



SUMMER STAFF HANDBOOK



THIS HANDBOOK BELONGS TO:

WELCOME TO CAMP SONSHINE!



ARE YOU READY TO BEGIN THE JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME?!

Imagine if there was a place where the focus was on creating a unique environment for campers and their families to experience positive life transformation and God's love. A place where the activities were as innovative and creative as the people who lead them. And a place where the most joyful, energetic and loving people came together with a commitment to being the kinds of positive role models today's kids need.

Well that place does exist, and you've been hired to work here!

It's no accident that you are here. We've been praying for you and believe that God has called you and appointed you to bear fruit this summer. The beginning of a life-changing experience starts right here and we are so excited that you've answered God's call to serve Him at Camp Sonshine. We can't wait to serve alongside of you this summer!

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is both a resource and a tool to help you be successful at Camp Sonshine! **This also serves as Part 1 of your Summer Staff Training Manual and you will need to bring it with you to orientation.** You'll notice some headings and other pieces of information are missing. We'll be providing the answers to those spaces in conjunction with some of our pre-summer training activities. We'll also be sharing some fun facts and bits of information that will help you get to know Camp Sonshine. As we post things to the Summer Staff SLACK Messaging App or send you an email, be sure to fill in those blanks and take notes! You will be responsible for knowing the topics in this book and will want to have things filled out before you arrive.

☐ To help you keep track of which sections you have read, we have included check boxes for you to check off as you complete each section.

There are also a couple of hidden secrets in this book.* Keep your eyes open and you could earn a sweet treat this summer! We've also provided places for you to jot down ideas, questions or notes you want to have handy, so let your creative juices flow!

Please don't hesitate to let us know if you need anything. We are always happy to help! You can call the office at 402-423-8746 or email your questions to our Recruiting Manager at info@CampSonshineMemories.org. We look forward to seeing you soon!

ABOUT CAMP SONSHINE

Camp Sonshine is a non-profit, Christian camping organization with three locations near Lincoln, Nebraska. (We also run two international camp programs!) Camp Sonshine's summer camp programs give kids and teens a safe place to experience personal growth, make new friends, and overcome challenges in a fun, faith-filled environment.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our passion is to unlock and unleash Kingdom builders by leveraging camp experiences to create a place to **BELONG & BECOME!**



“ I love that Camp Sonshine has shown me my passion for working with kids and developed my skills in getting to be a part of their spiritual, creative, and imaginative experience. I also love pouring into the kids and showing them who the Lord is. Camp Sonshine has also poured so much into me as a believer.

- Sadie, Staff Alumni



ONE POWERFUL MINISTRY - THREE GREAT LOCATIONS

DAY CAMP

- Two locations located near Roca, Nebraska (2 miles south of Lincoln) - Sonshine & Shiloh
- All-day camp activities
- Campers go home at the end of the day
- Each session is one week long (Monday-Saturday)
- Extended camper experience on Friday night
- Camp clean up on Saturday morning

Program Details

- Explorer Camp: 1st – 2nd Grade (@ Sonshine)
- Adventure Camp: 3rd – 4th Grade (@Sonshine)
- High Adventure: 5th – 6th Grade (@Shiloh)
- Teen Adventure: 7th - 9th Grade (@Shiloh)
- Leader In Training (LIT): 7th – 9th Grade (@Sonshine)

OVERNIGHT CAMP

- Solaris is located in Firth, Nebraska (20 miles south of Lincoln)
- Location of our Overnight Camp Programs
- A blend of large & small group adventure activities
- Off-site excursions
- Sessions vary and are 3 or 5 nights long
- Dorm-style residence
- End of Session Cookout on last night of session

Program Details

- Journey: 3rd – 6th Grade | 3 night camp
- Expedition: 5th – 9th Grade | 5 night camp
- LIT: 9th Grade | 3 night camp

HIGH SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

At all locations, we have our Assistant Counselor program! Assistant Counselors fulfill a variety of vitally important roles within camp like...helping with camper groups, leading scheduled games & activities, and working behind the scenes to help ensure campers are having the best experience possible!

CAMP SONSHINE'S CORE VALUES

Buying into and living out the core values of Camp Sonshine is not something that we hope our staff members will just accidentally fall into.

While certain values may manifest themselves more naturally in different people at different times, we recognize that adhering to these values and allowing them to formulate a grid by which to filter all actions and decisions is a choice that each person has to make on a daily basis.

THEREFORE, AT CAMP SONSHINE, WE CHOOSE TO:

BELONG

We strive to create, maintain and participate in a community where the love of God is experienced by all.

BECOME

We remain teachable as we promote and pursue positive growth to become more fully who God created us to be.

BELIEVE

We infuse a positive and uplifting perspective into every relationship, circumstance and situation we experience.

Go BEYOND

We initiate exceptional service and do not settle for the minimum standard or effort.

**“Have a vision so big,
that unless God intervenes,
it will fail.”**

These were the words that inspired the founding and current directors, Jeff and Trisha Keiser, to step out in faith to start Camp Sonshine.



CAMP LIFE



OVERVIEW

As a counselor, you will be giving up a great deal of privacy and comfort, working long and demanding hours, and adhering to camp policies which may be limiting and not necessarily reflect your normal way of living.

It is important that you have accurate expectations for what will be required of you during your time of ministry at Camp Sonshine. There are various reasons for the policies and guidelines that have been established:

- Our desire for those who minister here is to separate themselves for the purpose of ministry and to live a life above reproach.
- As a result of our living arrangements and size, these policies are necessary to make life run much smoother for everyone.
- To live in unity, we must all demonstrate a respect for the convictions of others. These guidelines help make that easier.
- Some policies are in place because Camp Sonshine enjoys an excellent reputation in the community, and we want to preserve that. Staff members help maintain the wholesome and professional reputation that parents and our community associate with Camp Sonshine.

Each of these policies have been made prayerfully and with consideration of many details. We understand that some or all of this may be a sacrifice for many of our counselors. **It is our prayer that our staff will look at these areas as a small sacrifice in comparison to the opportunity to influence so many lives.**

Camp Sonshine is a ministry, and while we may encourage some things and discourage others, we know that you will have the good of others in mind. We will treat you like an adult capable of making good decisions about your own life, but please also be conscious of others around you and their personal standards/beliefs. We are all in this together!



WEEKENDS & LIMITED FREE TIME

Please realize that you will have limited free time, even on weekends. You should expect to have especially limited time during training, when there may be extended training sessions or meetings. Ministering at Camp Sonshine is a position for flexible persons, and you should expect to have unanticipated extended hours throughout the summer. During the day, staff members do not have free time. Personal business needs to be done either before the summer or during your limited free time. In addition, we strongly discourage staff members from taking correspondence courses during the summer or planning additional employment or volunteer service during the summer. A divided attention is beneficial to neither commitment. Each staff member, regardless of site (day or overnight camp), typically gets 1 1/2 days off on the weekend - no less than 24 hours!



CAMP HOUSING

Staff members living within 30 minutes of camp are expected to live at home, while staff who live further will be assigned to camp housing. In your housing situation this summer, you will have fun, as well as be challenged to live together with others in unity. In choosing to come to Camp Sonshine, it is assumed that you are in agreement of following the house rules of the camp and your host family and willing to show love and forgive on a daily basis.

Each counselor will also share in weekly cleaning assignments in his/her home. Regardless of where you are placed, all counselors are expected to live with an attitude of respect for others in the home. To ensure that everyone receives adequate rest, Camp Sonshine does provide expectations for lights out and times to be in the home. These expectations will be covered more in depth during Training.



GUEST POLICY

All requests for visitors must be approved by the Camp Directors in advance.

Housing: Housing is not provided for visitors and host homes should never be asked to house a guest. Staff members are never allowed in the opposite sex's housing unit.

Camper Interaction: Campers should not, under any circumstance, be invited to a staff member's house. Visitors are not permitted to work directly with campers. No person may interact with campers without first going through the entire application and hiring process, including background screening and reference checks.



CHURCH

Because it is vital for our staff to be spiritually nourished, everyone employed by Camp Sonshine is encouraged to attend church on Sundays (or Saturday evenings). Counselors may choose to attend other churches, but most choose to worship together at Lincoln Berean Church, a highly supportive church to Camp Sonshine's ministry and church home for many campers and their families.



