



Counselor in Training 2023 Handbook





FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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Program Outlines

YMCA/APYC Camp Kekoka has been offering leadership training nearly as long as we have been in operation. For many campers, becoming a CIT is the long-awaited next step in their camping progression. The transition marks a turning point in campers' experience, as you are now expected to take additional leadership and responsibility. With these new expectations, comes new forms of gratifications, and this older generation of Kekoka campers are expected to work hard, but also be awarded new privileges for their efforts.

2023 marks a major change to the YMCA/APYC Camp Kekoka leadership training program in the last few years. The program remains a work-in progress. The major change is the program title; Campers in Leadership Training (C.I.L.T) to Counselor in Training (C.I.T). We believe this provides a more concrete connotation of the increased leadership and responsibility we are asking of our, hope to be, future staff. CITs will be treated as though they are counselors and will be expected to act and behave similarly.

This handbook will focus on the new CIT program. While it is our intention to provide a general outline of the program, please be aware the actual content may vary from session to session, and items may be added or deleted between now and the time camp starts this summer.

COUNSELORS IN TRAINING

This is a one-week program for rising 10th and 11th graders who have not previously been CITs. CITs will be placed on an individual basis, based on our assessment of their leadership skills and their own preference.

The focus of the CIT program is to give participants a glimpse of what it is like to be a counselor at Kekoka. Through discussion, activities, and hands-on experience, CITs learn about camp routines, managing children in groups, and running activities that are both fun and safe.



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Expectations

DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco or any other controlled substances (drugs) is strictly prohibited during your time at Kekoka. If you are caught with any of these items during your time at camp, your guardians will be notified and may be sent home with no refund.

CELL PHONES

CITs are not permitted to use or be in possession of cell phones while at camp. Violation of this policy will likely result in dismissal from camp and/or the CIT program. Please read and sign the cell phone policy as well as this CIT handbook.

CLOTHING

We ask your clothing and personal appearance be appropriate to your role as a teen leader and mentor to younger campers. We expect as a teen leader you have the ability and drive to make sound decisions about what is and is not appropriate attire as a role model. We ask you keep your role as a leader at the fore-front of your mind when making all decisions at camp, including what you decide to wear.

LANGUAGE AND BEHAVIOR

Cursing is not acceptable. It sounds trashy, and sets a poor example for campers. The same applies to all obscene or insulting gestures. There are topics that many of our campers are not ready to leader about. Discussion relating to mature themes, drugs, alcohol and violence should not be discussed or heard by younger campers and staff.

Insults, teasing, or jokes based on race, gender, culture and/or sexual orientation are entirely unacceptable and you will likely be dismissed from the CIT program without a refund.

Not everyone has the same sense of humor, and even adults cannot always tell the difference between comments made in jest and those intended seriously. Younger campers often struggle to understand sarcasm. Although it seems to be common for some teenagers to joke around by calling each other names, however, these interactions do not set a positive example for younger campers, and can set a dangerously negative tone with your group. Please work hard to create a positive CIT culture for all members of your program.

In your role as a leader, it is expected you maintain a positive attitude towards camp, the camp staff, and all of our programs. Positivity and enthusiasm is contagious, and will only enhance your camp experience, as well as the experience of the campers and CITs around you.



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OTHER RULES

Please respect and follow all other rules and policies of Camp Kekoka. It is vital as a leader that you not only follow the rules yourself, but also encourage others to follow them.

Your Responsibilities

PUNCTUALITY

Please be prepared (with appropriate clothing and equipment) and on time for all scheduled activities and events. This includes: meals, flag, all activity times, leadership workshops and any other CIT meetings. We suggest you bring a watch.

TALENT SHOW AND DANCE PARTY

Every Thursday night Kekoka hosts its coveted talent show and dance party. As a way to showcase everything you learned from the week, CITs will be asked to help set up the event, collect names for the talent show and decide on the dance party theme. Please come prepared to contribute to this fun activity!

