



PARENT/CAMPER HANDBOOK

Summer

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INTRODUCTION

This camper handbook has been created to help campers and parents prepare for PYDA Camp at Portsmouth Camp. In it you will find answers to frequently asked questions, and other information that will help you make plans to attend camp. Whether you are a new camper, or returning for another summer, we ask that you read this handbook carefully. If you have any questions or concerns about attending camp or how the camp operates, please feel free to call president Phil LaFountain Sr. at (401) 533-0112, or email at president@pyda.org.

All campers and at least one parent/guardian will need to complete an acknowledgement form indicating that the handbook has been read and that they are in agreement with all policies and conditions laid out in it before the start of camp.

Thank you for joining us for PYDA Camp at Portsmouth Camp and we look forward to seeing you!

Philip N LaFountain, Sr.
President

MISSION STATEMENT

Portsmouth Youth Development Association (PYDA) is a non-profit Christian youth organization whose primary goal is to provide resources for youth ages 12-18 to attend and experience the transformative adventure of summer camp in a safer and enjoyable environment. PYDA expresses this vision by providing a camp experience each summer (primarily in August) in partnership with Portsmouth Camp. The goal is to help young people ages 12-18 develop a vibrant Christian character - physically, mentally, emotionally, and morally.

This emphasis on **CHARACTER** is essential to the vision of PYDA. A person's character is who they are and is expressed in everything a person does. While one camp experience cannot do this, the directors of PYDA believe that camp is one important part of developing that Christian character.

CORE VALUES

The Board of the Portsmouth Youth Development Association has expressed the core Christian values of its youth organization in the acronym - B. R. I. D. G. E.

Belief – a love for the truth and a confidence to live it out.

Respect – deep admiration for others, their abilities, qualities or achievements.

Integrity – the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.

Discipline – the practice of self-control through positive reinforcement.

Generosity – the quality of being kind, generous, and helpful.

Excellence – the quality of being outstanding or good.

CAMPER CODE OF CONDUCT

In order to ensure a positive experience for every camper, it is essential that all campers obey the following rules while at PYDA camp:

- Campers will not leave the campus without permission.
- Campers will not leave the cabin after lights-out (without the express permission of a youth counselor).
- Campers will not steal or harm camp property or facilities, the property of other campers or staff, or the property of others when outside of Camp on a trip or at an event.
- Campers will not have in their possession, or partake of, any illegal drugs (and related paraphernalia), alcohol or tobacco products.
- Campers will not keep any prescription or nonprescription drugs in the cabin (all medications must be registered through “Camp Meds” and dispensed by the nurses, details to follow).
- Campers will not have in their possession or use any weapons, including folding Swiss Army type pocket-knives, and lighters/matches.
- Campers will not have in their possession cell phones or other devices that can make phone calls, send emails, and have internet capability.
- Campers will not undertake any actions that involve danger to another camper, a staff member, or any other individual.
- Campers will not be disrespectful to their peers or their counselors; they will willingly follow all the protocols and routines at camp. This includes always using respectful and appropriate language.

Violations of any of these important rules will be dealt with firmly and can result in immediate dismissal without refund of tuition.

ATTENDANCE

Concern for safety and to assure a good camp experience, campers are expected to attend ALL youth events and activities that take place during camp unless special arrangements have been made with the Youth Director prior to the event. Campers who have reached the age of majority (18) are subject to the same rules and regulations as minor campers.

Attendance Consequences:

- The Youth Director will determine disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from camp.
 - Please note: Refunds are not available if a camper chooses to or is asked to leave camp.

Definition of Camp Property

For purposes of defining what is considered camp property, PYDA defines camp property as the entire acreage of campgrounds, adjacent lots, grounds buildings, and all areas used by PYDA – sidewalks etc. All rules and regulations that apply to campers during camp apply to these properties. **When practices or games are being held at off-site locations, all rules and regulations are in effect and disciplinary action may be taken for any violation.**

Video Surveillance

PYDA does not own the property on which it provides summer camp experiences. While no plans are in place to use video surveillance, the host organization, Portsmouth Camp, may consider the use of video cameras on camp property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all staff, campers and visitors to the property, and to safeguard facilities and equipment. Video cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Portsmouth Camp administration.

