



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 18 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 suggested 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:

Teambuilding ___ Ropes Courses ___ Camping Trips ___ Kayaking Trips _____

Other (clerical, fundraising, board membership, maintenance): .

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

Certifications (include issuing body): _____

Experience working with youth:

Previous residences (previous 10 years):

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

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:

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 _____



Volunteer Policies and Procedures

Criteria for Volunteers

The minimum age requirement for an Adult Volunteer is 18 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. The clerical position requires no physical abilities and that utilizes volunteer's administrative skills.

A capable volunteer acknowledges personal limitations, and exercises good judgement 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
 - 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.**
 - 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
 - Youth Odyssey will contact your listed references.

Education

At-Risk Youth Training

All Volunteers with direct contact with youth need to be well versed in how to work with the youth and to handle difficult situations that may arise. Volunteers are encouraged to attend classes offered through out the year by Youth Odyssey.

Medical Training

Youth Odyssey encourages all Volunteers to have current certifications in Adult CPR and Standard First Aid. Classes are offered through the local American Red Cross office. Classes are offered on 2-3 times a month for around \$90. American Red Cross – 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. Volunteers must follow the guidelines and procedures that are taught in the *At-risk Youth Training*.

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 shift are expected to contact the staff at least one week in advance or at the earliest opportunity.

Standards of Conduct and Professionalism

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

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 an employee'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 Activities

Portable Team Challenges

These are two-hour teambuilding activities held at local recreation centers, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, parks, and other youth agencies around the Coastal Bend. Activities are interactive games and challenges focused on developing and enhancing basic life skills.

Ropes Challenge Course

A fun day trip to our ropes course where youth participate in low and high elements. Low elements consist of activities on the ground that foster teamwork, overcoming challenges, and support. The high elements such as rock-climbing and walking across a cable suspended 35 feet in the air, are facilitated by trained and certified belayers. The focus for high elements are using your team and personal drive to overcome fears, problem-solving, and to push yourself to new limits in a safe/controlled way.

Kayaking

Another day trip to either the Nueces River at Labonte Park or in the Bay of Corpus Christi. Youth paddle together in two-person kayaks. This can be a great challenge if they do not listen to each other and work as a team, causing them to run into the shore, other boats, or flip over. Trained and certified staff teach basic paddling strokes and water safety onshore before the group enters the water and continues to teach and assist while traveling the body of water. This is a fun day-trip filled with wildlife and further coming together as a team.

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 5:00 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 campcraft 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.

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. Volunteers and employees should not have contact with participants outside of Youth Odyssey meetings, trips, and events.
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.

Pertinent telephone numbers

Becky Meyer, Executive Director	361-946-6016
Program Director	361-793-9691
	361-739-3724
Kim Cox, Board President	361-883-3834

Fees and Remuneration

Volunteers will receive no fees or remuneration for their work with the agency. The agency does not charge for its services.

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 the Program Director. Volunteers who feel their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved with the Program Director, may submit their grievance to the Executive Director for review.

- o File in writing to Program Director
- o If not comfortable talking to Program Director or the grievance is with that Director, please file in writing with the Executive Director
- o If not comfortable with either the Program or Executive Director or grievance is with either Director, please file with Board President.

In addition, volunteers are prohibited from filing grievances with Board Members 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

Mailing Address:
P O BOX 331394
Corpus Christi, TX. 78463

Physical Address:
623 Power Street
Corpus Christi, TX. 78401

Phone: 361-946-6016

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 _____
Printed

Date _____

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE