

# ADULT VOLUNTEER PACKET



Youth Odyssey relies on the help of adult volunteers to assist staff in providing programming. Adults with experience or desire to work with at-risk youth fit our program. The minimum age requirement for adult volunteers is 20 years old. Selection is based on the ability of the volunteer to perform certain skills. Some rigorous physical activities are required on some trips. Past experience in the outdoors is imperative to the selection of the volunteers for extreme outdoor activities. Standard first aid and CPR is mandatory for volunteers. The information obtained on the form is for the internal use of Youth Odyssey only. The form must be completed in full for any applicant to be considered for Youth Odyssey Programming.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: F M

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check areas you would be interested in:**

High Ropes Courses \_\_\_\_\_ Camping Trips \_\_\_\_\_ Kayaking Trips \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list your outdoor experience (I.e., rock climbing, hiking, camping etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Certifications (include issuing body): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Experience working with youth:

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Previous residences (previous 10 years):

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Current memberships (religious, community, business, labor or professional organizations):

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References (please list people who are familiar with your character as it relates to working with youth:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Years known: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Years known: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Years known: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use illegal drugs?    Yes    No

Have you ever been hospitalized or treated for alcohol or substance abuse?    Yes    No

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense?    Yes    No

If YES please explain below:

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Have you ever been accused, arrested or convicted of child abuse, neglect, or a crime involving actual or attempted sexual molestation of a minor or any other sexually related crimes?    Yes    No

If YES please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Has your driver's license ever been suspended or revoked?    Yes    No

Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance and care of young people?    Yes    No

If YES please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Drivers License Number: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that:

1. The information I have provided may be verified, if necessary, by contacting any person or organization that may have information concerning me. I hereby release and agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information. I also agree to hold harmless Youth Odyssey, Inc. and its officers, employees and volunteers.
2. I give permission for Youth Odyssey, Inc. to use my name and photo in Youth Odyssey, Inc. press releases.    Yes    No
3. In signing this application, I affirm that the information I have given is true and correct. I also agree to abide by the rules, policies and procedures of Youth Odyssey, Inc.
4. In signing this application, I have Youth Odyssey, Inc. permission to perform a criminal background check on me (may take up to 6 weeks) and I will provide a set of ink rolled fingerprints.

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Youth Odyssey

## Volunteer Policies and Procedures

*December 2001*

### **Criteria for Volunteers**

The minimum age requirement for an Adult Volunteer is 20 years old. Although there are no maximum age requirements for adult volunteers, selection will be based on the ability of the volunteer to perform certain skills. Some rigorous physical activities such as hiking five to ten miles a day carrying a 50lb. backpack is required on some trips. Evidence of fitness and a release from a health care practitioner if a health condition is present is mandatory. Youth Odyssey also has other volunteer opportunities behind the scenes.

A capable volunteer acknowledges personal limitations, and exercises good judgment in a variety of circumstances. Not only must volunteers exhibit technical skills associated with adventure challenge programs but must also have the ability to empathize with the youth. A volunteer knowingly understands and accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the youth in their care.

### **Non-discrimination**

Youth Odyssey selects volunteers without regard to race, gender, sexual preference, nationality, religious, or political persuasion, social or economic status.

### **Screening**

Youth Odyssey performs the same set of standards in selecting volunteers as when hiring employees. The standard screening process includes:

1. Application review
2. Interview
3. Background check (can take up to 6 weeks)
  - a. To ensure that individuals who join Youth Odyssey are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of Youth Odyssey to check the references and perform a background check of all volunteers with direct contact with youth.
  - b. Volunteers are at times asked to drive Youth Odyssey vehicles. Volunteers must have a copy of a valid Texas driver's license.
4. Reference check: A reference letter is mailed to one of the individual's listed references.

### **Medical Training**

Youth Odyssey requires all Volunteers to have current certifications in Adult CPR and Standard First Aid. Classes are offered through the local American Red Cross office. American Red Cross Coastal Bend — 887-9991

## **Confidentiality**

Information about any client will under no circumstances be shared with anyone but a fellow volunteer or staff, and then only on a need to know basis.

The identity, address, and telephone number of clients, staff, and volunteers are not to be revealed to anyone.

Volunteers will not discuss Youth Odyssey or its clients with any representative of the news media. Volunteers are to refer the media to the Executive Director. Volunteers may not be interviewed by the media without the permission of the Executive Director.

## **Identifying and Management of Significant Incidents**

Volunteers must refer all significant incidents to Staff and will follow staff directions during any emergency situation.

## **Scheduling**

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, Youth Odyssey expects volunteers to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work and trips. Absenteeism and tardiness can cause the cancellation of a trip and places a burden on staff. Poor attendance and excessive tardiness will result in termination of volunteer. Volunteers who are unable to cover a schedule are expected to contact the staff at least one week in advance or at the earliest opportunity.

## **Standards of Conduct**

Each volunteer will respect and follow Youth Odyssey's rules/procedures for Standards of Conduct and Safety. The applicable rules will be presented and learned prior to the activities.

## **Child Abuse Prevention Policy:**

To ensure that all participants in Youth Odyssey Inc. programs remain safe and healthy, Youth Odyssey Inc. will check employment references and perform a background check on all volunteers and employees. In addition, volunteers and employees will abide by all child abuse prevention procedures.