Notice is hereby given that video surveillance may occur on camp property. In the event a video surveillance recording captures a camper or other grounds user violating policies or rules or local, state or federal laws, the video surveillance recording may be used in appropriate disciplinary proceedings against the camper or other grounds user and may also be provided to law enforcement agencies.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

While PYDA works hard to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for campers, unexpected events may arise. It is important for each and every camper to know the emergency procedure and to follow the guidance of camp counselors in the advent of an emergency. These procedures and policies will be reviewed with campers at the beginning of the camp week.

Fire Drills

Fire drills may occur during the week of camp. Specific instructions for exits are different for each building area. When the alarm sounds, leave through the designated exits quickly and orderly. DO NOT STOP. GO DIRECTLY OUTSIDE. Once outside the building, stand clear of any apparatus concerned with the drill or emergency. Remain outside until signaled to return to the building. It is very important that campers report to a counselor in the assigned area during the fire drill.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service denotes activities which students perform to benefit at least one other unrelated person and for which they receive no payment. Up to four (4) community service hours may be required by campers. Community service may be performed at any time, however, often community service is done on one specific day.

MEAL GUIDELINES – FOOD AND DRINK

- Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are provided for campers throughout the week.
- Water bottles are not provided. Reusable water bottles are highly recommended.
- The “snack bar” is available at certain times during the week including after evening service. Campers should bring spending money for the snack bar.

Note: Returning campers who bring a friend that has never attended before will receive a \$10 credit to the snack bar.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

While the schedule may vary on any given day, the following sample schedule gives a provides a general idea of how days are planned, and the kinds of activities campers might be engaged in.

7:45	Breakfast
8:30	Morning announcements
8:45	Tournament
9:45	Work on points/grab Bibles
10:00-11	Daily Devotional
11:20	Water Games
12:30	Lunch and Bible Memory
2:30	Obstacle course
4:00	Showers/nap/quiet time/loft
5:30	Dinner
6:15	Games & Ice Cream Dartmouth
8:30	Rollerblading
11:30	Lights out

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

This section provides suggestions for what campers should bring to camp. It may be used as a starting point and then use your knowledge of your own child to finalize the packing list. Our recommendations are based on past experience of campers and takes into consideration the weather and temperatures changes that can occur on Aquidneck Island. NOTE: Accommodations are separate boys and girls dorms with open floor plans, bunk beds, and single beds. Camp facilities include boys and girls bathrooms and shower, dining hall, snack bar, volleyball court, basketball court, church tabernacle, and book store.

There are NO laundry facilities, therefore it is advisable for each camper to bring at least two (2) laundry (or trash) bags for clothing storage.

Clothing

- 2 fleece pullovers/sweatshirts
- 1 rain jacket-waterproof and lightweight
- 12 t-shirts
- 2 pairs of pants (attire for evening services)
- 5 pairs of shorts
- 5 pairs of gym/athletic shorts
- 10 pairs of underwear
- 15 pairs of socks
- 1 bathing suit
- 1 bath towel
- 1 beach towel

Footwear

- 2 pairs of athletic shoes (sneakers)
- 1 pair of sandals
- 1 pair flip-flops

Bedding/Linen

- 2 blankets (it can get cold at night!)
- 2 sets of twin-sized sheets
- 1 pillow (with pillowcases)

Personal Items

- 2 toothbrushes and toothpaste
- 1 comb and/or brush
- 1 bottle liquid soap
- 1 bottle shampoo
- 1 bottle sunscreen
- 1 lip balm/Chapstick
- 2 deodorant
- 1 pair of extra eyeglasses
- 1 nail clipper
- 1 deet-free insect repellent
- 1 shower organizer (optional)

Essentials and Fun Stuff

- 1 refillable water bottle
- 1 flashlight or headlamp with extra batteries
- Bible
- battery-operated fan (optional)
- alarm clock (reminder: cell phones are now allowed at camp)
- camera (note - the youth director and counselors will share a large amount of pictures with youth at the conclusion of camp)
- spending money (camp snack bar and trips)

NOTES ON CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Labeling Clothes and Equipment

Please put your name on everything brought to camp: clothing, towels, etc. Feel free to use a permanent pen (silver pens are available for dark items).

