



# CAMP TREETOPS

P.O. Box 187 • Lake Placid • New York 12946-0187



## GENERAL STAFF INFORMATION

**SEASON:** The staff camp season lasts for eight and one-half weeks. It begins with a staff orientation, which lasts for about a week right before the arrival of campers. Staff training is usually the third or fourth week in June. Campers arrive after staff orientation for one seven-week session. Staff are required to stay for the three days after the camp program ends for meetings and clean-up.

**STAFF ORIENTATION:** This week is a combination of training sessions and group work periods to set up the camp's activity areas and living quarters. It provides time for staff to get to know one another and to acquaint themselves with our camp program. Training sessions will cover a range of topics including the camp's philosophy, how the program works, and general sessions on working effectively with children.

**HEALTH REQUIREMENTS:** New York State Health Department (NYSHD). regulations and American Camp Association (ACA) Standards require all hired staff to have a physical examination within nine months before the beginning of camp. Each staff member will be sent a health form which includes a health history and immunization record which must be signed by the staff member and a physician. Payment for the health examination is the responsibility of the staff member.

**TIME OFF:** Staff members will have six days off during the seven week camper season to be arranged as duties permit. In addition to a day off, staff members usually have two evenings off a week which begin after dinner. Staff may be absent from the property during any of that time. All staff are required to stay in camp on Sunday evening for staff meetings and are "on duty" the other three evenings until about 9:30 p.m. In general staff are free after this time with the exception of the three or four nights a summer when assigned "late/late" duty. In

order to comply with ACA regulations concerning all night coverage, each staff member is expected to remain on the property an additional ten nights during the summer although not in a supervisory capacity. During each day a staff member generally has one to two hours free between 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 p.m. (More information concerning duties can be found in the job descriptions below and in the staff notebook which will be given to each staff member at the beginning of staff orientation. The duty schedule will also be covered in detail during staff orientation.)

**ACCOMMODATIONS:** Staff members are housed in leantos or platform tents designed for two to four people. Staff accommodations are separate from but nearby those of the children. We have some accommodations for married staff and for those with young children.

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

**GENERAL COUNSELING DUTIES:** The minimum age for counselors is 18.

Counseling staff, regardless of activity or specialty, will be in charge of a tent group or leanto group of campers (usually 4). Each counselor is responsible for the overall care and well-being of the campers in his or her group. Beginning with unpacking the campers' belongings on the first day, through orientation tours and discussions, specific tent group activities and right on to packing up at the end of the season, the tent counselor is to be the person with the most comprehensive view of the campers in his or her tent. Tent counselors will be responsible for writing an introductory letter home to parents, for general record keeping during the summer, and for summarizing the child's summer in a letter home at the end of the season.

All counseling staff will share in the supervision of children during non-activity times. The following is a brief description of some of those times:

**Early morning wake-up and wash-up:** In each camp two counselors are on duty starting at 6:00 a.m. and two more starting at 6:45 a.m. These counselors wake children for morning work jobs and breakfast and supervise their morning wash-up.

**Morning work jobs:** Other counselors may begin their morning by supervising a morning work job at the barn or in the garden. These jobs begin at about 7:00 a.m.

**Clean-up:** All staff help children after breakfast to tidy their living quarters.

**Rest hour:** One or two times a week a staff member supervises rest hour, patrolling to make sure that children remain quietly reading, writing or resting.

**Afternoon work jobs:** All counselors help campers with work jobs at five o'clock. These jobs can range from picking flowers for the tables to feeding pigs to cleaning the craft shops.

**Evening activities and putting children to bed:** Approximately four days a week each counselor is responsible for covering evening activities and putting children to bed.

**Late night duty:** Three or four times a summer a staff member supervises the tent line until midnight, remaining in camp throughout that night.

