

FLAG *Camp*

Camper Handbook
2021



PIONEER
MEMORIAL CHURCH

Introducing FLAG Camp

FLAG Camp began over 3 decades ago, when PMC's youth pastor at the time, Buz Menhardt, and a friend decided to start a day camp in the backyard of a church member. Twenty-seven campers attended that first summer. Originally standing for Fun Learning and Gymnastics, FLAG Camp changed the acronym to better reflect the mission of camp: Fun Learning About God.

FLAG Camp has changed in some ways through the years: there have been multiple transitions in leadership, and the programming and format have changed to meet current needs. But the essence of FLAG Camp is unwavering. We are here to ensure kids have a fun time learning about God.

Over the years, thousands of children have attended FLAG Camps around the world: Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the Republic of Georgia, Bermuda, Honduras, Romania, Slovakia, Bosnia, and the Philippines, as well as at the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church locations in Toronto, Canada and St. Louis, Missouri. Only eternity will reveal how many lives have been touched and changed as a result of FLAG Camp, which began with the vision of two young ministers in one backyard! And campers are not only the ones impacted. Staff members have also learned and grown drawn closer to God because of the ministry of FLAG Camp. Sharing God's love is what it's all about.

In His Service,

Brooke Scott and Lindsey Pratt

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W E L C O M E

Welcome to FLAG Camp!

We are here to minister to campers and their families, and it is our desire to serve you in the best possible way. At FLAG Camp, we take seriously what Dorothy Law Nolte penned in her poem "Children Learn What They Live,"

If a child lives with criticism, He learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, He learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule, He learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame, He learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance,

He learns to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement,

He learns confidence.

If a child lives with praise,

He learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness,

He learns justice.

If a child lives with security,

He learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval,

He learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, He learns to find love in the world.

Our goal is to help campers to find and experience love during their time at FLAG Camp. Our purpose for this camper handbook is to orientate parents and guardians on our guidelines and policies for FLAG Camp. We hope that an understanding of this handbook will make you and your child's camp experience a positive and an enjoyable one.

Feel free to discuss any concerns or ideas with the Director or Assistant Director as it relates to the handbook and your experience with FLAG Camp.

Here to Serve You,

Pioneer FLAG Camp Staff

OBJECTIVES

The FLAG Camp Ministry focuses on children in Kindergarten through 8th grade. FLAG Camp partners with families to create a wholesome, God-centered summer experience for each child who attends. We aim to embrace and expand the parents' relationship with the child and to minister to each camper and his or her family. This philosophy is understood and shared by all members of the staff. FLAG Camp does not substitute, compete with or disparage the role of the parents, but acts as a support in all ways possible to the family.

The specific program objectives are to:

- Encourage and exemplify, through the strength of God, Christ-like character in every activity.
- Train and mentor College and High School youth in principles of Christian leadership and service.
- Provide children with a safe setting in which to experience simple fun, interactive learning, and spiritual growth.
- Offer an affordable camp experience for the campers and a life-changing job opportunity to the staff members.

CAMP FEES / CHARGES / DISCOUNTS

1. The FLAG Camp rates per child:

\$5.00 Pre-Care & After-Care

\$5.00 One-time Registration Fee (Per Child)

\$18.00 Community

\$10.00 Andrews University Housing (subsidized by AU Housing)

2. Payment and Charge Policy

- Please pay at the beginning of each week for the days that your child will be attending, this includes pre-care and after-care. If your child is sick or does not come one day, that camper will receive a credit on their account. Checks are to be made payable to: PMC – Flag Camp. Children will not be permitted to come unless payment has been made ahead of time.
- Every parent or guardian will be given a receipt for each payment that is made. A print out of the camper's account will be available upon request.
- All returned unpaid checks will be subjected to redeposit without further notice. There will be a \$10.00 return check fee charged to your account. All accounts must be kept up to date; a child may not attend FLAG Camp until it is current.
- Any camper dropped off before 8:15 a.m. or picked up after 4:15 p.m. will be charged the pre-care and/or after-care rate.
- All campers in after-care must be picked up by 5:30p.m.
- A tax receipt will be available upon request at the end of the summer for parents who need this information for their tax returns.

3. Special discounts

A reduction in price for having 3 or more children attending FLAG Camp:

- 3 children (\$14 per day) / 4 children (\$12 per day) / 5 children (\$10 per day) *Children must live in the same household.
- A \$10 daily rate for campers living in Andrews University Housing due to their department's subsidy contribution.
- Special group rates available to organizations that utilize FLAG Camp programming. Please contact the director for details.

WHAT TO BRING

We ask that each parent or guardian send with the camper each day the following and that each item be labeled with the child's name on it.

