

# Vraj Youth Camp Adult Volunteer Handbook



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## **Minimum Qualifications:**

- Ability to relate to and work with campers, counselor and peers
- Ability to accept supervision and guidance
- Ability to assist in cooking, teaching and supervising activities
- Ability to make considered decisions and judgment calls on acceptable VYC behaviors
- Willingness to be flexible with assignments
- Possession of good character, integrity and adaptability
- Must be creative, energetic, have a good sense of humor, patience and self-control

## **Responsible to:**

Camp Director(s)

## **General Responsibilities:**

- Carry out camp programs and goals
- Fulfill duties assigned by the Camp Director, Kitchen Lead, Curriculum Lead
- Provide leadership and guidance to the counselors and campers
- Must follow the daily schedule
- Keep Vraj premises and property clean. This includes temple and campgrounds, activity rooms, assigned rooms, dining area, kitchen facilities, etc.

## **Specific Responsibilities:**

- Volunteer(s) are responsible to monitor the floor/building in which they reside. They must report any activities or behaviors which may be deemed inappropriate and/or are not allowed at camp
- DO NOT play any favoritism to any family member or friend at camp. Volunteer shall not attend to their own children.
- Provide leadership and guidance to all campers and counselors through all camp activities
- Every volunteer will be assigned at least three activities depending on camp needs. Fulfill all assigned duties
- Bring up questions or concerns to the Camp Director(s)
- Help the Director with any help they may need
- Provide opportunities for all campers and counselors to be successful during camp
- Help each camper and counselor meet the goals established by camp for a happy, healthy, spiritual, social and intellectual experience
- Positively interact with campers and counselors

- ENCOURAGE all campers to participate in camp activities. Lead by example
- Enforce camp safety regulations and make sure that camp premises are safe at all times
- PROMOTE healthy hygiene
- PROMOTE proper etiquette
- Be a positive influence and a role model to other volunteers, counselors, and campers
- Supervise and provide guidance to campers in participation of all activities at all times.
- Providing emotional support and encouragement to campers and counselors.
- Work as part of a team.
- Be a positive role model to campers, counselors and be available at all times.

### **Dress Code:**

- Volunteers are expected to dress neatly and APPROPRIATELY for camp. You are required to set an example for counselors and campers
- Clothing with inappropriate language or messages (implied or stated) is not acceptable
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Sneakers must be worn for sports and sports-related activities at all times including the morning walk

### **Code of Conduct:**

- Volunteers are not to deal with campers, counselors, or one another in a degrading or abusive matter. All problems with campers or counselors should be addressed to the Camp Director(s) or Head Counselor(s)
- No friends or family members are permitted to visit / stay on the camp grounds during camp
- Volunteers are permitted to carry their cell phones, but they should NOT have them out at any time except for during free time or unless there is an emergency. At no time can the cell phones or other electronic devices be used in the presence of counselors or campers. Please review detailed [Vraj Camp Cell Phone Policy](#) on the [www.vrajyouth.net](http://www.vrajyouth.net) website.
- Photographer will be assigned during the camp. Personal photography or video is not allowed. No one is allowed to distribute any A/V material or upload it on the internet without explicit consent from VYC. Please review [Vraj Camp Cell Phone Policy](#) on the [www.vrajyouth.net](http://www.vrajyouth.net) website for pictures.
- Profanity of any kind should not be used by any volunteer. This includes talking to campers in a brash tone or using derogatory language or telling campers to “shut up”. Anyone (campers, counselors, and volunteers alike) is allowed to call out the use of foul language and can ask the offender to do push-ups. Please let the Director know if anyone repeatedly uses foul language.

- Physical or continual verbal abuse to any camper, counselor or volunteer will result in the dismissal of the violator
- Camp is a 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.
- Volunteers are required to be at AND take part in all camp activities and events. This is extremely important as the campers will be directly affected by your level of participation and enthusiasm
- Volunteers are not to leave the camp grounds during camp session unless the Director has given approval. If there is any type of emergency or need to leave the camp, please speak with the Director immediately
- No cars are to be driven on the camp premises. At the beginning of the week, cars must be parked in the designated areas through the duration of camp
- You may not leave campgrounds for personal work
- Counselors are responsible to take care of their campers. It is a learning experience for both counselors and campers to work with each other. Volunteers/Parents are not permitted to enter any camper rooms without explicit permission by the Head Counselor or Camp Director.
- The camp office is to be used by Head Counselors, Curriculum Lead, First-Aid Volunteer and Director(s) ONLY. No volunteers or counselors are to be in the camp office without the permission and/or in the company of a Head Counselor, Curriculum Lead, First-Aid Volunteer and Director
- Volunteers are not to bring any food, drinks, candy or gum to camp.
- Personal work can be done only after camp retires for the night, in consultation with the Camp Director
- Volunteers should use their best judgment in what is acceptable behavior at a temple site. When in doubt or when any questionable activity is seen, the Camp Director must be notified immediately. It is the duty of the Volunteer to take the most conservative stance to preserve the reputation of Vraj and VYC.
- While at Vraj, you are representing Vraj and no any other organization or affiliation
- No one is permitted to use Vraj campers list, counselors list or volunteers list to solicit for other organizations
- Camp curriculum is the property of Vraj Youth Organization and no one is allowed to duplicate or reproduce the material without permission

