or dorm. You have just a few days and nights to impact them with your love and involvement. Our method is simple, use EVERY opportunity, whether it be spiritual or recreational, to form, solidify and grow a relationship with that young person.

Building Relationships Skills

In sharing relationship building skills, please remember that any method will feel awkward at first. However, after adapting it to your personality, positive results usually follow.

In a relationship building approach, it is good to be "SAFE"

- S** Seek information (name, age, grade, hobbies, etc...)
- A** Accept what you hear (listen; let them talk)
- F** Focus on what you hear (try to empathize & relate)
- E** Explore what you hear (use open ended questions)

During the course of investing into young people, you might have a young person confide in you about a personal problem. Some basic problem solving skills are:

- What is the problem? Do you understand fully what is being said?
- How did this problem occur?
- What are some possible solutions?
- What solution seems to be best?
- Adopt a strategy for problem solving.
- Follow-up

Understanding Your Campers

(For Youth Camp Volunteers)

Since you will be spending a week working very closely with your students, it is important that you make every effort to understand them.

Our youth campers are entering the sixth grade through the twelfth grade, which reflects ages of approximately 12 to 18. There is a wide range of maturity among students. Physically, many of these campers are just entering an awareness of sexual maturity. The boys at this age are often a year or two behind the girls.

Mentally, students of this age are quite capable of activities involving reasoning, reorganization and comprehension. They have a strong desire to learn. They particularly like to explore, experiment and discover their surroundings. You must remember that each student is unique and, as such, has varying abilities to learn.

Spiritually, there will be a wide range of spiritual awareness. Some of our campers will come with good Bible knowledge and a vital personal relationship with Jesus. Others will come without knowing the first thing about spiritual matters. To some, the basics of salvation will need to be explained in the simplest of terms.

Broadly speaking, adolescence is the period of sexual, social, ideological, and vocational adjustment and striving for independence from parents. The adolescent age by definition is a time of storm and stress, and the behavior of the adolescent is as erratic as a roller coaster in its ups and downs. Adolescents live in an atmosphere of great anxiety, high elation, deep despair, quickly rising enthusiasm, utter hopelessness, intellectual idealism, and spiritual preoccupation.

The yearning for freedom, the sense of loneliness, the feeling of oppression by parents, the rages and active hatreds directed against the world, the romantic crushes, tend to keep the adolescent upset and on the edge most of the time. Obviously, these manifestations are not predictable and there seems to be no way we can anticipate what will happen next in the life of a young person.

However, these extreme fluctuations in behavior are normal during adolescence. The ego of the individual adolescent is being formed and he/she must experiment with a great variety of emotions, feelings, situations, and people. Only in this way can he/she learn what best suits him/her and is most compatible to his/her likes and dislikes. The church and its leadership play a great part in assisting the young adolescent through this time of storm and stress.

To help you better understand each student, please review the following characteristics of adolescents by age group:

12 Year Olds

- ◆ Become more reasonable, more companionable & more sociable.
- ◆ Is trying to grow up and does not wish to be considered a baby.
- ◆ Demonstrates integration of personality. The basic personality traits are: reasonableness, tolerance, and humor.
- ◆ Takes initiative and enters self-chosen tasks with enthusiasm.
- ◆ Acutely conscious of appearance and influenced by fads.
- ◆ There is a slight change in boy/girl relationships. Antagonism toward the opposite sex begins to fade.

13 Year Olds

- ◆ His/her focus is inward. Becomes his/her own critic and seems to be over conscientious.
- ◆ Worries frequently and withdraws inwardly.
- ◆ Becomes sensitive to criticism and aware of the emotional state of others.
- ◆ Changes in structure and chemistry affect behavior in many ways: posture, motor coordination, voice change, facial expression, and related tension and attitudes.
- ◆ Increased awareness that he/she is growing up.

14 Year Olds

- ◆ Reverses from introversion to extroversion, characterized by energy, exuberance, and expansiveness.
- ◆ A degree of integration effects interpersonal relations and self-concepts.
- ◆ Fascinated by the word "personality" and likes to compare personality traits. Interest in his/her own personality is demonstrated by exclamations such as "that's me!"