COMMUNICATION WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Phones: Cell phone use during the camp day is strictly prohibited. Counselors are required to fully turn off their phones during the camp day. Complete attention needs to be on the children being cared for and cell phones create a distraction from your duties. Please let your family and friends know that you cannot receive calls or texts during the day when your responsibility is on the children. All emergency communication should come through the camp office at (402) 423-8746 and you will be notified immediately.

Receiving Mail & Packages: All staff mail should be sent to Camp Sonshine directly and should NEVER be mailed to a host home. All mail received at camp will be delivered to you at your specific location.

Summer Mailing Address



Social Media :

Can I Interact With Campers On Social Media?

Short answer. It depends. Long answer... Camp does have a few policies pertaining to the use of social media sites:

- Photos of you and your campers may be posted, but under no circumstance should the names of any child be listed.
- Please avoid posting photos/portraits of individual children. It's preferred that photos of kids be taken as a group or while involved in a particular camp activity.
- You may accept friend requests from campers & LITs but under no circumstance should private messages be sent. Anything requiring that level of privacy should be discussed face to face and within the visibility of others. Keep in mind, anything you do or say online, whether good or bad, either during or after the summer, is permanent & will probably be seen by campers and parents.

How Can I Be Wise On Social Media?

Instagram, Facebook, and other sites are excellent ways to keep supporters and prayer partners up to date with your life at camp.

Not every experience at camp may be as positive as one would like. Everyone is entitled to their own opinions, however, the online venting, complaining and/or otherwise verbal attacking of co-workers, parents, campers, or Camp Sonshine in general, will not be tolerated. There are more mature & effective ways to deal with disappointment that don't involve damaging your personal testimony or the reputation of Camp Sonshine and others through social media attacks and posts.

Posts made prior to camp that are questionable or inappropriate may be addressed by camp directors and could result in cancelation of contract.



FUN FACT: MINI HORSES ARE THE BEST!

We have a miniature pony who is beloved by all. Her full name is Sassy Rae and she looks forward to meeting you and your campers this summer.

“**Camp is awesome. Straight up.** So if you're apprehensive about it, know that God has put you here for a reason, and that reason will impact His Kingdom. I hope that God will bless you and give you energy as you embark on a life-changing experience not only for your campers but for the internal changes you will have. Welcome to a family of Christ believers who love you and want to continue to love on you for your entire life. You will be meeting lifelong friends.”

- Josh J. Jones, Staff Alumni

MEALS

If Camp Sonshine is providing your housing, then all of your meals will also be provided. Please realize that this is “camp food” and not fine dining. Camp Sonshine tries to accommodate special dietary restrictions as is reasonable.

Bringing/buying extra snacks at the store is a great idea for those who need a little more or have special food preferences beyond what is provided.

If Camp Sonshine does not provide your housing, camp will still provide your lunch and dinner everyday, but you are responsible for your own breakfast and weekend foods.

INSURANCE

All staff members are required to have personal health insurance. Any staff member who does not must sign the waiver included on the Health History form. Camp Sonshine DOES NOT provide auto insurance for staff vehicles.

TRANSPORTATION

We encourage anyone who can to bring a car due to the freedom it provides. For those without cars, camp will make arrangements to get you to and from work each day as well as a limited number of store trips.



LIFESTYLE POLICIES

Camp Sonshine seeks to maintain positive community relationships and spiritual integrity because we understand that these both play vital roles in making the summer successful. With this in mind, we expect all our staff to show concern and respect for each other in matters of personal habits, attitudes, and conduct. These include the matters relating to:

RELATIONSHIPS

Being a quality Christian camp, there are many opportunities to make great friends. While we encourage friendship, we discourage starting dating relationships during the summer. We have found in the past that people who have gotten involved in a relationship during camp have encountered more problems than those who have not. In the event that focus is lost during camp for any reason and it hinders your relationships or effectiveness with the campers or staff of Camp Sonshine, or if rules are blatantly broken, appropriate action will be taken, which may include termination of your employment. In addition, any romantic relationship between a staff member and a minor is grounds for dismissal. A "minor" is any person under the age of 18, and includes LITs (Leader In Training) and ACs (Assistant Counselors).