### **Guidelines for Morning Routine:**

- WAKE up early with enough time to wake up the counselors
- SPREAD out amongst the campers and counselors during Vraj Parikrama, Yoga and Darshan
- PARTICIPATE and set a good example

## **Meal Time:**

- Volunteers are requested to bring non-disposable dish, bowl, mug and flatware to encourage environment friendly camps
- Must not make special food for anyone just because they do not like the meal on the menu
- All Volunteers must eat after the campers have completed their meal
- Clean up your area and surrounding areas after your meal

## **Volunteer Bedtime Policy:**

- Everyone including Volunteers must follow Lights Out Guidelines included in Appendix A of this Handbook
- You must remember being an adult Volunteer, you need be up in the morning earlier than the campers and counselors
- Napping during the day should only be during free time
  - Our primary responsibility is to be there for the campers
  - Get involved with the activities
  - Keep a watch on campers and counselors at all times

## **DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN!**

In closing, we would like to emphasize that Vraj camp is about connecting with our roots, culture and meeting new people. We would like all campers, counselors, and adult volunteers to leave camp feeling enlightened by their experience. We remind our counselors and adult volunteers that we are here for the campers and counselors. We also encourage the campers to remember that the camps are made possible because of the hard work of counselors and dedication of adult volunteers. We hope that all have fun at this year's VRAJ camp!

## Appendix A

### Lights Out Guidelines at Vraj Camps

Every camp day at Vraj begins at 6:30 AM (wake up time). After a long intense day, post dinner activities provide a relaxing time to stretch your legs and unwind. Time is allotted for Campers, Counselors, and Volunteers to recap the day and prepare for the next day as well as bond with each other and their peer group by playing games and sharing personal experiences. We also recognize that at least 8-9 hours of sleep is necessary for the campers and 7-8 hours of sleep is essential for youth and adults to keep the camp functioning at its best for a whole week.

The camp schedule allows ample bonding time each day and throughout the week. *Lights out for all is at 10:30 PM!* There is designated camper-counselor bonding time as well as counselor group time allocated in the schedule. In addition, as many planning activities as possible are outside of camp daily meetings to allow for effective and efficient nightly recap and prep meetings.

Following is the standard nighttime activity schedule that all Campers, Counselors, Volunteers, and Directors are expected to follow:

Activity	Start Time	End Time	Notes
BED-TIME SNACKS	8:30 PM	9:00 PM	No one is allowed to take food in the rooms. Volunteers can prepare their meeting time milk/coffee at this time so that the meetings can start on schedule.
COUNSELORS SETTLE CAMPERS IN ROOM	9:00 PM	9:30 PM	Counselors take this time to help campers unwind and get ready for bed.
DIRECTOR / HC MEETING	9:00 PM	9:30 PM	Directors and HCs recap key items from the day and review next day's schedule.
LIGHTS OUT FOR CAMPERS	9:30 PM	6:30 AM	Campers must stay in their own rooms and go to bed at this time.
COUNSELORS / VOLUNTEERS MEETING	9:30 PM	Sa: 10:00 PM Su, M, Tu, Th: 9:45 PM	Directors facilitate this session to get feedback from the group on top 3 successes and improvement items from the day. The Directors must ensure that the meeting does not go past the designated time. Volunteers/Counselors may take advantage of this time for bonding activities.
COUNSELORS MEETING / BONDING TIME	Sa: 10:00 PM Su, M, Tu, Th: 9:45 PM	10:30 PM	HCs facilitate this session to discuss a plan for improvement items from the day and share key items for next day's schedule. The HCs must ensure that the meeting time keeps within 15 minutes and may take advantage of the rest of the time for Counselor bonding activities.

Activity	Start Time	End Time	Notes
VOLUNTEERS MEETING /SATSANG	Sa: 10:00 PM Su, M, Tu, Th: 9:45 PM	10:30 PM	Directors facilitate this session to discuss a plan for improvement items from the day and share key items for the next day's schedule. The Directors must ensure that the meeting time keeps within 15 minutes and may take advantage of the rest of the time for Volunteer bonding activities.
LIGHTS OFF FOR ALL	10:30 PM	6:30 AM	Everyone except for assigned Night Watch volunteers/Directors must retire to their own rooms
NIGHT WATCH	10:30 PM	12:00 AM	Assigned Night Watch volunteers ensure everyone is in their own buildings and campgrounds are vacant. They may check camper, counselor, and volunteer rooms to ensure everyone is in their rooms.

Exception to the schedule:

- Wednesday's nighttime activity schedule is modified for Garba.
- Friday's nighttime activity schedule is modified for Final Camp Fire.