

FLAG *Camp*

STAFF HANDBOOK
2021



PIONEER
MEMORIAL CHURCH

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.

—*Dorothy Law Nolte*



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W E L C O M E

Friends,

Welcome to the Pioneer FLAG Camp Ministry team! The purpose of this handbook is to give you some guidelines for conducting yourself in a professional and constructive manner as a staff member. A thorough understanding of this handbook will make your job easier.

The FLAG Camp Ministry also has a handbook that is designed for the families of children attending camp. It is essential that you read the handbook to familiarize yourself with the rules, policies and requirements given to the parents. It is an excellent orientation that provides information necessary for you to assist the parents or guardians in complying with our requests.

As with every aspect of your FLAG Camp Ministry, feel free to discuss any concerns or ideas with myself or the assistant director.

Brooke Scott
FLAG Camp Director

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 must be 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:

- Contribute to the quality of life and well-being of families in the community with children, Kindergarten through grade 8.
- Minister to campers and their families. As we are able to minister to campers, their parents are also impacted, including those who don't typically attend religious activities. Campers from the community can join Pathfinders or Adventures, may enroll in church school, and even become church members.
- Contribute to the growth and development (physically, emotionally, and spiritually) of children while they are in FLAG Camp.

CHAIN OF SUPERVISION

If at any time during your employment with the FLAG Camp Ministry you have a concern, suggestion, observation, or simply want to discuss your feelings on any matter, you have a prescribed chain of supervisors who will listen and assist you. Many problems can be solved at a low level in the chain and need not involve the next higher person. You should address your concerns to personnel in your chain in the following order:

- Your Co-Counselor
- Assistant Director
- Director
- Pastor

It is in the best interest of all concerned, you, the ministry and particularly the children, that you be comfortable and happy in your position. Do not hesitate to resolve personal or job-related situations through your chain of supervision. "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." (Romans 15:7)

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Collaborate effectively with the rest of the staff, director and assistant director.
- Share in the responsibility of maintaining an environment which is comfortable and appealing. (Help clean the building & grounds, organize supplies, etc.)
- Respect children and parents by maintaining confidentiality when applicable. Because we are a community ministry, you will undoubtedly hear and be aware of some confidential information concerning children and their families. We expect all staff members to use their best judgment and refrain from talking about this information to parents and anyone else not directly concerned with the matter.
- Be child oriented. A successful counselor is busy interacting with children throughout the day. (Cell phones have become especially problematic in the past and are not allowed except to make emergency or camp- related calls.)
- Participate in many other assigned duties such as staff meetings, morning worships and parent meetings, as well as fulfilling responsibilities when teaching classes. The welfare of the camp and its successful operation is largely dependent upon everyone's participation in many activities.
- Continue spiritual growth by being "kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

LEAVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PERSONAL/VACATION LEAVE: Personal leave is approved at the discretion of the director and should be requested before the summer begins. Staff shortages, short notice, and other factors may be reasons for denial of personal leave. All personal or vacation leave is considered unpaid leave.

SICK LEAVE: Staff unable to report to duty must notify the director/assistant director within a half hour of scheduled report time. If after hours, call the director at (269) 470-0431.

APPEARANCES

General Appearance

Clothing and shoes must be worn that ensure safety and maintain sanitary condition of themselves. Attire must be in good condition and whose appearance is conducive to the operation of FLAG Camp. Shirts must have official Flag Camp logo. Overall appearance must be clean and

neat at all times. Final assessment of appropriate attire is made at the discretion of the assistant director or director.

CAMP AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

The dress and appearance for the all staff must reflect the highest quality of appearance and professionalism. Here are our guidelines for clothing and appearance. Please know that our efforts in these areas are not anti-fashion but rather protective for our campers and staff. Our guidelines and decisions are intended for the well-being of all.

- Swimsuits are expected to be modest and should only be worn at times when it is appropriate. There should be no bikini or two-piece bathing suits that reveal the midriff. A t-shirt covering the swimsuit should be worn over any suit that is questionable.
- Pants and shorts must be modest in length. Solid colors are preferred, as you will look more professional. You must have footwear on at all times. FLAG Camp tee-shirts from previous summers are acceptable.
- All clothing should conceal all articles of underwear. This would include bra straps and boxer shorts.
- Any staff wearing clothing that does not comply with these standards will be asked to change.
- No Jewelry (rings, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, etc) is allowed to be worn during camp hours. Only exceptions include wedding bands, medical alert bands/bracelets, etc.
- Hair must be clean and well groomed.

SUMMARY

Decisions regarding appropriate attire will be addressed by the director and assistant director. Any areas not clear should be discussed with the either the director or assistant director.

PERSONAL BEHAVIOR

It is most important while working with children to consider the impressions we make and leave with them. Abusive language—both verbal and nonverbal—must be avoided at all times and is a violation of FLAG Camp policy. “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)

You are required to report for work on time (7:30 a.m.).