CIT TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Every morning, and some evenings, CITs will meet with our director to participate in structured workshops. These workshops will vary from day to day and teaching style. Do not fear, we are not lecturers. We believe when teaching a topic, it accommodates all common learning styles: auditory, visual and kinesthetic.

Our workshops can be in the form of formal discussions, groups games and activities, and opportunities to try new things all in the pursuit of developing your leadership skills. Our directors will work with each CIT, individually, to ensure they are meeting goals and expectations of the program. Our workshops and learning outcomes will be structured around the interactive book "Everyday Leadership: Attitudes and Actions for Respect and Success" by Mariam G. MacGregor.

MORNING CHARACTER VALUE SKITS

As another opportunity to work on your leadership opportunities and represent our character values of Caring, Honesty, Respect and Responsibility, we ask our CITs to come up with the morning skit to show what the value is, means and looks like in action. Be creative and have fun with it! This is a responsibility that has been a part of Kekoka since its inception and look forward to see what you can come up with!

TABLE SETTING

Everyday, every meal except for lunch, 2-3 CITs will be assigned to set and clear our tables and dining hall. The table setting schedule will be posted your first night. Please make sure you are punctual and take the role seriously.



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TRACK TIMES ASSISTANT

A huge portion of what makes Camp Kekoka fun are our structured activity times, called Track Times. Our counselors take a lot of time and energy to think of their track time and how it will be taught in a fun and engaging. This is the hardest task we ask our counselors to execute and we believe including CITs as assistants for track times, you will have more time to learn the intricacies of developing your own awesome track time.

Your first night, you will select 4 different track times you would like to learn more about and possibly teach a portion. This is your time to ask questions and practice public speaking, decision making and camper management. This opportunity is what you make it. The more questions you ask, the more you participate, the more you will learn! With each activity, you will need to find the primary track time counselor and help them set up and clean up every day.



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The Perks

CAMPER TIME

We know this is a lot of increased responsibility, and we know you deserve to have fun! Camper time is where you can go back to the days of being a camper. These times will be marked on the schedule, and you will be allowed to participate in the activities of your choice as our campers do.

CURFEW

As a CIT, you have later 'lights-out' time than traditional campers. This is a huge responsibility though. Know your limits and if you need to go to sleep at the normal time, listen to your body. We need you all well-rested in order to maximize your energy for the next day.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

Upon the successful completion of the CIT program, you will receive a certification of completion signed by your directors. Your certificate is tangible proof of all you accomplished in your time with us. This certificate could be used in your application to colleges, scholarships and other summer internship programs.

VOLUNTEER HOURS (FOR SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATIONS)

Along with your certificate of completion, we will award documentation for 40 community service hours.



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Promotion to Junior Counselor

To be promoted to a Junior Counselor (JC), a CIT must meet all of the following:

- Be at least 17 years of age OR
- Entering the 12th grade
- Have completed CIT program, or permission from the Camp Director

The promotion to JC status is not automatic; not every CIT will be invited to participate. Qualities we look for in a JC candidate are:

Positive and Cheerful Attitude: Do you cheerfully accept tasks as they are assigned, without complaining? Do you express positive thoughts and feelings about camp, your fellow CITS and various camp activities? Are you polite and courteous to everyone in our camp community?

Flexibility and Creativity: Do you cope well with last-minute changes in plans and schedules? Do you propose workable solutions for problems and challenges? Can you think on your feet and improvise when necessary?

Behavior and Language are Consistently Appropriate to the Camp Environment: Do you dress appropriately without being reminded? Are the words you use and the stories you tell appropriate to an all-ages environment? Do you set a positive example for campers and peers?

Enthusiasm for New Activities: Will you try new things? Do you set goals and challenge yourself? Do you volunteer for extra tasks and/or responsibilities?

