

First Time Staff

- Welcome! Camp is better with new and the old, like a nature eco-system, which needs diversity.
- There will be some orientation before camps, and then you figure out stuff while camp is happening. Give yourself time to learn and ask questions if you are unsure what is going on.
- We have free-play time built into the schedule, and that is a great time to do any activity or fun thing that you've been wanting to do, otherwise the day is planned out. There will be other times too, to lead activities, games, and sing songs with campers.
- We've built up a lot of systems that work well. The reason why we do something the way we do isn't always obvious, so thanks for giving us the benefit of the doubt!
- Our hope is you will love camp and be a regular part.



Youth Leader to Staff Transition tips 1

- **See the forest and the trees:** A camper's priority within a game is having fun, maybe winning. A youth leader's is having fun and making sure the campers near them within the game have fun. A staff member's is making sure that everyone involved in the game or generally within that area is having fun and treating one another respectfully. Try to take a step back from the activity occasionally, to make sure you see what's going on around you.
- **Know what is happening now and what is happening next:** It's always important to be aware of what is happening at the current moment, whether it's sitting down for lunch or doing an art activity or even free play options. It is just as important to be aware of when the current activity ends and to know what comes next, so that you can be sure that a YL or Staff member has set everything up for a smooth transition.





Youth Leader to Staff Transition tips 2

Don't be afraid to ask for help: Camp works best when we play to our strengths! Stretch your boundaries and push beyond your comfort zone, but if there's something you especially like or dislike tell that to your team. We all have things that we struggle with and need to improve, so rather than plunging into the deep end, try watching someone lead something, then lead it with assistance, and then finally tackle it on your own.

Check in, check in, check in: If you're ever unsure about something, whether it's how an activity went or how to address a challenge, or even just a feeling you got after something happened, let your team know! This ties into the previous tip as well but in general others can't help you if they don't know that something is wrong, so be sure to bring things up as they occur.



Youth Leadership at Monkey Business Camp

Youth Leaders are a main part of each team!

- We're so grateful to YLs. They enrich our program so much.
- Welcome, get to know, thank, and mentor your YLs so you can work together well.
- Staff support YLs with leadership opportunities, and with setting boundaries with the campers.
- YLs can spend time with each other, if it is working out for the group. (For example, they could play a board game together if kids are engaged and doing well. Campers often enjoy watching YLs play each other.)
- Staff usually need to remind each YL group to spread out when we need their help to be more involved with campers.





Youth Leader Basics

- CITs are ages 11-15; JCs are ages 14+ who have attended before & can help mentor CITs.
- Hours: 8:25-4:35 (not flexible, since they help the team) with a half hour break mid-day
- We ask YLs not to miss camp, but at times they do. Please check in with them to see what's up and welcome them back. If parents don't seem to be aware of YLs needing to attend all the camp hours they signed up for, SDs please check in with them. Also please mention in End of day survey or text office about YLs being out.
- Youth Leader families pay to attend camp and we are responsible for them throughout the day. They need to stay within sight and follow camp rules like any other camper.

Youth Leaders- Transitions and Assigning Tasks

- Remind youth leaders to take their breaks and keep track of the time they're due to return to their group. Give them a few extra minutes if they have to start their break late.
- YLs help with handwashing at snacks and lunch. They stand inside the bathroom to help with soap, sometimes rinsing hands, and to remind campers to take one paper towel or if it's warm to shake those hands dry. They will need help to learn this routine and you may need to show them the first couple of days.
- It's important to assign YLs solo tasks that you know that they can handle and support them during any tasks that they are trying for the first time or starting to learn. While it may seem easy to hand off undesirable or tricky tasks, we want YLs to enjoy their time at camp, too.
- Before giving a YL direction, check in with them to see if someone else on the team has told them to do or be somewhere else.



YL Orienting & Check-Ins

- Site Directors lead a 1st morning 20 min. on-site orientation using the agenda on the Daily Log clipboard. Site Directors also give ongoing feedback (stars and steps) during camp sessions. Aim to check-in with your YL team Mon/Wed/Fri from 4:30-4:35pm.
- Help JCs take on more responsibility as they get closer to staff age, e.g., leading games and making calls. Discuss any challenges and what they'd like to accomplish.
- If more time to talk with YLs individually is needed during camp hours, find a time when other staff and YLs are engaging the campers, and you can step aside a bit. Be clear and supportive.
- Please do not compare youth leaders with one another. You can name e.g., "Kai has been a YL for 3 years, look at what they do to help you see what's needed at different times of the day."
- Summer only: Additional weekly Tuesday afternoon team mtg for sessions 2+ wks long only. Yls practice camp songs, share how things are going, and receive weekly sheets, with things to try out at camp that week. Usually led by Heather at Meadows and Samantha at Big Leaf.



Youth Leader End of Session Details

On the final day of camp at closing circle:

- SDs set aside a time to share thank you cards and a few verbal appreciations from campers and staff. Each group appreciation is enthusiastic and positive. In summer, there is also a diploma for those coming for 1+ weeks.
- SDs organize the kids starting a day or two before the end of camp, to make the thank you cards. Blank cards and info is in the Journal bins.
- Staff fill out diplomas for Summer sessions that last one week or more.
- Finally, camp provides end of session gifts for staff to give to each YL that the YL can open at home. Staff, please do not supplement these gifts with something of your own.