Incoming calls for staff members must be kept to an absolute minimum. As a general rule, a

message will be taken and you may return calls when you have a break. Cell phones are to be reserved for the purpose of contacting the administrative staff or for camper emergencies when away from camp base. Phones are not to be used for recreational purposes during camp hours.

Relationship and interaction with staff should be appropriate. No sitting on laps, hanging on each other, or flirting. We do not encourage staff to date each other, but if there is a relationship, staff are reminded they are at camp to work with campers and that must be the priority during camp hours.

Gossiping or the spread of rumors is an unacceptable behavior. This type of behavior will not be tolerated.

STAFF MEETINGS AND STAFF WORSHIPS

Daily staff meetings and morning worship are required attendance for all staff to attend and participate. This provides an opportunity to begin each day with a collaborative vision and purpose.

STAFF TRAINING

All paid staff are required to attend staff training unless special arrangements are made with the director.

All paid staff must be oriented in the following:

- The FLAG Camp's child care policies, including discipline, guidance and the release of children to guardians/ authorized individuals.
- The procedures to follow in handling emergencies.
- Use and location of first aid kits and fire extinguishers.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

1. Supervision of Children

- While on duty, you are responsible for the children in your unit. Their safety and well being are your most important consideration. Always know where each child is, what he/she is doing.
- An adequate number of staff must be present to protect the children's health and safety, insure opportunities for child and personal interactions and provide program activities. If for some reason the staff/child ratio exceeds that allowed, it must be called to the attention of the director or assistant director for immediate correction.

- Be alert to the total classroom situation. Use the most strategic and effective techniques for classroom management.
- Be alert to individual differences. No two children are the same. There are no standard methods that apply to all children. Different standards may have to be set for different children in the same group, but be consistent.
- Assist campers in becoming involved in an activity. Comfort and reassure any child who appears to be upset or ill at ease.
- Children must NEVER be left unattended.
- Each staff member will do his/her share to pick up after activities, keep personal belongings in their proper place, and generally care for the equipment, thus creating a neat environment and promoting a sense of pride in our camp.
- Learn the names of the children as soon as possible.
- A smile and a warm greeting as the child enters the room will make him/her feel good about coming to camp.
- When talking to children, it is helpful to get down on your knees so that you may establish eye-to-eye contact.

2. Class Rotations

- a. Lesson plans must be provided for each week's class. **Topics must be appropriate for elementary school age campers and approved by the director.** The director will be available to assist and help you while planning for classes or as issues arise during class time. Please do not hesitate to ask for any needed assistance.
- b. Your attitude toward campers should be warm, fair, calm and patient. The campers will then develop a loving and trustful attitude toward all of us. "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth." (1 Corinthians 13:4-6).
- c. All staff should gear their lesson plans to be appropriate for group age. Please remember that lessons designed for Kindergarteners will likely be presented very differently than those designed for 8th graders.

3. Parent Relations

- We are a service to the community and to the children. We must always be warm, loving, and deeply interested in the welfare of our campers.

- Greet each camper and parent with a warm smile and a "Hello." The transition which the camper makes from home to the camp each day can be difficult. A warm greeting makes him or her feel wanted, and an important part of the group. Learn and use camper's names as soon as possible. If they can feel secure from the minute they arrive, their day and yours will go much better. Every day, tell them how happy you are to see them.
- Make sure all campers' belongings are labeled!
- You need to know where all campers of your unit possessions are and be able to answer all questions when asked, (i.e., day's good and bad happenings, accidents, progress, etc.). You should make every effort to welcome parents and answer their questions about their child's daily activities. If you don't know the answer to a question, indicate you will find the answer. Ask other staff, the assistant director or director. Instead of saying, "I don't know," say "I'll find out."
- When talking with parents, be polite and courteous – never argumentative. If there are issues that arise, tell the director or assistant director and they will address it.
- Assist campers in preparing to depart camp prior to the parent's arrival: toileting, washing hands and face, gathering personal possessions.

4. Discipline

"Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." (Psalm 25:25).

- 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.
 - Confinement in closets, boxes, or similar places.
 - Binding to restrain movement of mouth or limb.
 - Humiliation or verbal abuse - the most common abuse of children.
 - Deprivation of meals or other program components. Short-term restrictions on the use of play equipment or participation in a specific activity are permissible, but the punishment must fit the infraction.
- Children will not be punished for refusing food.

Some Suggestions

- If physical violence erupts between two or more children, intervene immediately. Comfort the child who has been attacked. Make every effort to direct the children back to more constructive activities. Call the director immediately.
- Be at eye level when talking to children—have their attention.
- Set realistic standards of behavior. In correcting behavior state: "What you are doing is...and what you need to do instead is..."
- Compliment or reinforce acceptable behavior. Create willingness to cooperate by focusing on and creating positive interactions.
- Use praise (be specific though.) Combine this with positive redirection and you will see a changed child.

5. Lunch

- Lunch will be eaten outside, weather permitting. Otherwise, we will eat in the Pathfinder Building. Counselors will eat with and interact with their unit during lunch. Each counselor is responsible to make sure their lunch area (table included) is cleaned up. Counselors can assign campers to help with different responsibilities.
- Have all campers wash hands with warm water and soap before eating. The use of baby wipes will not be permitted for hand washing. Assist young campers as necessary.
- Familiarize yourself with campers who have allergies; a list is posted in the community room. Ensure that children are not given food to which they are allergic.
- Allow children sufficient time to eat an enjoyable meal.
- Use of the kitchen is allowed from 12:00-12:15pm. You must plan ahead for your meals. Keep microwave items to a minimum and do not use it every day.

6. Swimming, Games, and Group Activities

- Never allow children out of your sight.
- Patrol and participate; do not sit down unless necessary to become actively involved in a particular activity with the children. Ensure that caregivers are spread throughout the playground.
- Children may not climb on fences, swing frames, trees or buildings.

7. Equipment and Materials

- Equipment and materials are costly. It is your responsibility to use them wisely. Paper, paint, brushes and all expendable items are supplies that must be used with forethought so as not to

waste. Non- expendable items (puzzles, books, toys, etc.) must be handled with care; children should be taught to use them with respect. Participating with the children as they play and learn is the best method for teaching proper care of items.

- All equipment and materials must be in clean, organized condition. Broken or missing items must be reported to the assistant director or director.

8. Room Organizations

You have a responsibility to work with the other staff in your room to ensure good maintenance and care of all equipment, furniture, etc.

9. Staff Responsibilities (miscellaneous information).

- Attendance records kept current for each line call throughout the day. Attendance must be accurate to ensure we account for all campers in our care. Also, if a child is not marked present, the family is not charged for the day, thus resulting in reduced revenue.
- Children are to be released only to those parents or adults who are authorized to pick them up. Any other person picking up children must see the administrative assistant or camp director.

10. Health and Safety

- Accidents will be reported to the assistant director or director immediately. The staff who witnessed the accident must file an accident report. Depending on the severity of the injury the parent will be called. All accidents, even minor ones, needed to be reported immediately.
- If a child becomes ill, the parent will be called. The child will wait in the lobby with the camp director, assistant camp director or administrative assistant until the parent comes.

11. Medication

- Medication must be in the original container.
- The director or assistant director will keep, store and administer any medications and will sign names on medication charts.

12. Emergency Procedures

- Regular monthly fire drills are conducted. Attendance sheets are taken with staff so they can account for children.
- Exit route diagrams are posted by exits.

STAFF JOB DESCRIPTION:

CAMP COUNSELOR & TEACHER Qualifications:

- Be at least 15 years old, freshman in high school.

Primary Responsibilities:

- Be responsible for a group of campers called "units"
- During line call –help campers to be present, in line, quiet, and following directions and take attendance
- During classes and activities—stay with unit, keep them occupied with the activity, assist the teacher
- During lunch—help with lunch distribution, teach table manners, and supervise clean up
- During pool preparation—supervise campers, applying sunscreen if outside, changing, etc.
- Prepare class lessons or activities
- Teach or lead out in your assigned class or activity

Key Activities and Tasks:

- Aid teachers during classes
- Actively participate in games and activities and encourage camper participation
- Assist in supervision of games, pool, and other activities
- Class/activity related responsibilities
- Prepare necessary materials and equipment
- Care for and organize needed materials and supplies
- Involve all campers in classes or activities
- **Incorporate the spiritual lessons designed for each class and activities**

Who to Report to:

Camp Director

Camp Assistant Director

Camp Admin

QUALIFICATIONS AND CRITERIA

A Positive Attitude: Good staff members are enthusiastic and look on the bright side of life. They find ways to make fun in the situation and to lift the spirits of the campers with songs, stories, and creative group games. When asked to clean up, they do it with a smile and a willing spirit.

Responsible Actions: Valuable staff take responsibility for their actions and don't play the blame game. They take care of the people and things entrusted to them. They show up on time and follow through with assigned tasks. They are prepared for camp activities and actively participate.

Ability to Work Well with People: Great staff are friendly, patient and encourage others. They demonstrate flexibility with different personalities. When faced with disobedient campers, or a distressed parent, they respond with love and sensitivity rather than anger.

Proactive Habits: The best staff see what needs to be done and do it. They are aware when materials need to be picked up around the campsite and do the job before being asked. When campers look restless after lunch or during other breaks, they begin an activity that involves everyone.

Mature Judgment: Quality staff know what is appropriate and act accordingly. They don't talk about their own personal issues with campers or negatively about other staff members. They are careful of what they say and do and are aware how their actions may affect other people.

Are Safety Aware: Priceless staff members are aware of safety issues. Flag camp should be a safe place for the campers and staff are aware of what makes camp safe.

A Christ-Centered Lifestyle: Superior staff members let Christ be Lord of their lives. To them, camp is viewed as a mission, not a job. Their commitment is made evident daily by their love for others and their personal lifestyle. They have active devotional lives.