

# VRAJ YOUTH CAMP



## CAMPER & PARENT HANDBOOK



## **MISSION**

The Vraj Youth Committee is dedicated to preserving and nurturing the intellectual, spiritual and cultural development of Hindu youth by encouraging service to our community and broadening knowledge of our Indian heritage.

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Visit [vrajyouth.net](http://vrajyouth.net) for additional information



## OBJECTIVES

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1. Provide familiarity of Pushtimarg through classes and activities.
2. Exposure to philosophy behind vegetarian food, and values of good health via yoga and exercise.
3. Exposure to basic knowledge of Indian music, arts, dances, feasts, festivals, and languages – Sanskrit and Gujarati
4. Provide experience of sharing, free and open communication and articulation of opinions, to enhance self-esteem and promote individual growth.
5. Develop sensitivity of respect, rights, and responsibility towards others; develop an outlook towards meeting and handling challenges.
6. Provide opportunities for the development of skills in leadership, self-presentation, and interpersonal relationships.
7. Provide models for volunteerism and civic duties.
8. Develop friendships and networks that go beyond camp.
9. Participate in various activities that involve cooperation, public speaking, and team work.

## ACTIVITIES

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1. Yoga
2. Class – Our Vraj – Pushtimarg slokas, hymns, and understandings of rituals.
3. Class – Indian Culture – Indian history, geography, festivals and heritage.
4. Conversational Gujarati, cultural plays and interactive activities.
5. Afternoons include the following various activities: Outings, Seva to Vraj, Mehndi, Arts & Crafts, Kirtan, Open Forum, Vraj Olympics, Garba, etc.
6. Group/Individual activities focusing on preparation of two-minute skits, song, dance, musical performances, etc. for evening campfire.
7. Small group discussions on relevant topics. E.g. current events, social interactions, personal development.
8. Free time sports and other self-initiated activities: soccer, basketball, Frisbee, volleyball, softball, etc.



## **SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE**

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06:30 a.m.	Wakeup call
06:50 a.m.	Morning Stretches
07:05 – 07:35 a.m.	Yoga
07:35 – 08:00 a.m.	Mangala Darshan
08:00 – 08:30 a.m.	Morning Walk, Parikrama
08:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Breakfast and get ready
10:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Culture, Our Vraj, Interactive Sessions
12:15 – 01:15 p.m.	Lunch
01:15 – 02:00 p.m.	Free Time
02:00 – 05:15 p.m.	Afternoon activities, Outings, Snacks
05:15 – 06:00 p.m.	Sports, Skit Prep
06:00 – 07:00 p.m.	Dinner
07:15 – 08:30 p.m.	Camp Fire
08:30 – 09:00 p.m.	Snack
09:00 p.m.	Campers return to rooms
09:30 p.m.	Lights out for campers

\*Schedules vary day-to-day. Detailed camp schedule will be posted two weeks prior to the start of camp on the website at <https://vrajyouth.net/index.php/portfolio/campers/>



## **DROP-OFF / PICK-UP**

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### **Opening (First day of Camp):**

#### **Registration/Luggage Drop off**

- Location: Murari Krupa / Dining Hall (Camp Campus)
- Time: 2:00pm – 2:50pm
- Please have all luggage and any necessary forms ready

#### **Orientation for Parents**

- Location: Bal-Bodh
- Time: 3:00pm – 4:00pm
- We request all parents or guardians to be present for the full orientation.

### **Closing (Last day of Camp):**

#### **Presentation and Camp Highlights, Camper Check-out**

- Location: Bal-Bodh
  - Time: 10:30am – 11:30am
- If having someone other than parent/guardian picking up camper, must notify and have approval of camp director prior to the start of camp.

#### **Luggage Pick-up**

- Location: Navratna (Camp Campus)
- Time: 12:00pm
- A parent/guardian must be present in order to sign out a camper.

#### **Rajbhog Prasad**

- Location: Anugrah (Old Haveli)
- Time: 1:00pm – 2:00pm



## GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

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Be assured that your child is in the safe and excellent care of our program leaders and counselors. A lot of planning has gone into making this program a learning and fun filled experience. In order to facilitate lasting memories for your child we kindly request that you:

- Please make sure to speak with your child's counselor about any allergies or medical condition during the camp orientation.
- **Do not leave a cell phone with your child**
- Do not call your child unless there is an emergency.
- Do not call to inquire about the well-being of your child.
- If a camper is ill or home-sick, we will give you a call to discuss the situation.
  - If needed, please be prepared to come to Vraj to pick-up your child.
- Please mark or label all personal items and clothing
  - Although we will do our best to help locate any missing items, Vraj and Vraj Youth will not be responsible to replace any missing items.
- Please review all the handbook and camp policies with your child.

## DRESS CODE

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**Campers/Counselors** are expected to dress neatly and appropriately. Distracting outfits are not permitted and those unsuitably dressed will be requested to change into appropriate clothing.

- Clothing with inappropriate language or messages (implied or stated) is not acceptable.
- Only mid-thigh walking type shorts are permissible.
- No spandex, boxer-type, running or short-shorts are allowed.
- Miniskirts and tight short skirts are not permitted. Pants must be worn at waist level.
- No ripped or tattered clothing is permitted.
- Clothing should cover the shoulders.
- Sundresses, tank-tops, halter tops, see through shirts, bare midriffs are not allowed.
- Campers will be asked to change any dress deemed inappropriate for Vraj campus.