PERSONAL SEXUAL PURITY

It is important for our staff to understand the importance of sexual purity in their interpersonal relationships. Biblical standards for human sexuality clearly prescribe a heterosexual relationship within the context of marriage and sexual chastity for those who are single. (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18-24; Galatians 5:19; Colossians 2:5) Staff who do not conform their conduct to this will face immediate dismissal as we believe that confused sexuality and unrepentant sexual sin can have serious consequences on the effectiveness of the ministry of the staff members involved, and on Camp Sonshine as a whole.

SMOKING, ALCOHOL, DRUGS & THEFT

Camp Sonshine has a zero tolerance policy for and entirely prohibits theft and any consumption, or use of: alcohol, drugs, chewing tobacco, smoking or vaping for all seasonal employees during the summer months. This includes both on and off the campgrounds. Any seasonal employee caught practicing these will be disciplined, which may include dismissal.

THE WORDS YOU SAY...

While we strongly encourage both positive and negative feedback about Camp Sonshine, administration, or problems you might be experiencing, we are opposed to negative complaining, gossip or lack of team effort. One of the most destructive forces to a cohesive team is complaining or negative discussion at inappropriate times. Thus our goal is Ephesians 4:29, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." We also discourage certain words and topics to be used around campers such as "crap", "suck", "shut up" or other types of "bathroom talk".

Profanity - Use of profanity in any way towards campers, staff members, parents, or anyone on and off camp grounds is not acceptable. Any seasonal employee caught practicing this will be disciplined, which may lead to dismissal.

MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT

Personal Music - To respect the convictions of others, please do not listen to secular music while in camp-owned buildings or vehicles, or while on duty. At independent host homes, if you want to listen to secular music, it should first be discussed with and "OK'd" by the host family and your roommates, or listened to privately with headphones.

Work Music - Please do not listen to secular music during camp related activities directly affecting staff members or campers. Please note that the rationale behind this guideline is respecting the various convictions of our staff and camper families.

Television, Movies & Games - TV is to be off during Quiet Hours. During TV times and occasional weekend trips to the theater, counselors are expected to be careful what they "feed" their minds and spirits and should have no part in watching unwholesome shows or movies. Camp does not restrict the rating of movies seen off-site but does challenge each counselor to carefully consider the content and subject matter of the films being taken in. No R-rated videos are allowed to be shown on campgrounds or in camp provided housing.

Please Note: Lifestyle Policies are in effect throughout the entire summer, whether the staff member is on-grounds or off-grounds.

WALKING IN THE WORD

Take some time to consider how Scripture addresses our attitudes and interactions with others.

- Romans 12:1-2
- Ephesians 4:25-32
- Philippians 4:4-7
- Colossians 3:12-17

"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."
- Colossians 3:17



STAFF ATTENDANCE

With only 50 camp days in the summer, staff attendance each day is critical. Relationships formed with campers are crucial and missing even one day can disrupt your group's dynamics.

Absence - There are no sick days (or paid absences for any reason) at Camp Sonshine. IN AN EXTREME CASE of illness-related absence:

- The staff member must notify his/her Head Counselor before morning meetings.
- The staff member is required to visit a doctor.
- The staff member must turn in a doctor's note.

If a staff member misses a full day due to illness he/she will not be allowed to return for dinner or other social events that evening. Dinner will be delivered to you. Only a Director may make an exception to any aspect of this policy.

Lateness - Lateness is not permitted. If a staff member is late to or absent from a meeting, including team devotionals, morning meetings, and Action Teams, the staff member will be given a warning. If there is no improvement, appropriate actions will be taken that may include reduced pay due to time missed.

THE "SONSHINE LOOK"

The "Sonshine Look" is an integral part of our staff standard. Regardless of your age, there is a consistency in this image that evokes a feeling of confidence and security both on the parts of the parents and the campers. Camp Sonshine has an extraordinary mixture of high standards, vision, and fun. Camp Sonshine enjoys an excellent reputation in the community, and we want to preserve that.

