

**Junior Counselor Handbook**

**Summer 2024**

**Mission**

Elevation Camp exists to help guide children to new life in God and to develop them into passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

**Goals**

The Junior Counselor Program exists to help build young adolescents’ confidence and develop essential and transferable skills applicable in education, work, and life. We aim to provide an encouraging atmosphere where Junior Counselors can learn and develop professional skills, gain hands-on experience, build friendships, and enjoy their summer.

**Purpose of the Handbook**

This handbook is an outline of what to expect of the Junior Counselor Program and what our program expects of you. Everything you need to know to prepare yourself is in these brief pages.

**Elevation Camp Core Values: What Guides Our Ministry**

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| **Core Value** | **What does this mean?** |
| **Christ–Centered** | Jesus is our ultimate authority and model for life. We passionately seek Him for guidance always. We must put God first in everything we plan and do. |
| **Heart–Focused** | Luke 10:27 “‘Love the Lord your God with all you heart, all your soul, all your strength, and all your mind’ and ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”  Our desire is to develop a close relationship with the Lord. |
| **Relationship–Driven** | We believe transformation and growth comes through relationships and small group interaction. Once healthy relationships are built between two people, others are open to receive Christ as Lord and Savior. |
| **Innovative & Relevant** | Children respond to and can relate to fun and exciting things. We want to spark children’s interest in the Bible so they will not only know God’s Word, but start living it, applying God’s Word to their lives every day. |
| **Safe** | Safety includes physical, emotional, and spiritual safety. Parents and families trust us with the care of their children. This key value informs our structure. Staff are screened through applications and background checks and they must be followers of Jesus Christ. |
| **Thoughtfully –Responsive** | Our goal is to see ministry through our children’s eyes. To build trust with a child, we must meet their needs by being thoughtful of their perspective. All children are different – the needs of one will not determine the needs of another. |

**What is a Junior Counselor?**

The Junior Counselor (JC) is considered both a camper and a counselor-in-training. The JC’s day will consist of training sessions, daily tasks, skill practice, and typical camper activities, such as swimming and free time. JC responsibilities include following the JC Supervisor’s instruction, participating in training sessions, active self-reflection, and completing daily tasks. JCs will receive a “Progress Report” home and will be encouraged to review it with their parents. JCs will report to the JC Supervisor.

**Participation Requirements:**

* Age 13-15 going into 8th-10th grades
* Parental permission and commitment to program participation
* Family must be members of New Life Church and/or Attend Carver Academy
* $85 per week (covers lunch, snack, training materials, etc.)
* Commitment to full week attendance. Arrival must be by 8:55AM

**Form Requirements:**

* Junior Counselor Application
* Youth Camp Health Exam/Record
* Pick-Up Authorization Form
* Rock Climbing Wall Permission Form

**Expectations:**

1. **Be Respectful** - Treat others the way God wants you to treat them
2. **Demonstrate Self-Control** - Have control of your words and actions
3. **Practice Humility** - Encourage one another and ask for help
4. **Be Careful** - Maintain appropriate language and body language
5. **Be Alert**- Be aware of your surroundings and if you have a concern, share it with your supervisor
6. **Be Responsible** - Follow directions the first time
7. **Be Proactive** - Actively work toward team and individual goals

**Primary Responsibilities:**

1. Active participation in training sessions
2. Following supervisor’s instructions
3. Completing daily tasks which may include
   1. Setting up materials for daily theme activity
   2. Assisting Activities Coordinator
   3. Cleaning up after daily theme activity
   4. Setting up for lunch
   5. Helping with sports equipment

**Calling Out/Absences**

If the Junior Counselor is sick, please contact your supervisor as soon as possible to inform them about your absence. This contact should go through the parent/guardian, however, the Junior Counselor must be prompt in communication with their parent as it is their responsibility.

**Bathroom**

Junior Counselors will exclusively use Bathroom 2 (attached to South Ridge). There will be scheduled breaks where JC’s can use the bathroom. Older Campers will also be using bathroom 2, so the JC Supervisor will discern when and how many JC’s can use the facilities when not during their break times to avoid conflict in the bathroom.

**Dress Code & Modesty Policy:**

We practice and promote modesty for all campers and counselors. Everyone should feel comfortable and appropriate. No one should worry about what they or others are wearing. We teach that God created us, each special and unique. We must honor our bodies and learn that beauty comes from within, not our outward appearance.