**Sneakers MUST be worn during morning walks, field trips and sports.**



## **CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT**

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Vraj Youth committee members have developed policies, rules and regulations concerning conduct and discipline which govern the behavior of the participants. While we recognize our responsibilities to maintain proper behavior at Vraj, we also urge you as parents to support our efforts by discussing these rules with your child.

Each camper has the responsibility to:

1. **RESPECT** the rights of others by:
  - a. Recognizing the value of personal and private property, i.e., avoiding defacing or otherwise damaging personal, private and public property.
  - b. To allow other campers to take part in all camp activities without fear of harm or harassment.
  - c. Pranks are not allowed.
  - d. Boys are NOT allowed to enter girls' rooms and vice versa.
  - e. Campers are NOT allowed to leave camp.
  
2. **CONTRIBUTE** to constructive group behavior by:
  - a. Participating in all activities
  - b. Supporting and obeying all those in authority (administrators, volunteers, counselors, etc.)
  - c. Controlling one's own physical actions, which are disturbing to others, i.e., fighting, tripping, shoving, etc.
  - d. Exercising self-discipline (e.g. properly eating in a courteous fashion, speaking quietly and disposing of garbage in a neat and orderly manner).
  - e. Playing in a cooperative manner and displaying good sportsmanship.
  
3. **BEHAVE** in a manner which will not disrupt the learning process by:
  - a. Refraining from any form of conduct which interferes with or prevents the learning process of oneself and/or others.
  - b. Do not use loud, abusive or profane language.
  - c. Do not use physical force against any camper or take part in any inappropriate behavior.
  - d. Physical or continual verbal abuse to any camper, counselor or volunteer will result in the dismissal of the violator. This includes talking to campers in a brash tone or using derogatory language, such as telling campers to "shut up." Anyone can call out use of foul language and ask the offender to perform push-ups. Notify the director if there are repeat offenses.



In addition to the above Campers are expected to:

- Adhering to the program schedule and regulations concerning attendance, tardiness, bedtime, etc.
- Take care of the sports and other equipment, the furnishings, and the building at all times.
- Maintain cleanliness of all areas of the campsite including rooms and bathrooms
- Not to leave the program site at any time.
- To seek out a counselor, volunteer, or director with any issue that they may have without fear of any repercussion.
- All campers should be in bed by 9:30 PM. Do not leave your assigned building at any time of the night.
- CELLPHONES and other electronic gadgets such as iPods, Apple watches, tablets, etc. are NOT allowed and will be confiscated if found in the possession of the camper. Please review detailed [Vraj Camp Cell Phone Policy](http://www.vrajyouth.net/) on the <http://www.vrajyouth.net/> website.
- Hazing and Bullying will not be tolerated. If you are a victim of or witness to such events, please notify the camp director immediately.
- No food from home of any kind (including gum, candy, etc.) is permitted. Furthermore, no food from the dining hall or snack time is permitted in the cabins at any point.
- Camp is tobacco, drug, and alcohol free environment. Possession or use of these substances (including but not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, marijuana, cocaine, beer, wine, etc.) during camp will constitute immediate grounds for dismissal.
- Gambling or card games of any kind that uses chips or any such form of counting mechanism is not allowed.
- Photographer will be assigned during camp. Personal photography or video is not allowed. No one is allowed to distribute any A/V material or upload it on the internet/social media without explicit consent from VYC.

## **DISCIPLINE**

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Any violation of the code of conduct (but not limited to) will be evaluated by the counselor, head counselor, and directors of the camp. The appropriate penalties will be decided upon and adhered to without question.





A Camper can incur the following penalties for misconduct:

1. The following privileges can be taken away for a specific period of time:
  - a. Free Time
  - b. Field trips with arrangements for misbehaving camper to work with another volunteer or temple staff during that period of time.
  - c. Attendance/Participation in sports events.
  - d. Participation in other camp activities.
2. A camper can be required to attend a time-out supervised by an appropriate staff member.
3. The parent may be requested to take camper home.
4. Any other form of penalty, within reason, that the camp director decides upon.

## **OUTINGS / SPECIAL EVENTS**

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Campers may be taken off of Vraj grounds during the week for field trips.

- Campers are provided with one Vraj Camp T-Shirt to be worn during these trips
- Campers are expected to behave in accordance with the Code of Conduct, even though they are not on Vraj grounds
- Campers are expected to respect all staff, property, and transportation buses at all times.

In addition, one night of the week will be devoted to a Garba/Raas night to be held at Bal Bodh on Vraj Grounds

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Visit [vrajyouth.net](http://vrajyouth.net) for additional information

<b>Registration</b>	<a href="mailto:OnlineReg@vrajyouth.net">OnlineReg@vrajyouth.net</a>
<b>Counselors</b>	<a href="mailto:CounselorReg@vrajyouth.net">CounselorReg@vrajyouth.net</a>
<b>Volunteers</b>	<a href="mailto:VolunteerReg@vrajyouth.net">VolunteerReg@vrajyouth.net</a>
<b>General Inquiries</b>	<a href="mailto:Info@vrajyouth.net">Info@vrajyouth.net</a>



## **Attention Parents!**

We need your help! Volunteers are needed to continually enhance and plan for various activities during and outside of the camp. By taking time out for the entire week, you can help make Vraj Youth Camp a great success as it has been in past years. Please email our Volunteer Coordinator ([volunteerreg@vrajyouth.net](mailto:volunteerreg@vrajyouth.net)) for additional information.

**Important:**

**Registration is based on timeliness and accuracy of submission of application until the camps are full!!!**

Please keep in mind that we will try our best to accommodate as many campers for the camps they have applied for. However, we cannot guarantee that everyone will get a spot in camps or a get camp of choice.