For this reason, we ask the counselors to be modest in clothing, hairstyles, and anything else pertaining to personal appearance. Parents will size you up with a critical eye because you are standing in for them as role models and caretakers for their children. We ask that staff members adhere to the following guidelines during employment at Camp Sonshine, whether on or off grounds:

PLEASE LOOK PROFESSIONAL AND READY FOR CAMP EVERY DAY.

FOR THE GUYS

Hair & Piercings:

Sport a mohawk for wacky hair day! Otherwise, radical hairstyles and unnatural hair coloring are not permitted. Piercings are not allowed for men, unless special arrangements are made.

Swimsuits:

Many counselors prefer to wear swim trunks to camp so they don't have to change mid-day. Make sure swimwear is functional and modest - no speedo style swimwear please!

Shorts:

Wear comfortable, presentable shorts/pants to camp everyday. Please do not wear tight fitting shorts, spandex, or cut-offs. Shorts or pants should be functional for the camp day and have no holes or stains.

FOR EVERYONE

Staff Shirt:

This is the centerpiece of the "Sonshine look." Whenever you wear it, it identifies you as a child care professional. Staff members are required to wear their Staff Shirt each camp day. You will be issued 5 light blue staff shirts. Staff shirts may not be altered for any reason, and may never be given to campers or other non-staffers.

Backpack:

Contains a counselor's entire life. May include but is not limited to: first aid kit, snacks, extra staff shirt, staff manual, camper info-sheets, play-dough, notes, tricks, Bible and more.

Durable Closed-Toe Shoes:

Please wear a tough pair of comfy shoes that are ready to be beaten up, trek through the mud, and even win a smelly shoe contest. If you bring open-toed shoes including Chacos, Crocs, flip-flops or sandals, you may wear them only when you are not "on duty".

FOR THE GIRLS

Hair & Piercings:

Radical hairstyles and unnatural hair coloring are not permitted - except on wacky hair day. Also, no exposed or facial body piercings other than earrings, which should be no larger than a quarter.

Swimsuits:

Please bring a modest one-piece swimsuit or tankini. Tankinis should only reveal less than a one-inch midriff between the two pieces. Tankinis should have at least a one inch strap for the top piece.

Shorts:

Wear comfortable, modest shorts or pants to camp everyday. Please do not wear yoga pants, shorts shorter than mid-thigh, spandex, or cut-offs. Shorts or pants should be functional and have no holes or stains.

FOR EVERYONE: Weekends & Personal Time:

Even though the majority of your time will be spent doing Camp, there will be times outside the camp day to wear other clothes - yay! You will want to bring some clothes for church on Sundays. During personal time, please remember you are a representative of Camp Sonshine and all of the above guidelines for modesty are in effect.

FOR EVERYONE: Other Required Items:

Items you should have everyday that aren't described above include: water bottle, wrist watch (phones don't count), Bible, and notebook. You will receive a full packing list before the summer begins. Smart Watches are highly discouraged due to the "environmental" dangers of the camp day (i.e. water, mud, happy tears, fire, horse saliva, paint, slime, etc.).



JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION: GROUP COUNSELOR
RESPONSIBLE TO: CAMP DIRECTORS

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To develop genuine and meaningful relationships with campers, and to ensure their physical, emotional, and spiritual growth and safety

QUALIFICATIONS

- At least 18 years of age, have completed at least one year of college, or have special arrangements made with the directors
- Training and/or experience in ministry and in working with children
- A born-again Christian who has a personal and growing relationship with Jesus Christ, in order to perform the essential functions of the job. (For example, to pray for campers and other counselors before and during the summer.)

SKILLS & ABILITIES

- Desire and ability to work with children in an outdoor camp environment
- Skilled in relating to children individually and in groups (i.e. group management, discipline, motivation)
- Able to identify and respond to hazards, and possess strength and endurance required to maintain constant supervision of individual campers within camper group
- Physical ability to endure the strenuous physical challenges of camp life, including ability to walk, run, and lift in order to assist campers and others as needed
- Able to see, hear and verbally respond to a camper in distress
- If you're reading this line then you've shown some serious dedication skills. Grab your phone and text a camp recruiter the words "I believe in Big Foot & Jesus." and you'll receive a small coupon to the Snack Shack. Thanks for reading your handbook!
- Ability to relate to one's peer group
- Ability to actively listen to campers and other counselors in order to offer support, encouragement, and positive feedback.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Willingness to take care of self (physically, emotionally, spiritually) in order to perform responsibilities with excellence
- Attitude: positive, willingness, flexibility, enthusiastic, teachable
- Has a vision and personal goals for the position

LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

- Able to see the overall picture of camp and it's long term effects
- Ability to build trust and unity with individual counselors as well as the entire staff
- Able to be relatable by being fun & friendly, having a sense of humor, and is patient
- Demonstrates high levels of integrity, servanthood, willingness to model tasks & attitudes
- Able to be creative and consistent in encouragement and appreciation
- Ability to give as well as receive guidance and supervision

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE JOB

- Able to read, comprehend and communicate in English.
- Must be able to stand and walk for long periods of time – up to six hours.
- Ability to communicate, enforce, and follow safety procedures.
- Be able to visually observe (with or without corrective lenses) campers to ensure safety.
- Able to assist campers physically & emotionally in emergency (fire, injury, etc.).
- Possess strength and endurance required to maintain constant supervision of campers.
- Able to traverse a wide range of terrains (i.e. open fields, rocky creek beds, forest floors, gravel, etc.) and to do so while supervising and staying the pace of a group of campers.
- Able to maintain personal, mental, and emotional health in order to provide a positive & encouraging environment with campers & staff and to provide emotional support and stability for campers.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Cultivate personal relationships with each camper in your group.
2. Attend all training sessions prior to camp.
3. Plan and facilitate Counselor Planned Activities as required by your schedule.
4. Monitor camper interactions to ensure a safe environment both physically and emotionally.
5. Actively participate in all camp activities and encourage involvement from each camper.
6. Encourage & support campers through verbal praise & positive reinforcement.
7. Utilizing the behavior management philosophy through the use of warnings, time-outs, and the involvement of camp directors as needed.
8. Inform directors of any and all camper or staff problems.
9. Complete and turn in all required counselor reports by the given deadlines.
10. Attend all required meetings during camp season.
11. Work on Action Teams as assigned each session
12. Evaluate the current season and make suggestions for the following seasons.
13. Monitor campgrounds; troubleshoot for safety & areas to improve.
14. Set a good example for campers and others in cleanliness, punctuality, sharing in clean-up and Action Team duties, sportsmanship, good attitude, and modeling Christian values and morals.
15. Faithfully pray for all of the campers in your group and their families.
16. Help plan and facilitate various all-camp-activities and special programming elements as needed.
17. Share in the facilitation of end of session parent programs.
18. These are not the only duties to be performed. Some duties may be reassigned and other duties may be assigned as required.



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

At Camp Sonshine, we take our job to care for and protect the well-being of each of our camper's very seriously, which is why we have adopted a set of standards for what we expect staff and volunteers to adhere to. This document clearly defines acceptable and unacceptable staff behavior towards those we serve, as well as those we serve with. All staff members are required to sign and return a copy of this "Code of Conduct" before beginning duties involving children or youth.

TOUCH

Appropriate

- Handshakes, fist bumps, and high-fives
- Your campers walking hand-in-hand
- Short, congratulatory or greeting side hugs
- Arm around the shoulders
- Group games when no one is being harmed or is uncomfortable by the touching
- Tending to a minor injury but only with verbal consent and in the presence of another adult
- Touching head, shoulders, or places not covered by modest swimsuit.

Not Appropriate

- Private back rubs, arm tickles, massages, etc.
- Touching or exposing of private parts – NO EXCEPTIONS
- Touching a child in anger, disgust, or frustration
- Frontal hugs with opposite sex
- Sexual embraces
- Lap sitting
- Kissing
- Intimate wrestling or tackling

Child Protection in Action

As a Camp Sonshine staff member you agree to report any behavior that seems suspicious, questionable, abusive or inappropriate between campers and/or staff. Camp Sonshine maintains a "zero tolerance" policy for child abuse, and any staff member found in opposition to or violating this policy may be terminated. Child sexual abuse is punishable by law and Camp Sonshine is bound by law to and will report allegations of sexual abuse to the proper authorities.