What Not To Bring: Electronics

We feel it is very important that our campers are “unplugged” during camp summer so cell phones, computers, and other devices that can make calls, send emails, and have internet capability are not allowed. In addition, any devices that can play games, videos and movies are not allowed. Please know that we will confiscate any of the prohibited electronics listed above even if they are configured to play only music.

COMMUNICATIONS/VISITING

Camp Contact Information

Our mailing address is:

Portsmouth Youth Development Association
69 Hedley St.
Portsmouth RI 02871

Key phone number

- President: (401) 533-0112
- Youth Director ((857) 258-1237

Phone Calls

Campers will generally not make calls from camp to friends or family except in cases of special events (such as a birthday) or emergencies. **The youth director, however, welcomes calls from parents at any time, even for just a brief check-in.** We ask that parents communicate to their child through the youth director.

Camp will also call parents if the following types of health issues arise: child needs to see medical personnel outside of camp staff; child needs to be put on medication or current medications need to be adjusted; and/or child spend the night in the camp office for observation.

Web Site

During camp we will try to post pictures on a daily basis. We will post pictures from time to time on www.pyda.org.

Visiting While Camp is in Session

In order to protect the safety—and morale—of all its campers, and to effectively run our programs, PYDA encourages parents who wish to visit their camper to please check in with the Youth Director.

HEALTH SERVICES

PYDA recognizes that health and well-being of a camper is the primary responsibility of the parent or guardian. The health services at PYDA camp are intended to extend and supplement the familial responsibility, rather than serve as a substitute for the same. The hosting organization, Portsmouth Camp, provides the services of a nurse who will be available daily. The extent of the nurse responsibilities, however, are limited. Please see the following information:

Accidents and Illness

Emergency care is rendered when a camper is injured or becomes ill. Such campers must notify a camp counselor and report to the Nurse. The youth director and/or camp nurse will notify parents and determine if emergency services are required.

Administration of Medicines

Medication can only be given by the camp nurse or authorized designee with permission by parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are responsible for bringing medication to the Nurse's Office. The medication must be in its original container and labeled with the camper's name on it.

Insurance

A camper must report all accidents or injuries immediately to the Youth Director. All boys and girls attending camp must carry insurance or provide written evidence of other coverage before the start of camp. Portsmouth Camp and PYDA do not assume responsibility for any accidents that occur.

Mandatory Medical Form/Enrollment Application

The health of your child is most important to us therefore it is critical that we have accurate and complete information. You have access to all of our forms at www.pyda.org or from a camp representative. You will need to fill out a health history form and print a doctor's form which will need a signature, as well as a "Parent Authorization" form which will need your signature and copies of your insurance cards. All vaccinations must be up-to-date.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

Dependent on various factors, transportation may include school busses, vans, or other personal vehicles. Vans and personal vehicles will be driven by a counselor or other authorized adult with a valid driver's license.

OTHER PROCEDURES

Lost and Found

All articles in buildings, on buses, or on the grounds should be turned into the Camp Office and claimed there. Lost articles should be reported and claimed as soon as possible. Lost articles may be discarded at the end of camp.

Personal Items

Campers are responsible for their personal property. Portsmouth Camp and PYDA will not be held responsible for damage to or loss of camper property. Lockers may be available in dorms. Portsmouth Camp and PYDA retains authority over lockers and they are subject to be searched at any time. Certain items may not be brought to camp including weapons, illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, stolen property, etc. Lockers or personal bags etc. may be inspected on a periodic basis to ensure that all students are complying with these regulations.

Cell Phone and Telephone Use

Use of a telephone for emergency purposes is available in the Camp Office. Cell phones are not allowed at camp and campers should leave them at home. Campers may ask the Youth Director to store their phone for the week of camp, however, Portsmouth Camp and PYDA is not responsible for any damage or loss. Youth Director and counselor cell phone numbers will be available to parents and campers may call home using a counselor's cell phone upon request.

Food and Drink Policy

Food containing tree nuts or peanuts are often served at camp. Parents are expected to inform the Youth Director in writing of any allergies. Campers are advised to bring refillable water bottles. Other beverages are available for purchase at the snack bar.