- A Lunch—please only include food items that do not need to be heated.
- Masks
- Your own water bottle
- Swimming suit and towel—we prefer girls to wear one-piece bathing suits. Two-piece swimsuits must be covered with a non-white shirt.
- Sneakers or tennis shoes to be worn for group games and activities
- An extra change of clothes

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Campers should NOT bring the following to FLAG Camp:

- Knives, weapons, or any item that could be used as a weapon. If any of these items are brought by a camper, the Flag Camp Staff reserve the right to suspend or expel a camper from camp.
- Personal toys, game boys, mp3 players, CD players, iPods, or videos. If any of these items are brought by a camper they will be confiscated by the staff and kept until the end of the day to return to the parents. Cell phones may be brought, but must be kept in a backpack until after the final line call.

DESCRIPTIONS OF FLAG CAMP ACTIVITIES: DAILY CAMP SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change.

8:00 — 8:30 Staff Worship

8:30 — 8:45 Meet n' Mingle / Group Games

8:45 — 9:00 Line Call

9:00 — 9:30 Camp Council

9:30 — 10:00 Rotation Period #1

10:00 — 10:30 Rotation Period #2

10:30 — 11:00 Rotation Period #3

11:00 — 11:30 Rotation Period #4

11:30 — 12:00 Rotation Period #5

12:00 — 12:30 Line Call / Lunch

12:30 — 2:00 Clean up / Unit time / walk to AU Pool

2:00 — 3:00 Johnson Gym Swimming or Gym (camper choice)

3:00 — 3:45 Gymnasium

3:45 — 4:15 Lost & Found / Final Line Call / Camper pick-up at Pathfinder Building* Camp Clean Up

4:15 — 4:30 Campers walk back to building for after care

4:30 — 5:00 Staff Meeting

*\$5 Charge applies if picked up after 4:15 CAMPER UNITS

Every camper will be assigned to a unit that two counselors will be in charge of. Campers are grouped together by grades (the grade a child is going into) and gender. Boys will be in boy units and girls will be girl units. The age groups are as follows:

1. Kindergarten & 1st Grade
2. 2nd & 3rd Grade
3. 4th & 5th Grade
4. 6th Grade & Higher

LINE CALL

Each unit lines up with their counselor so team leaders may get a camper count to ensure each camper is present and accounted for. Line call is also conducted each time the bus is loaded for off campus trips to ensure that each camper is in attendance. An attendance record of all line calls is kept by each counselor.

CAMP COUNCIL

Camp council is designed to be a meaningful experience for campers which fosters a closer relationship with Jesus. It involves singing, praise and prayer. Valuable life lessons are taught through stories, skits, puppets and short talks. Camp council is upbeat and to the point lasting about 30 minutes each day.

CLASS ROTATIONS

The lesson plans for each class have been developed to help stimulate the camper's minds so that they continue to learn during the summer months. The curriculums are designed to help create a hands-on, active and fun learning experience. Each class runs for 30 minutes depending on the selected class rotation. Here are some general areas our classes cover: Nature, Bible, Crafts, Music, History, Science, Games, Art, Camping Skills

UNIT TIME

This is a special time that each counselor spends with the campers in their unit to foster healthy relationships. Approximately two days a week, there will be "Camper's Choice" instead of Unit Time, where each camper signs up for an activity of their choice.

SWIMMING

We will swim at the Wellness center pool (pending approval) unless we are going to Warren Dunes State Park. There is a gym available for campers to play in if they don't like to swim. There will be 3-4 certified lifeguards on duty who will conduct a brief swimming test for each camper to determine their swimming abilities. The campers that pass will be given an armband that will permit them to be in the deep end of the pool. All others must stay in the shallow end.

We will be swimming at Warren Dunes State Park every Wednesday starting in July if weather permits.

The park has a flag system for swimming conditions that we follow:

- 1) Red indicates rough conditions and no swimming allowed
- 2) Yellow indicates caution
- 3) Green represents safe conditions to swim.

Although the park does not provide lifeguards, FLAG Camp will bring lifeguards. To further protect the safety of our campers while swimming, staff form a large square, creating a physical barrier that campers are required to swim within.

CAMPER TEE-SHIRTS

Campers who attend for a minimum of ten days will qualify for a free FLAG Camp T-shirt.

FLAG CAMP POLICIES SUPERVISION AND SAFETY

Each counselor is responsible for the children in his or her unit. Each camper's safety and well-being is FLAG Camp's most important consideration. We will always know where each child is and what he or she is doing.

- A camper must NEVER be left unattended.
- Walking will be encouraged inside all buildings.
- Children may never climb on fences, swing frames or buildings.
- Campers will only be released to authorized individuals, as indicated in writing.
- Select staff members will be certified in First, Aid, and CPR.

DISCIPLINE

Based on an understanding of individual needs and behaviors of children at varying developmental levels, simple, understandable rules will be established so that expectations and limitations are clearly defined.

Discipline will be constructive in nature, including such methods, separation of child from situations, praise for appropriate behavior, and specific redirection.