TALK

Appropriate

- Verbal praise for achievement/behavior
- Verbal encouragement
- Scripturally based teaching (non-sexual)
- Chants or songs that are uplifting and have a positive meaning
- Conversations about a minor's life situations that does not make the minor feel uncomfortable and is appropriate
- Prayer for appropriate requests from minors

Not Appropriate

- Compliments or questions relating to physique or body development
- Sexual jokes, homosexual innuendos, or bathroom humor
- Swearing or vulgar language
- Verbal harassment or abuse
- Individual secrets or special gifts
- Sexual coaching or conversation
- Conversations about personal dating relationships and/or "match making"

TERRITORY

Appropriate

- Public one-on-one interaction
- Group or public environments
- Outside of camp interactions with parental involvement and/or initiation

Not Appropriate

- Sitting or lying on a bed with a minor
- Private one-on-one interactions
- Minors visiting on-site resident areas
- Minors in unauthorized personal vehicles

"Thanks!!! You were great examples of Christ for our kids!

Knowing they were having so much fun and were in a safe environment was easy to leave them and to have peace of mind! The kids had countless stories about their counselors and groups."

- Camp Parent

Print Name

Signature of Staff Member

Date



STAFF ORIENTATION



COMMON "LINGO"



WHAT TO EXPECT

Staff Arrival & Welcome - There will be activities planned throughout the weekend and opportunities to meet other staff members. Those arriving on Saturday are invited to attend church together with the full-time staff on Sunday morning.

Orientation:

Staff orientation will begin promptly at _____ on _____ and run through _____

Schedule & Times - During Staff Orientation you should expect to have especially limited free time. There may be extended staff meetings during the weekdays and there will be an orientation for the L.I.T. (our Leader In Training program for teens) program on the weekend between training and camp. Throughout the week and weekend before camp, there may be required events and obligations that take time to complete - some for all staff, and some for specific positions.

What to Wear & Bring - Plan on wearing comfortable, modest shorts and a T-shirt, along with close-toed shoes. We will be active and moving around grounds a lot. Bring a water bottle, backpack and a great attitude.

Investing in Training - As with anything in life worth doing, the more you invest and "put in" during orientation, the greater your reward will be throughout the summer.

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Sunday - We will begin the process of developing our team & share about the history and vision of Camp Sonshine!

Monday - Thursday - We will hit the ground running & dive into important topics like summer visions, lifestyle expectations, team development, risk management & safety, group management skills, and so much more. Counselors will also receive a list of their first campers.

Friday - We call it "Mock Camp Day". The closest thing to a real camp day you can get. Counselors will experience a full camp day and practice all the necessary skills needed for success.

Saturday - Specialized activity training and L.I.T. Orientation, a miniature version of staff training for our Leader In Training teens.

Sunday - After morning worship - complete Camper Calls and finalize site preparations.



As with any community, there are words, abbreviations, and phrases that are unique to that community. Camp Sonshine has some lingo of its own that can be confusing or sound strange if you don't know what it stands for. We wanted to give you some of those words before you arrive in hopes that you'll know what we mean when we say the following...

Locations - Camp Sonshine offers a variety of programs for campers of all ages at three locations.

Sonshine - The original location located on the Schrader family farm! Our youngest campers do day camp here!

Solaris - Our overnight camp locations located 20 minutes south of Sonshine.

Shiloh - Our newest locations located 5 minutes from Sonshine hosts our older day campers!

Day Camp Explorer Camp (1st - 2nd grade), Adventure Camp (3rd - 4th grade) , High Adventure Camp (5th - 6th grade)

Overnight Camp - Journey (3rd - 6th grade, Expedition (7th - 9th grade

Camp-Wide - Leader In Training (7th - 9th grade), Assistant Counselors (10th - 12th grade), HCs (Head Counselors), PMs (Program Managers)

Overnighter/Late Stay - Friday night campout experience held each session for all day camp groups.

Action Teams - Our set-up and clean-up crews for various aspects of camp.

Oasis - The location of our inflatable slip-n-slide and our inflatable water slides.

Assembly - The gathering each morning in which all of camp dances, sings, and starts the morning praising God!!!

"The Barn" - The main gathering/indoor space at Sonshine that is home to our offices. Don't be fooled - there are two barns at Sonshine. "The Barn" is the big brown one.