CAMPER DISCIPLINE

It is our hope that every camper has a great time at camp. In the unlikely case that disciplinary action needs to be taken the following guidelines will be followed:

Camper Discipline Code

One of the goals of PYDA is for campers to learn and practice self-discipline through training and experience for self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency. Good conduct, proper consideration for other people, and understanding the purposes of discipline at camp are part of a good camp experience. Campers are expected to do their part in making camp an effective place of learning and growing.

One of the basic Christian principles is that actions have consequences. PYDA's goal in discipline is always redemptive, never punitive.

Consequences for infractions of camp rules might include some of the following:

- Exclusion from certain areas in the camp
- Prohibited from attending events and activities
- Additional community service hours
- Parental notification
- Exclusion or Expulsion
- Other, as appropriate (e.g. restitution, social suspension)

In determining the severity of the penalty or suspension, the Youth Director may consider all relevant factors, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The camper's previous disciplinary record
- The severity of the disruption
- The degree to which the camper is willing to change his/her inappropriate behavior
- The degree of danger to self, others, and the camp in general

These rules and regulations are put in place to guide and instruct. **PYDA may impose discipline upon prayerful consideration for the camper and the situation. The Youth Director will be responsible for assessing and implementing discipline including second and third offenses.**

Disciplinary Chart for Common Offenses

Minor Offenses	Disciplinary Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Late to church / activity ● Inappropriate conduct in common areas ● Being in a non-designated area ● Gambling (cards, dice, etc.) ● Dress Code violation ● Electronic devices 	As deemed appropriate by the Youth Director. If a student habitually engages in these types of infractions, the Youth Director may escalate the penalty.
Major Offenses	Disciplinary Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skip church or activity ● Smoking and/or possession of tobacco products, ● Disruption/non-compliant behavior ● Disrespectful behavior ● Inappropriate behavior, obscene, vulgar behavior or language unacceptable in a school environment, including gesturing and posturing ● Profanity 	As deemed appropriate by the Youth Director. These violations could result in expulsion from camp.
Severe Offenses	Disciplinary Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leaving Campgrounds ● Confrontational conduct or conduct that is blatantly disrespectful or compromises a person's dignity ● Threatening or Aggressive Actions Aggressive Behavior, Harassment of any kind (verbal, physical, social, sexual), bullying, including cyber/electronic, and intimidation ● Hazing Behaviors of any type –M.G.L. c.269 	As deemed appropriate by the Youth Director. These violations could result in expulsion from camp.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fighting 	As deemed appropriate by the Youth Director. These violations could result in expulsion from camp.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acceptable Imagery: All projects/artwork created must conform to a reasonable standard of appropriateness. Inappropriate images related to drugs/alcohol, racism, violence, and sexuality are unacceptable. Non-compliant students will be asked to change the clothing and/or be subject to disciplinary action. 	As deemed appropriate by the Youth Director. These violations could result in expulsion from camp.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alcohol or drug use and/or possession of related paraphernalia including including smokeless cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vape 	Automatic expulsion from camp.

<p>pens, juuls etc. at camp or at activities including prescription and non-prescription medications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intent to distribute 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arson/use of materials/combustible product/device that pose fire hazard or safety risk to staff/campers 	Automatic expulsion from camp.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assault and/or battery (camper to camper, camper to counselor or staff), other violent behavior 	Automatic expulsion from camp.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disruption of camp assembly 	As deemed appropriate by the Youth Director. These violations could result in expulsion from camp.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> False alarms/false emergency calls 	Automatic expulsion from camp. \$300 fine and notify police and fire Department, parent notification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negligent Endangerment with the potential for personal injury to camper, visitors, and/or camp personnel 	Automatic expulsion from camp and notify police department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tampering/destruction to video surveillance equipment 	Restitution. Automatic expulsion from camp. Notification of police department
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theft of camper, counselor, or camp property 	Restitution plus: Discipline as deemed appropriate by the Youth Director. This could result in expulsion from camp, parent/guardian notification, notification of police department

This discipline code is not meant to exhaust all possible areas of misbehavior. If campers behave in a way that is considered inappropriate, they will receive a penalty that is in keeping with their actions. Even if not specifically cited here, behavior that is disruptive to camp, malicious towards others, destructive of property, or intentionally damaging to the reputation of fellow campers or staff members will be considered punishable. These rules apply at camp, on buses or vehicles, and at camp-sponsored events regardless of where the event(s) take(s) place.