## **Child Abuse Prevention Procedures:**

The following procedures are meant to prevent child abuse during Youth Odyssey programs and by Youth Odyssey volunteers and employees. Youth Odyssey Inc. defines a child as anyone between the ages of 0 and 17.

1. No volunteer or employee can be alone with a child. In situations where having a second adult present is not possible, at least two additional youth should be present. In a situation where an employee must speak with a child alone or in private (E.g., discussion a medical condition), another adult or two additional youth should be within eyesight and earshot.
2. During Youth Odyssey trips, male and female participants should never be alone or without supervision. In addition, male and female participants

- should never be in or around the sleeping/changing areas of the opposite gender.
3. No volunteer or employee should have intimate, sexual, or inappropriate contact with a participant, regardless of age. In addition, no participants should have intimate, sexual, or inappropriate contact during a Youth Odyssey program. Intimate, sexual, and inappropriate contact is defined as, but not limited to:
    - a. Touching of the breasts, buttocks, or genitals
    - b. Kissing
    - c. Unwanted or forced touching
    - d. Showing pornography or involving youth in pornographic activities
  4. Meetings (this includes but is not limited to in person, phone calls, texting, and internet) between volunteers or employees and participants or former participants outside of Youth Odyssey meetings, trips, and events should be professional in nature and reported to the program director or executive director.
  5. Youth Odyssey employees will monitor for inappropriate or harmful behaviors and redirect towards more positive behaviors, reporting the behavior if necessary.
  6. Any Youth Odyssey employee or volunteer who engages in intimate, romantic, or sexual contact with a participant will be terminated immediately.

### **Drug /Alcohol/Firearms/Smoking**

Youth Odyssey is committed to providing a safe and productive environment for all of the youth we serve. While on Youth Odyssey premises and while conducting business-related activities off Youth Odyssey premises, no volunteer may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. The legal use of prescribed drugs is permitted on the job only if it does not impair the volunteer's ability to perform the essential functions of the job effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger other individuals.

Youth Odyssey wishes to maintain an environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, Youth Odyssey prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of such materials on its premises. Youth Odyssey requires the cooperation of all volunteers in administering this policy.

***Volunteers may not smoke at any time during work that has indirect or direct contact with youth.***

### **Explanation of Volunteer Program Adventure Wilderness Trip**

The wilderness is a place where nature is dominant and situations and their consequences are real. Camping in these conditions, away from the distractions of modern civilization fosters self-reliance, respect and a sense of responsibility for

youth's own actions. Youth Odyssey's programs are designed based on the nationally recognized National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). Youth are guided through programs, which enable them to build problem-solving skills, self-confidence, communication, trust, leadership skills, and team building. Youth also respond to physical challenges and learn to overcome obstacles through problem solving and goal setting. Teens expand their horizons beyond concrete and asphalt and to learn about themselves, nature and the environment

Each Youth Odyssey Wilderness Adventure trip meets at 4:30 p.m. on Friday evening for transportation to a campsite and return by 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. Campsites are no more than a 5-hour radius of Corpus Christi and are usually Texas State and National Parks.

Volunteers are encouraged to attend an orientation meeting that is held prior to each camping trip. Youth Odyssey provides all equipment and supplies for each trip and gives each youth a list of suggested clothing and personal accessories that may be needed. Basic camp craft are taught on each trip. On all trips, youth are introduced to the concept of environmental stewardship through "Leave NO Trace" ethics. This concept teaches an acceptance of personal responsibility for maintaining the health and beauty of the natural environment.

Youth Odyssey camping trips will include a challenge activities such as rock climbing and kayaking. The activities offer an opportunity for youth to stretch themselves physically and emotionally.

### **Program procedures**

All Youth Odyssey programs require certain paperwork. Required paperwork may vary due to requirements from various funding sources.

### **All pertinent telephone numbers:**

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Becky Koeller, Executive Director  | 361-946-6016 |
| Brian Vrouvas, Program Facilitator | 361-793-9691 |
| Kim Cox, President of Board        | 361-883-3265 |
| Bob Corrigan, Treasurer of Board   | 361-813-0145 |
| James Gourley, Board Member        | 361-774-5346 |

### **Fees & Remuneration**

Volunteers will receive no fees or remuneration for their work with the agency. The agency does charge for its services. But can provide letters of involvement if needed.

### **Grievance Procedure:**

If, during the course of your work with Youth Odyssey, you have a complaint regarding alleged unfair or unequal treatment, you should discuss your concern with one of our Directors.

Volunteers who feel their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved with our Directors may contact our President of the Board or Board Members.

In addition, volunteers are prohibited from filing grievances before following the above steps.

**Insurance**

Youth Odyssey provides the following insurance for its volunteers and is secondary to your personal insurance. Please consult with your insurance agent to review personal coverage for adventure wilderness activities.

|          |                  |                |
|----------|------------------|----------------|
| \$10,000 | Medical Expense  | Maximum Amount |
| \$10,000 | Accidental Death | Maximum Amount |

**Accidents**

In case of an accident, Youth Odyssey will provide immediate medical care until emergency aid can arrive. Under no circumstances will Youth Odyssey staff be available to transport Youth Odyssey Volunteers to a medical facility.





Youth Odyssey  
PO Box 331394  
Corpus Christi TX, 78463

Phone: 361-946-6016  
Fax: 361-334-4254

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have read the policy/procedures for Youth Odyssey's program. I understand them and know that failure to follow any procedure can lead to removal from the program.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Sign and Return This Page**