15 Year Olds

- ◆ Develops a spirit of independence which shows itself in increased tensions in parental and school relationships.
- ◆ Wishes to have free-time and free choice and may show defiance of external control.
- ◆ Increasingly self-aware and perceptive.
- ◆ Has tendencies toward perfectionism, self-criticism and the beginnings of self-control
- ◆ Vulnerable age—a 15 year old can be led into behavior problems and delinquency, or may have an urge to relate closely to adult models and heroes

16 Year Olds

- ◆ Self-awareness, self-independence and personal social adjustment, have developed into a remarkable degree of balance and integrity.
- ◆ Emotions are more controlled.
- ◆ Becomes cheerful, friendly, outgoing, and well adjusted.
- ◆ The rebellious spirit, so characteristic of the 15 year old, gives way to a sense of independence based on self-confidence.
- ◆ Oriented toward the future—the girls already have matrimonial plans and the boys are learning the role of manhood.
- ◆ Desires companionship with the opposite sex. Their togetherness should not always be interpreted with sexual overtones

18 Year Olds

- ◆ Starting to get serious about life. What they dreamed about earlier is now becoming reality.
- ◆ College, marriage, business, church and community responsibilities are just around the corner.
- ◆ Male/female relationships are important and sex drives are stronger than ever.
- ◆ More independent and has a stronger sense of self.
- ◆ Continue to struggle with parental morals and religious values as they attempt to define their own belief.

Dealing with Camper Issues

Homesick Campers

Help campers to become well-acquainted with his/her cabin mates; provide opportunities to show abilities and talents; take a personal interest in him/her and make it known; assign special jobs to do.

Irresponsible Camper

Set the example by doing your share. Reward the behavior you want to see.

Camper with Illegal Drugs or Other Paraphernalia

If they are turning these things in, do not condemn. Please notify the Camp Director give him the items turned in to you. If they are caught with illegal drugs, fire crackers, tobacco or other paraphernalia, notify the Camp Director. Love the camper and ask God to do a mighty work in his/her life. Do not broadcast such events, even to other volunteers or campers. Leave it in the hands of the Camp Director.

Non-participating Camper

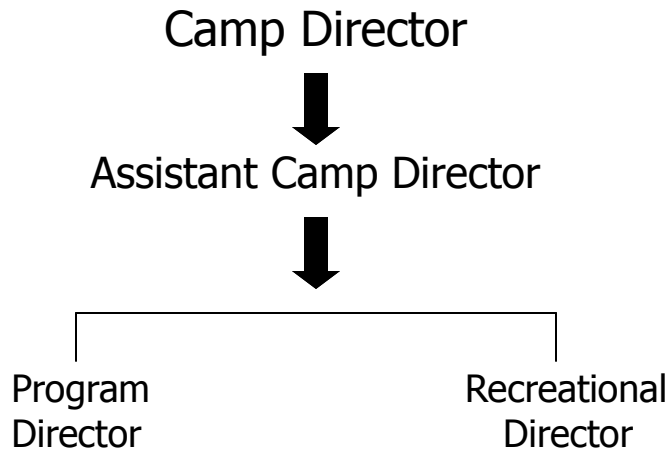
Be an enthusiastic example of involvement. Enforce the camp program. It is your responsibility to have your campers in the proper place at the proper time.

Misconduct in Services

Please sit with your students. A gentle word of instruction, in love, usually takes care of difficulties like: excessive male/female contact, talking, etc.

Policies and Procedures

Camp Leadership Flowchart



CAMP DIRECTOR

The Camp Director shall have oversight of ALL camp functions, and will have the final authority in all facets of camp. He shall have an Assistant Camp Director and an executive staff working with him to run the camp program throughout each week. If the Camp Director is off the premises, the Assistant Camp Director shall have charge of the camp.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The Program Director will implement all camp activities. The Program Director will direct or delegate all camp activities as approved by the camp director, and will insure that the camp is on schedule.

RECREATIONAL DIRECTOR

The Recreational Director will implement all camp recreational activities. In addition, he will keep the points throughout the week and stay close to the Program Director. The Recreation Director will have responsibility over the swimming program and lifeguards.