Children will NOT be punished by:

- Spanking, pinching, shaking or other corporal punishment.
- Isolation for long periods of time.
- Confinement in closets, boxes, or similar places.
- Binding to restrain movement of mouth or limb.
- Humiliation or verbal abuse.
- Deprivation of meals, dessert, or snacks.
- Children will not be punished for refusing to eat their lunch.
- Every effort will be made to direct a camper back to more constructive activities. As a last resort, the camper who is disruptive will be removed from the play area for a "time-out."
- Praise and positive reinforcement will be used to shape and develop appropriate behavior.

The discipline steps for inappropriate or disruptive behavior is as follows:

Step 1: Clear specific redirection to what the camper should be doing.

Step 2: Remove camper from activity and enforce time-out if appropriate.

Step 3: Short-term restrictions on the use of specific play materials and equipment or participation in a specific activity.

Step 4: A call to the parent or guardian to discuss the situation and for the parent to talk with the camper about the situation.

Step 5: If behavior continues to be a problem throughout the day or the child refuses to follow directions and cooperate, parents will be called to pick up the camper and camper will not be allowed to return until the next camp day. A camper could be suspended for a day or more depending on the seriousness and severity of the inappropriate behavior.

Here is a list of inappropriate behaviors we consider to be serious and will result in suspension or expulsion. This is not an inclusive list.

- Bringing a weapon to camp or any item that could be used as a weapon
- Exposing private parts to other campers or staff
- Touching another camper inappropriately
- Swearing or using vulgar language
- Bullying other campers
- Running away from camp
- Not following rules and regulations

SWIMMING

(We will swim if the University permits Flagcamp to use the new Wellness Center; it is still pending approval. If denied, we will be doing outdoor water activities.)

We want swimming to be fun but safe. Here are some important rules to remember during swim times.

- Always change and get dressed with your assigned unit and counselor.
- Always do what the lifeguard says. Don't argue - but follow his or her direction immediately
- There will be a restroom break halfway through Swimtime.
- No running in the pool area.
- No pushing other campers into the pool or holding a camper's head under water. No jumping on counselors.
- Be Respectful to other campers.

BUS

Here is a list of important safety rules when on the bus:

1. Must remain seated at all times while the bus is in motion
2. Must keep all body parts inside the bus at all times
3. Must keep voice tone to normal level, no screaming or yelling
4. Must sit together with your assigned unit
5. No throwing things

ACCIDENT / INCIDENT POLICY

1. All accidents and incidents will be reported to the unit counselor immediately, even minor ones. The team leader then will inform the camp director or assistant camp director. The staff will complete a written report of the accident or incident and a copy will be made available to the parent or guardian. Depending on the severity of the accident or incident, the parent will be called.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP OF CAMPERS

We want to ensure that each child is safely dropped and picked up by the authorized individual, as indicated in writing and kept on file at the front desk. Each parent or guardian will complete the drop off and pick up form that will provide the following information:

- a. Who is the primary person for dropping off and picking up the child?
- b. Name and address of individuals permitted by the parent or guardian to pick up the child in case the primary person is not able.
- c. List of any individuals that may not remove a child from camp.

All individuals picking up a child must sign them out on the attendance sheet showing the time left.

HEALTH INSURANCE

The parents or guardian's health insurance coverage will be used as the primary insurance in the event medical intervention is needed. Coverage by the local Seventh-day Adventist Church through its accident policy will be used as secondary insurance. A copy of a valid health insurance card will be required at registration.

MEDICATION

All medications must be in the original container and only administered to the child as prescribed to and as directed.

All medications will be kept, stored, and administered by the director or assistant director.

A medication log will be kept on all campers who need medicine administered to them during camp hours.

PHONE CALLS / MESSAGES

All phone calls for campers a message will be taken and the child will return the call as soon as possible. If a child is on a field trip or swimming upon return they will get the message. If it is an emergency, the secretary will contact the Camp Director or Assistant Director by cell phone and get the message to them. Parents may call the Pathfinder building at 269-471-3377 or reach Administration directly at the numbers listed on the next page.

ILLNESS

COVID Protocols:

Please keep your child home if they are experiencing any signs of sickness.

If your child appears or complains about being sick we will ask for the parents to pick up their child. Your child will be required to have a mask. Children and Staff will have daily temperature checks. Children will be in their groups or cohorts. They will be required to wear masks indoors except for eating, drinking and in designated areas, or until state restrictions lift. When able our activities will be conducted outside.

FLAG CAMP STAFFING

The majority of FLAG Camp staff are college and high school students. Each staff member goes through a screening process before being hired to work at any of our camps. This process includes an application, interview, references, and background checks.

FLAG Camp International wants every child to feel safe and every parent to feel comfortable knowing that their child is safe at FLAG Camp.

All FLAG Camp staff are required to participate in one week of training and also are provided with a Staff Handbook which covers FLAG Camp objectives, policies and safety procedures.

The camp directors and assistant director will monitor staff and campers to make sure that all established procedures and practices are carried out.

In addition to Administration and counselor positions, FLAG Camp has added several volunteer positions. Volunteers must be a minimum of 15 years old, complete all staff application, training and background checks. All volunteers will be directly monitored by the Administration.