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment… Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” 1 Peter 3:3-4

**Daily Attire:** Clean & appropriate T-Shirt, pants or shorts (no shorter than half-way between thigh and knee), and sneakers. Shorts for all must reach at least halfway down the thigh. Clothing with explicit images and language, inappropriate references, and content contrary to what is taught in the Bible will not be allowed to be worn.

**Swim Attire:**

* Males - Non-white shirt and swim trunks
* Females - Non-white t-shirts over the bathing suit, the entire torso (chest, midriff, & behind) must be covered

If clothes are deemed inappropriate or immodest, the JC will be required to change

**Cell Phone & Socialization Policy:**

Cellular devices, smart phones, tablets, and the like are not to be used during the camp day. JCs phones will be in a secure bin during the camp day 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM. For emergencies, parents/families may call the camp number or supervisor/director direct number.

When on your phone/social media, **Be Mindful** and remember:

1. You represent yourself, your family, New Life Church, Elevation Camp, and most importantly - God, when you text or post publicly.
2. The Internet is forever! Once something is posted, written, or said, you can’t take it back.
3. Whatever you post follows you. Future schools, employers, and networks will be able to see everything. ***Decisions now impact outcomes later.***

To maintain **integrity** while socializing and getting to know each other:

1. Adhere to the **Rule of Three**: Always be with at least two other people at all times
   1. Yourself & two other JCs
   2. Yourself & two counselors
   3. Yourself, counselor, & camper
2. NO opposite gender pairs alone, must be in view and earshot of a third human
3. Maintain Appropriate Physical Contact - You are the Role Model
   1. Engage in non-physical forms of encouragement
   2. Side hugs and quick normal hugs are acceptable
   3. NO sitting in each other’s lap, or allowing campers in your lap
   4. Avoid questionable scenarios
4. Any relationships that go beyond friendships stay off church property and off camp time.

**Matthew 18 Policy:**

We have a responsibility as Christians and as team members to hold each other accountable and help each other grow.

**15** “If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. **16** But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. **17** If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won’t accept the church’s decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.” - Matthew 18:15-17 NLT

When you notice another falling short of expectations and responsibilities, you must:

1. Respectfully address the issue with the person. Give a gentle reminder.
2. If they do not heed your encouraging reminder, ask one other to accompany you in reminding them again. This is your witness.
3. If the behavior/action continues, bring it up to your supervisor who will address it accordingly.

**Injury Policy:**

All injuries (minor scrapes, bruises, bumps to bleeding, head injuries, bee stings) will be handled by our First Aid Director or another trained staff in their absence. The first aid station is located in South Ridge Connector.

* If you experience an injury, report to your supervisor immediately.
* If a camper experiences an injury, notify the counselor and First Aid Director immediately.
* If life-threatening (difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, broken limb), we call 9-1-1 and Notify the First Aid Director immediately. Then, we remove all campers and non-essential persons from the injured.

**Policy for Emergencies:**

**Fire and Evacuation**

1. Director will communicate the emergency.
2. Count how many campers and JCs you have.
3. Keep children calm and guide your group quietly to the far field.
4. Once there, count campers and JCs. Communicate with the director via walkie talkie.
5. While waiting – pray & reassure your campers.
6. The director will tell you when you may resume activity.
7. The director will debrief with you afterwards.

**Lockdown**

1. Director will communicate the emergency via walkie talkie.
2. Quickly and quietly guide your group back to the main bay.
3. The director and counselors will close all doors and lock down.
4. Keep campers quiet and calm in the bathrooms.
5. Director will notify you when you may resume activity.
6. Reassure campers, pray, and resume activity.
7. The director will debrief with you afterwards.

**Inclement Weather**

1. The director will inform you when you will implement the rain day or hot day schedule.
2. If the weather gets worse, all groups will relocate to the main bay.
3. In case of extreme weather, enact the Extreme Weather Schedule and parents will be called to pick up their children.

**Consequences:**

Junior Counselors must do their best to fulfill their duties and meet expectations of their role. When expectations are not being met, they will receive a set of simple reminders. Their supervisor will say “***That’s one***” and “***That’s two***” for the first two reminders. If the JC needs a third, the supervisor will say “***That’s three***.” The consequence of needing a third reminder will be a note indicated on their Progress Report as well as the JC’s choice of 1) an extra cleaning task, 2) a writing assignment related to their misconduct, or 3) time off of free time/pool time.

The supervisor reserves the ability to discern if only two reminders are necessary, depending on the severity of the offense, i.e. crossing physical boundaries, safety risks. Any reminders needed past three within the same day will result in a phone call to the parents/family.

