



The Amazing Camp Day Dreams Volunteer Counselor

A counselor is a special creature undefined by psychologists, misunderstood by camp directors, worshipped by campers, either admired or doubted by parents, and unheard of by the rest of society.

A camp counselor is a rare combination of parent, teacher, coach, psychologist and best friend. They are competent child psychologists that use their common sense and compassion to guide them. They are unpaid babysitters with neither television nor refrigerator. They are followers of the rules with a twinkle in their eye. She is a referee, coach, teacher, and advisor. He is an example of adulthood in worn-out sneakers, a sweatshirt two sizes too large, and a hat two sizes too small. She is a humorist in a crisis, a doctor in an emergency, and song leader, entertainer, and play director. He is an idol with his head in a cloud of wood smoke and his feet in the mud. He is a comforter in a leaky cabin on a cold night and a pal who has just loaned someone his last pair of dry socks. She is a teacher of the outdoors, knee deep in poison ivy.

A Counselor dislikes getting up early, waiting in line, and cabin clean-up, yet finds the humor in it all. She is fond of sunbathing, exploring, teaching new games, and a night off. He is handy for patching up broken friendships, bloody noses, and torn jeans, and good at locating lost bathing suits and fixing things. A Counselor is a friendly guide in the middle of the night on the path to the Wellness Center.

A Counselor can cure homesickness, send wet bedding to the laundry without the other campers knowing, play 16 games of cards in a row, whistle through their fingers, carry two backpacks, speak Pig Latin in French, stand on their hands, sing 37 verses of "Row, Row, Row your boat..." and eat four helpings of PB and Js or Burgers and Tator Tots.

A Counselor is expected to teach Tyshawn to be a friend, help Anthony mature, rehabilitate Kadijah, allow Jacqise to be an individual, and help Maria adjust to the group. They are expected to lead campers in fun, but safe, adventure...even when their head aches; teach them to live in the outdoors, even though they spend nine months a year in the city, to guide youngsters in social adjustment...when they are learning to adjust themselves; to ensure safety and health...with a sunburned nose, band-aids on their thumbs, and blisters on their heels. What makes the summer successful is not new facilities or video games but the connection between the staff and their campers.

For all this they are paid NOTHING. You wonder if they really know how much they are worth; and, somehow you realize you can never thank them enough, when, as they leave at the end of the week they wave good-bye with a teary smile, and say "See you next year!"