If campers commit an act that violates a state or federal law, Portsmouth Camp and/or PYDA will report the offense to the appropriate legal authorities.

Early Morning Detention

Campers assigned early morning detention may be asked to wake up no earlier than 6:30am and sit in a designated area until the breakfast bell.

Extended Afternoon Detention

Campers assigned extended afternoon detention may be asked to sit in a designated area during or after an activity for a period of time determined by the Youth Director.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the permanent exclusion of a camper from (1) attending camp in that given year, and (2) participating in any camp-associated activity.

Care of Camp Property

Campers should strive to protect the camp, including its equipment, facilities and grounds, from damage or misuse. Campers, who in the judgment of the Youth Director, counselors, or Portsmouth Camp board, willfully or through negligence, damage or misuse camp equipment, facilities or property may be subject to disciplinary action by the Youth Director in addition to legal action taken under state and federal law.

REGULATIONS

ELECTRONIC DEVICES (e.g., cell phones, iPods, tablets, etc.)

Campers are not to be in possession of cell phones, iPods, tablets or other devices that have the ability to gain internet access.

FALSE CHARGES

Any camper who knowingly makes false charges or brings a malicious complaint may be subject to any of the disciplinary and/or corrective actions detailed herein.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Physical Restraint is defined as the use of bodily force to limit a campers freedom of movement. Physical restraint shall only be used as means to protect campers, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious harm.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

All youth attending camp shall dress and groom themselves in such a manner as to avoid disrupting any of the processes of the camp. Although it is not within the province of the camp to dictate styles, it is our responsibility to strive for an atmosphere that is free from distractions created by a camper's dress. Anything which might distract from that, must, in fairness to all, be discouraged.

The following list addresses specific inappropriate clothing selections that may lead to disciplinary action:

- Clothing/hats that advertise alcoholic beverages, drugs, sexual references, or are deemed to have gang-related symbols or messages are not allowed
- Undergarments should not be visible
- Midriffs should not be visible
- Cleavage should not be visible
- All shorts and skirts must be of appropriate length (not higher than end of fingers)
- Two-piece bathing suits are not to be worn at beach activities. One piece bathing suits only which should exemplify Christian modesty.
- Shirts and appropriate footwear must be always worn on the campgrounds.

Although hats may be worn at camp, they must be removed upon request and not to be worn in church. Hooded sweatshirts may be worn; however, the hoods are not to be worn inside buildings.

Below is the procedure that will be followed when a dress code violation is reported.

When in the opinion of camp staff, a camper is dressed in such a manner that is inappropriate, a counselor will advise the camper about the violation. The student will be asked to change into acceptable dress clothes.

Failure to respond appropriately may result in disciplinary action. A camper's refusal to comply with this dress code may result in the issuing of disciplinary action by the Youth Director. A second instance of a student refusal to comply with the dress code will result in a disciplinary response and parental notification.

CAMPER MOTOR VEHICLES

Campers that bring a vehicle to camp must not access the vehicle during the week without permission by the Youth Director.

A camper's vehicle may be subject to search if there are reasonable grounds to believe that drugs, alcohol, stolen property, or other contraband that might be present in that vehicle.

Camper Searches

A camper search by the Youth Director will be found reasonable under the U.S. Supreme Court standard if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the camper has violated or is violating either federal or state law or the rules of the camp. The search itself is conducted in a manner reasonably related to its objectives and not excessively intrusive in the light of the age and sex of the camper and the nature of the infraction. "Reasonable grounds" for camper search may include, for example, a camp counselor's personal observation that the camper possesses contraband material on camp premises, or the official's receipt of a report to that effect from a counselor, another staff member, camper, or some other reliable source.

The camp retains the right to periodically inspect lockers, backpacks/bags, pocketbooks, and campers' cars (on the premises) for compliance with these rules.

Smoking Policy

Portsmouth Camp policy requires that no camper, board member, or visitor shall use tobacco products in camp buildings, on camp grounds, on buses, or at camp activities. No camper shall possess cigarettes, tobacco in any form, or vapes and related items during camp week, on camp grounds, or at camp events. Please see the definition of what constitutes camp property.