The ARKK - The main gathering/indoor space at Solaris used for activities, recreation, meals, and chapel.

The Lodge - The main gathering/indoor space at Shiloh. Currently, there is only one building at Shiloh, so you'll know it when you see it!



CHALLENGES TO THE POSITION

☐ We will be honest with you that camp is a lot of fun and can be very rewarding, but it also has its challenges - challenges unlike those you find in most other jobs. We ask that you look at this list below and prepare yourself for working in the Camp Sonshine setting.

THE NEED TO ALWAYS “BE ON”

We do provide time off during the weekends and encourage our staff to use this time to recharge their batteries. However, when you are with campers, you will need to be on the watch, at all times - to participate and supervise in an activity without getting so involved that you forget to keep your campers safe. You will need to keep an upbeat attitude, even with activities or campers you do not feel so enthusiastic about. The safety of our campers depends on your supervision and guidance.

REGRESSIVE PULL

When you are around campers, the tendency can be to act like a kid when you need to act like an adult. You will need to resist the temptation to act childish (when you need to be CHILD LIKE) and that can take some serious self control.

ENVELOPE OF SAFETY

You will have to find the happy medium between being a friend to your campers and being firm with boundaries; they may be asserting their independence by disagreeing with you or expressing homesickness (even just for the day!) by complaining about seemingly everything. They will find many, many ways to try your patience and test their boundaries - calling each other names, talking when you have asked for quiet, getting angry when you ask them to move from a favorite activity. Please keep in mind that this can be stressful for the unprepared but rest assured that we will prepare you with tools to handle these situations.

“Camp Sonshine is not just a good place to work, it’s your family from the moment you walk on grounds. It’s a place that God uses you to change lives. If you are at camp, it’s because of a wonderful purpose.”

- Laura Baron, Staff Alumni



TRAINING BEGINS NOW!

☐ The following section of this booklet is for you to record information that you will need for a successful summer at Camp Sonshine. You will be added to the Summer Staff communication channels, where you’ll receive ongoing communication from us regarding important summer news, details, and pre-training information.

As you begin to think about your summer, take some time to also brainstorm various ideas for devotionals to share with your campers and other games or activities that you’d like to lead. **You will need to bring this book with you to training**, so it makes a great space to capture your thoughts and ideas. We look forward to seeing you soon!

THE MORE YOU KNOW

- What are the 3 staff behavior areas covered by the Child Protection Policy?
- The Journey program at Camp Solaris is for what age group?
- Describe in your own words what “Regressive Pull” is.
- What is Camp Sonshine’s cell phone policy?



**CHECK OUT OUR
STAFF ONBOARDING PAGE!**



NEXT STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SUMMER

1. Go to **CampSonshineMemories.org/StaffOnboarding** to find everything you'll
2. Read through this entire book and check off each section as you go. Find the hidden messages inside this Handbook for sweet prizes.
3. Submit your support team members to Camp Sonshine.
4. Complete your onboarding forms on Homepage!
5. Complete the "Arrival Itinerary" form by May 1.
6. Pray for the other counselors, your campers, and for God to prepare your heart.
7. Start connecting with other counselors via the Summer Staff Communication Channels!
8. Get ready for the **MOST LIFE CHANGING SUMMER** of your LIFE!!!

MY QUESTIONS/NOTES

These are great questions! Thanks for writing them down so you don't forget. Keep adding to the list as you think of more and then contact us so we can answer them for you. Don't think that any of these questions are too silly to ask....we've probably been asked that very same question a hundred times already. **You are important to us, and so are your questions.**

When you've got some time feel free to call us at 402-423-8746, or you can email us with any questions or prayer requests you have at info@CampSonshineMemories.org.



**CHECK OUT
THIS STAFF STORY**



**BOOKMARK OUR
SPOTIFY PROFILE**



**SEND THIS VIDEO TO YOUR
FRIENDS & INVITE THEM TO
JOIN YOU THIS SUMMER!**

MAKE FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD!

At Camp Sonshine you will meet staff from all over the United States and from around the world.

Fun Fact: We have had staff from Bulgaria, Papua New Guinea, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, China, Poland, Australia, Colombia, Iran, Zambia, and Indonesia!