Camp Rules

1. Stay within camp boundaries. No one leaves the grounds without permission from the Camp Director or the Nurse...this INCLUDES VOLUNTEERS.
2. All cars will be parked in our back parking lot after arrival and will not be moved until the camp closes unless the Camp Director gives other authorization.
3. Boys cabins/dorms are off-limits to the girls and vice versa.
4. Destruction of camp property will not be tolerated. If an item is abused or destroyed, we will seek reimbursement to replace the item.
5. Please do not litter!
6. Our dress code is modest, clean and neat. During the day, modest shorts may be worn. NO TANK TOPS OR MIDRIFFS! During the evening, dress neatly. NO SHORTS. (Note: Skirts and dresses must be at an appropriate length. No mini-skirts). Modesty should be a rule for all clothing.
7. Swimwear may be worn in the immediate pool area only. ONE-PIECE SUITS ONLY.
8. The possession or use of narcotics, tobacco, alcoholic beverages or fireworks is strictly forbidden and is reason for prompt dismissal from camp.
9. No public display of affection. Handholding is the only thing permitted.
10. Water balloons, towel fights and shaving cream fights are prohibited.
11. Please do not touch the PA system.
12. No food is allowed in the cabins or dorms.

Staff Meetings

Volunteers are REQUIRED to attend ALL staff meetings and PRAYER times. Vital information will be presented pertaining to each day's activities. We will be sharing needs and victories, as well as praying together. You must be present in order to know what is going on.

Camp Hours

Camp days are long days. As a result, you will need to follow the "lights-out" schedule as closely as possible.

Extra Duties

There will be times when you will be called upon for duties other than those which were originally assigned to you. Please accept these as service unto the Lord.

Relationships

The volunteers are the key to a successful camp. The Camp Director is relying on you to see that the camp runs smoothly.

To The Camp Director: You have a responsibility to the Camp Director, as he coordinates the total camp. The ultimate responsibility for camp rests with him. He will expect you to pitch in where extra help is needed. Look for opportunities to volunteer!

To The Program Director: If a question or problem exists, the Program Director is the first link in the chain of command. The Program Director will be working with the Camp Director to solve any situation that might occur. All disciplinary matters and non-emergency matters should flow through the Program Director first. If necessary, the Program Director will involve the Camp Director to resolve the matter.

To Other Volunteers: You also have a responsibility to the rest of the volunteers. Assume your share of the load—even the unpleasant tasks. A word of appreciation to the kitchen staff will brighten their day. Assist the Lifeguard by maintaining an alertness.

To The Campers: You have a responsibility to all the campers. You will be their friend, their guide, and their authority. You are responsible for their health and safety so be sure you know where your campers are at all times. Enforce quiet time—they need their rest.

Emergency Procedures

ASSEMBLY	An emergency necessitating the assembling of the entire camp shall be signaled through the PA system. On this signal, everyone will assemble in the tabernacle.
TORNADO	In case of a tornado or other severe storm which might make cabins unsafe, the entire group will be assembled in the tabernacle or assigned another area.
FIRE	In case of fire, the first consideration shall be for personal safety. Make sure all campers are moved from the area, and notify an Executive Staff member. The Executive Staff member will assess the situation and call the fire department. Staff members will attempt to put out the fire only to the extent that they can do so without endangering themselves.
LOST CAMPER	<p>If a camper is missing and cannot be located, contact and Executive Staff member immediately, and they will begin the Emergency Management process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ All camp personnel assemble at the tabernacle.◆ Volunteers will be required to account for all their campers and report as soon as possible. Search areas will be appointed as volunteers report◆ Inform campers that we call three people: parents, pastor and police.
DEATH	<p>In case of death from either accidental or natural causes, the Camp Director shall be notified immediately and he will begin the Emergency Management Process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ He will call 911.◆ Parents or next of kin will be notified immediately, and a written report will be filed within 48 hours of the event on forms that the department has furnished.

POOL EMERGENCY

If an emergency occurs at the pool, the Lifeguard will begin the following emergency procedures:

- ◆ Warning or emergency signal of 3 blasts or whistles. Everyone out of the pool; line up on the side
- ◆ If a swimmer is missing, a search of the bathhouse and gym will begin immediately. Volunteers should keep track of their campers.
- ◆ In the event of accidental or near drowning or injury, guards will make any necessary rescue and perform first aid. Volunteers will help maintain order at the pool.
- ◆ The Camp Director will be notified immediately in the event of injury, accident, or drowning.
- ◆ The emergency unit (911) will be notified in case of serious injury, drowning or death.