**Dismissal Policy:**

If a JC participant has a significant pattern of inappropriate behaviors, there will be a discussion of dismissal from the program. There are no refunds associated with dismissals, regardless of cause. A discussion between supervisor, JC, and parent will accompany the verbal and written warning prior to dismissal. Elevation Camp directors and supervisors reserve the ability to skip verbal or written warnings depending on the severity of misconduct.

***Patterns of Inappropriate Behaviors:***

* Inappropriate language/topics/actions
* Disregard for authority or instruction
* Lack of progress or a significant regression

***Severe Behaviors Warranting Immediate Dismissal:***

* Physical Violence
* Threats
* Bullying
* Endangering Self or Others

**What You Will Need to Bring (Label ALL Belongings):**

* Swimsuit and non-white t-shirt
* Flip-Flops/Sandals
* Towel
* Sunscreen, hat, sunglasses
* Water Bottle
* Bag

**What to Expect on Your First Day:**

You will arrive, fill out your lunch menu for the week, and join the other JC’s and your JC Supervisor. The typical schedule is as follows. You will have lunch with the campers and then enjoy the pool! The most important thing is to have an open mind and be ready for whatever challenges and activities will come your way!

**Typical Daily Schedule:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Activity** | **Location** |
| 8:30 - 8:55 AM | Arrival (Free Time) | Upper Pavilion |
| 9:00 - 9:30 AM | Worship & Devotional | Main Bay/Auditorium |
| 9:30 - 10:20 AM | Training Session | TBD - Varies |
| 10:20 - 10:30 AM | Bathroom Break | Bathroom 2 |
| 10:30 - 11:30 AM | Assist Activity Director - work on specific skill from training session | TBD - Varies |
| 11:30 - 12:00 PM | Set Up Lunch & Help Hand Out Drinks | Lunch Tables |
| 12:00 - 12:30 PM | Lunch (1-2 JC per team) | Lunch Tables |
| 12:30 - 12:45 PM | Change for Pool | Bathroom 2 |
| 12:45 - 1:45 PM | Pool | Pool |
| 1:45 - 2:00 PM | Change back | Bathroom 2 |
| 2:00 - 2:30 PM | Training Review/Reflection | TBD - Varies |
| 2:30 - 2:45 PM | Snack & Free Time | TBD - Varies |
| 2:45 - 3:00 PM | Cleaning Tasks | TBD - Varies |

**Pool Rules and Expectations**

***General Pool Rules:***

1. All persons shall bathe with warm water and soap before entering the pool.
2. Any persons known or suspected of having a communicable disease shall not use the pool.
3. **Spitting or blowing the nose in the pool is prohibited.**
4. Running, boisterous or rough play is prohibited.
5. Pool will be cleared if thunder is heard or lightening is seen and closed until at least 30 minutes after the last thunder or lightning.
6. No diving or jumping in the pool.

***Kid-Friendly Expectations:***

1. Stay clean with good hygiene! Wash up at home before coming to camp.
2. Walking feet ONLY in the pool areas.
3. We keep safe hands and feet to ourselves. We do not hang on one another or splash each other’s faces.
4. We use the stairs and ladders to get in and out of the pool. No jumping, diving, or sliding in from the side. We do not play on the stairs or ladders.
5. We keep our hands out of our mouths and noses. We do not spit or blow our noses.
6. When you hear the lifeguard whistle, you STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN to the lifeguard.
7. All campers 3rd grade or younger must pass a swim test with the lifeguard to be allowed in the deep end.
8. If you are asked to sit out, follow directions immediately. If you don’t understand why, wait until after you have followed all the directions, and the counselor or director will speak with you.

***Pool Consequences for Poor Behavior:***

It is a privilege to be able to use the pool. Having pool time means we have the responsibility to keep everyone safe and act appropriately. If you do not follow any of the rules,

1. The first time, you get one warning only.
2. The second time, you will sit out for 10 minutes.
3. Any unsafe, inappropriate behavior past this will result in sitting out for the rest of pool time and a phone call to your family.

**Weekly Progress Reports**

Each week, JC participants will receive a “Progress Report” to take home to reflect on. This report is to encourage our adolescents in a tangible way. Example:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name:** | | | | **Week:** | |
| **Attendance:** | **Mon 🔲** | **Tues 🔲** | **Wed 🔲** | **Thurs 🔲** | **Fri 🔲** |
| **Met Expectations** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Count & Consequence** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Goal of the Week:** | | | | | **Progress:** |
| **Strengths:** | | | | | |
| **Area of Improvement:** | | | | | |
| **Junior Counselor:** | | **Parent:** | | **JC Supervisor:** | |