Willingness to Resolve Conflicts Fairly: Do you avoid gossip? Are you kind and honest in your interactions with others? Do you ask for help in resolving conflicts as they arise? Do you follow appropriate communication channels?

Responsibility and Accountability: Do you admit when you are wrong or have made a mistake? Do you ask for help, support, or clarification when needed? Can you be trusted to complete a task without constant supervision?

Punctuality: Are you on time and prepared for activities, events and outings? Do you manage your time well? Do you complete tasks in a timely manner?



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Sample Daily Schedule

7:30am- Wake Up Bell

Morning Table setters will go to the dining hall to set up breakfast

Preform morning character value skit

8:15am- Breakfast

8:45am- Cabin Clean Up

9:00am-10:30am- Morning Activity Free Time

10:30-12pm- Morning Leadership Workshop

12pm- Lunch

12:30pm- Rest Period

1:30pm- Check in with Activity Counselor to help set up for the day

2:00pm- First Track Time assistant

3:30pm- Second Track Time assistant

4:00pm- Afternoon Table setters will go to dining hall to set up dinner
CIT Check-in with director

5:30pm- Dinner

6:00pm- Set up for evening activity or evening Leadership Workshop

7:30pm- Showers and Leadership Workbook Time

9:30pm- Lights Out



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CIT Packing List

CLOTHING

Shorts	Hat and Sunglasses
T-shirts/Tank Tops	Swimsuit (modesty is encouraged)
Underwear	Sweatshirt
Socks	Rain Jacket/Poncho
Things to sleep in	

FOOTWARE

It is important to keep your feet happy and healthy while you are at camp. There are very few activities you can participate in if you are limping due to blisters or splitting heels. Wearing socks all of the time helps a lot.

Water shoes are required while at the waterfront. Barefoot is NOT an option.

Crocs are a great water shoe.

We recommend closed toed tennis shoes that you do not mind getting dirty or covered in paint.

BEDDING

Sleeping bag	Sheets
Extra Blanket	Fitted Sheet *(needs to cover mattress)
Pillow	

TOILETRIES

Sunscreen	Soap
Toothpaste	Optional: Bug Spray
Shampoo/Conditioner	Optional: Anti-itch cream
Shower Caddy	Medications checked in with Nurse
At least two towels	

ODDS AND ENDS

Sunglasses	Flashlight/Headlamp
Hat	Book
Day Pack	Journal/Diary
Bandannas	Card games
Extra batteries	Fun session theme clothing

THINGS TO LEAVE AT HOME

- CELL PHONE
- Money
- Valuable jewelry
- Any technology (i-pod, computers, tablets, portable gaming devices, etc.)
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco products
- Knives, guns or any weapons



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CIT Program Agreement

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- I have read and understand the expectations, responsibilities and privileges that are outlined in the CIT handbook
- I agree to abide by all rules and policies of YMCA/APYC Camp Kekoka
- I agree to be respectful to myself, peers, other campers, camp staff, and the camp environment
- I understand if I fail to show this respect, or put my own safety or the safety of others at risk in any way, the consequences may include suspension or privileges or dismissal from camp without a refund
- I realize, as a CIT, I am held to a higher standard of behavior and attitude than regular campers and therefore, the CIT program and Camp Directors, will have lower tolerance for misbehavior or poor attitude with me
- I agree to do everything in my power to make my camp experience, and the experiences of my peers and younger campers positive, safe and fun

Name of CIT: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

CIT Parent/Guardian Agreement

- I have read and understand the expectations, responsibilities that my child will be subject to during his/her time as a Kekoka CIT
- I understand that my child's participation in the CIT program is entirely at the discretion of the CIT lead staff and Camp Directors.
- I understand CITs are held to a higher standard of behavior and attitude than traditional campers. With that, infraction of rules, misbehavior, or poor attitude may result in my child being immediately asked to leave camp without a refund
- Should my child be dismissed from the program, I agree to make the necessary transportation arrangement promptly and at my own expense and inconvenience

Name of Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____