**Meals:** Counselors act as table heads during meals, supervising and serving five children at a meal.

**ACTIVITY DUTIES:** In addition to responsibilities as tent counselors, staff members will also have one or more activity areas in which they work during the four daily activity periods. The primary program areas at Treetops include the Waterfront and its related activities; Arts and Crafts with a particular emphasis on pottery, woodworking, and weaving; the Horseback Riding and Farm Animal programs; and Gardening/Nature. (Although Nature appears in the Additional Activity Areas portion of the staff application, we do hire one or two staff to work exclusively in this area.) We look for staff with strong skills in one or more of these four primary areas and with additional skills in a variety of other activities which augment our program. Other activities includes Dramatics, Music, Dance, Sports,

and the Outdoor Program. (Note: Although the Outdoor Program is a primary program area as far as campers are concerned, it is an area in which we involve all of our staff. We do not hire staff to work exclusively in this area.) Staff applicants with strong skills in a number of "non-primary" areas will also be considered. Staff are given considerable initiative in the planning of their activity periods.

**Waterfront:** Treetops seeks applicants who are qualified to provide instruction in swimming, canoeing, kayaking, or sailing. Applicants with additional skills in wind-surfing, diving, synchronized swimming, fishing, or rowing are particularly desirable. In order to comply with NYSHD regulations, all waterfront counselors are expected to hold current certifications in American Red Cross Lifeguard Training and CPR For the Professional Rescuer or their equivalents. Swim instructors should also hold a current WSI certification. In addition to instruction, waterfront staff are expected to supervise general swim and general boating periods and to maintain waterfront equipment in their activity areas.

**Arts and Crafts:** Treetops seeks applicants who are qualified to provide instruction in weaving, pottery, and woodworking. In addition to knowing weaving techniques, weaving counselors should know how to warp a variety of looms. Pottery counselors should be skilled in the use of kick wheels as well as electric wheels, hand building, glazing and the use of gas fired and electric kilns. Woodworking counselors should be able to instruct using a wide variety of hand tools. Applicants with additional skills in basketry, leatherwork, macrame, sketching, painting, batik, photography, sculpture or other arts and crafts areas are particularly desirable. In addition to instruction, arts and crafts counselors are expected to maintain equipment in their respective areas.

**Horseback Riding and Farm Animals:** Treetops seeks applicants who are qualified to provide instruction in English style riding from beginner to advanced levels including jumping. They should also be able to instruct in saddling, bridling, knots and hitches and be able to supervise ring and trail

riding. They must be familiar with the care and handling of both horses and ponies. Applicants with additional skills in working with a variety of farm animals including pigs, goats, sheep, chickens, cows, and llamas are particularly desirable. The riding counselors will be responsible for the care and well being of the horses and the condition of the tack and other riding equipment. Keeping the main horse barn clean and safe is also the responsibility of the riding staff through their supervision of Barn Chores.

**Nature and Gardening:** While we hope that all staff bring to Treetops a love of our natural surrounding and a willingness to share their knowledge with campers, we also seek applicants with special expertise in the areas of nature and organic gardening. Knowledge of, and interest in environmental education, natural history, experiential learning, and nature crafts is particularly desirable. We are also looking for applicants who have experience leading nature activities relating to field, forest and wetland habitats and are able to work cooperatively as well as independently. Nature counselors work out of our Junior and Senior Camp nature houses. We also have a butterfly house and access to our diverse environment of ponds, forest, streams, and pastures. Gardening counselors are expected to coordinate the Junior and Senior Camp gardening programs with our Garden Manager.

**Additional Activity Areas:** Treetops seeks applicants who possess a variety of additional interests and skills in which they can provide instruction and which augment our program. The Outdoor Program, Music, Dramatics and Dance are integral to life at Treetops. Trips may range from a half-day hike up a nearby mountain to a four-day canoe trip. We take trips almost daily except for Sundays, and there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the mountains, lakes, and streams of the Adirondacks. Counselors with current American Red Cross Responding to Emergencies or Wilderness First Aid and CPR for the Professional Rescuer or equivalent will be given preference on trips. Water trips not only require that at least one staff member have the First Aid and CPR certification, but both staff members

must be certified in American Red Cross Lifeguard Training or the equivalent. Although some staff take more trips than others, (depending on age, qualifications, and experience) no counselor is primarily a trip counselor. All staff have another area of expertise in camp.