Accidents During Camp

- ◆ Please seek medical advice from our camp nurse immediately after any accident, and have the student cleared to continue activities.
- ◆ Please note most accident policies pay an up-front cash amount before co-insurance goes into effect. To take advantage of accident coverage, most policies require treatment to be sought within 48 hours or it is not considered an accident or injury for insurance purposes.
- ◆ The church is becoming less and less “immune” to suits against its constituency, and we need to take extra precaution when dealing with these kinds of circumstances.

Medical Concerns

The American Income Life Insurance coverage that is provided for each person attending Jackson Conference Center is only paying for accidents (not sickness) with a maximum single limit of \$ 2,500.00 per injury. If an injury goes beyond this limit, we will request that the remainder of the claim be filed with the individual's health insurance policy.

Medical Reports & Insurance Responsibilities

- CAMP MEDICAL TECH** The camp nurse is responsible to fill out the medical report in full for each person needing professional medical attention. This form is to be turned into the Camp Director.
- HEALTH PROVIDER** As the bills come into the District office, they will be filed immediately with American Income Life. American Income Life will pay the hospital and/or doctor upon receipt of the bill.
- FAMILY** If the health provider does not submit an itemized invoice (s) to the District office, the camper's family has the responsibility to submit the original itemized invoice to the District office for filing with American Income Life Insurance Company.
- The family should keep a complete set of all itemized invoices from all providers so they can be photocopied by the secondary insurer.

Abusive Behavior Toward Children

Defined

We do not want abusive behavior in any form. The following is considered to be unacceptable volunteer or paid staff behavior toward children/youth and will not be tolerated.

1. Using obscene language, or gestures, or making remarks that deliberately debase, humiliate or intimidate.
2. Making sexual contact or inappropriate sexual suggestions.
3. Throwing, kicking, burning or cutting a child.
4. Striking a child with a closed fist or open palm.
5. Shaking a child.
6. Interfering with a child's breathing.
7. Threatening a child with a deadly weapon.
8. Doing any other act that is likely to cause bodily harm.
9. Discipline—there will be no physical discipline of children/youth. Examples of physical discipline include, but are not limited to:
 - A. Slapping
 - B. Spanking

Child Protection Law

Public Act 519

Camp staff (volunteer or paid) are obligated by law to report any suspected case of adult abuse, neglect, exploitation or endangerment. Any suspicion should be reported immediately to the Program Director. He in turn will contact the District Youth Director, who will contact the Department of Social Services. Any report will be kept confidential and discretely handled. You are not to discuss this matter with fellow volunteers or other campers.

Discipline Tips

A youth leader cannot effectively discipline someone he/she does not know. Again, a sufficient number of caring leaders who initiate relationships can prevent many problems before they erupt. Often we can anticipate trouble and head it off by inserting ourselves into the nexus of the breakdown. The Leader who is afraid of trouble, or who tries to crush it to prove his/her power, is courting disaster.

When correction becomes necessary, we need to proceed with caution. Instead of making suggestions, I offer the following rules:

- First, determine that an individual or group is being injured by the episode; be sure that it is not simply a problem or irritation for you.
- Make it a private matter. Never (except in desperate emergency) rebuke a student in front of others.
- Practice confidentiality.
- Do not presume to understand another person's motives; share your observations of his or her behavior (it is useless to complain about an attitude that is speculative and vague) and ask the individual in an even, non-accusatory tone, to explain the incident. For instance, "*You seem to be bored (or uncomfortable or angry) today with camp—what's going on?*"
- Be certain that a reprimand is not taken as rejection.
- Check back in a few hours with the person you have challenged. (No matter how nicely you say it, the person will recoil to some extent and feel badly.) Do not allow distance to grow between you.



Tennessee Assemblies of God Ministry Network
Youth Ministries Dept.
1402 Stop 30 Road
Hendersonville, TN 37075
Phone: (615) 431-0871
Fax: (615) 265-8527

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