Music is part of life at Treetops. We sing whenever we gather: before meals, at morning council, and in the evenings. We also encourage children and staff to bring musical instruments to camp. There are often opportunities for children to perform skits, songs, and instrumental pieces for the community during evening activities. We also square dance regularly through the summer and rely on staff to provide “live music” (the piano being the mainstay) for these dances. We also enjoy staff who have expertise in other forms of dance – folk, modern, or jazz. Dramatic activities range from the period-long creative dramatics or theater games to skits and more elaborate productions performed in each camp. Children also enjoy making their own puppets and putting on shows. Drama, music, and dance activities are offered each day, but are not considered a primary program area at Treetops. It is for this reason that staff usually have other areas of expertise in one of our primary program areas.

**Nurses:** In order to meet ACA and NYSHD regulations we have two registered nurses on the property, one in each camp. The nurses are expected to check each child the first day of camp, keep all medical records in order, provide first aid for children and staff, dispense daily medications and care for children who become sick. We have a first aid dispensing area in each camp and one infirmary area shared by both camps for children who must spend the night. There is at least one registered nurse on the property at all times and the two nurses arrange their time off and one day off a week so that coverage is always provided. The nurses instruct staff on the use of items in first aid kits and restock those kits as needed. Nurses work closely with doctors located in the village of Lake Placid which is six miles away and make appointments for children as needed. They are responsible for notifying parents of any hospital treatment or overnight stay in the infirmary.

**Kitchen:** Each camp has a Head Cook, and Assistant Cook and 3-4 kitchen assistants. A Head Cook is responsible for the overall operation of the kitchen including: scheduling and directing kitchen assistants, menu planning in consultation with the program directors, ordering foods and basic household paper needs, compliance with NYSHD regulations for food services, operation of the kitchen in a safe and clean manner, cooking and delegating cooking tasks. Treetops seeks Head Cooks who are interested in cooking wholesome, unprocessed food and in using produce from our organic gardens. They are responsible for making sure that fresh bread made from home ground flour is baked daily. They are also responsible for preparing and freezing garden produce. The minimum age for kitchen helpers is 17. As with counseling staff, kitchen staff get one day off per week.

**Certifications:** As mentioned previously in the sections on Waterfront and Outdoor Program, certifications are important. Most Treetops staff, regardless of their activity specialty, find they want to spend some time involved on the waterfront or on trips. In order to comply with a number of NYSHD regulations and ACA standards, Treetops actively seeks applicants with certifications in one or more of the following: American Red Cross Lifeguard Training, WSI, Responding to Emergencies or Wilderness First Aid, and CPR for the Professional Rescuer. We encourage all staff, if not already certi-

fied, to consider becoming so when hired. Courses can usually be found by contacting your local chapter of the American Red Cross or a nearby community college. Equivalent certifications from other organizations are acceptable and may be obtained from the National Safety Council, SOLO Wilderness Emergency Medicine, or the American Heart Association, among others. For a list of equivalent certifications, please contact the Camp Director.

**Please Note:** These job descriptions are by no means all inclusive of the responsibilities inherent in a given activity area. They are meant to primarily give staff applicants an overview of how the various activities and duties relate to the program as a whole and should be of help in completing the staff application form. Staff members are expected to be self-starters, to take the initiative to plan and organize activities, and to pitch in with all camp projects or when extra help is needed in any area. We seek adults who can teach by example rather than by lecturing and who in their demeanor and interactions with people can serve as role models for children. New counselors need to bring their own ideas to camp but also need to seek and accept advice from experienced staff. The essential ingredients for being a counselor are a genuine respect for children, a love of the outdoors, a sense of humor, flexibility, lots of energy and enormous patience.