



# ciT HANDBOOK

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## COUNSELOR IN TRAINING



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# JCC CAMPS CIT MISSION STATEMENT

The JCC Rockland Camps Counselor In Training (CIT) program helps teens gain valuable hands-on leadership skills needed to be a successful staff member and leader. CITs have the opportunity to work independently and as part of a team to develop trust, creative problem solving, critical thinking and effective communication skills. During weekly meetings and workshops, CITs will learn various leadership techniques, receive performance feedback from the CIT Program Director and also have the opportunity to share their own observations and experiences.

## FACTS AND MYTHS

### THE CIT PROGRAM IS:

- A chance for personal skill development, leadership development and growth.
- A hands-on training program for future counselors, specialists and leaders.
- An incredible learning opportunity for teens entering 9th and 10th grade.
- The opportunity to work with children in a team setting.

### THE CIT PROGRAM IS NOT:

- A method for relieving camp staff of their responsibilities by asking CITs to do the counselor's job.
- A chance to make CITs "gophers."
- The opportunity for counselors to assign undesirable tasks to CITs.
- A guarantee for a staff position at JCC Camps in the future.

## SO YOU WANT TO JOIN JCC ROCKLAND CAMPS CIT PROGRAM...

The CIT program involves making a genuine commitment to training, growing, and taking on new responsibilities. This specialized program has been designed to give our oldest campers the opportunity to share the best of themselves at camp. CITs are placed within a camp group where they will actively assist a counselor and make positive contributions to the group while interacting with the younger campers. Campers who have a CIT in their group see them as role models and greatly enjoy spending time with them. CITs also have opportunities to enjoy activities with their peers and participate in community service activities. CITs develop leadership skills through goal setting, team building, and explicit training from the Leadership Team, which helps develop the life skills that are the foundation for future success. CITs get ready to step up to the plate and create friends and memories that last a lifetime.

# CITS OFTEN HAVE DAILY INTERACTION WITH EVERYONE AT CAMP...

...from the campers to the director and everyone in between. Over the course of your session, you will get to know everyone better; but for now, think of camp as a blank map with each person being a different tool for successfully navigating from point A to point B. Remember, everyone will be working together to ensure YOUR success as a CIT!

## You will interact with:

- Counselors and Specialists
- Office Team
- Porters
- Program Directors
- Specialists
- CIT Program Director

## THE CIT PROGRAM...

...is designed to give you exposure to all the different aspects of the counselor's and specialist's roles and their relation to the entire camp operation. The program consists of formalized instruction by members of the leadership team and workshops from current leaders in our camp community, as well as general informal discussion sessions on camp life.

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### INDIVIDUAL OBJECTIVES:

- Personal Growth
- Skill Growth
- Leadership Growth

### CAMP OBJECTIVES:

- Provide Training- we will share tools and trainings for a smooth and successful transition from camper to staff.
- Develop leadership skills and opportunities to develop communication strategies.
- Offer practical applications in order to develop leadership skills.

## CIT PROGRAM:

- The opportunity to assist with special event days.
- Weekly training workshops.
- Weekly CIT meetings and team building activities.
- Socialization with peers.
- One off campus trip per session.

## EVALUATIONS:

CITs will be formally evaluated in writing by their Program Director every two weeks and at the end of the summer. Additionally, throughout the summer there will be periodic conversations (formal and/or informal). The goal of the evaluations is to provide a positive exchange that allows constructive feedback for continued growth, awareness, and development. Additionally, your group counselors and specialists will evaluate your performance at the end of each session for review by the CIT Program Director.

### BASIC CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION INCLUDES:

- Are you where you are supposed to be?
- Do you take initiative with the campers?
- How do the children respond to your directions and interactions?
- What are your strengths with the campers and with the staff?
- What are areas that you can improve?
- How do you handle situations with individual campers?
- Do you enjoy being with campers during activities?
- How are your teaching skills - are you able to explain the activities or help individual children improve their skills?
- Are you flexible? How do you adapt to different conditions?
- Are you cooperative? How do you work with the other staff at each activity?
- Are you enthusiastic about all activities?

# PLACEMENTS

Each CIT will have a brief meeting prior to the start of camp that will give us insight into your preferences and leadership style. At that time, you can request a specific age-range for placement.

The CIT Program Director (along with other members of the leadership team) will work together to place you in a group that we believe will be conducive to your development and necessary for the campers' success.

We will not guarantee placement in ANY program but will take your preferences into consideration when making placements. Often, being placed in an age group outside your comfort zone turns out to be the most rewarding learning experience in the end.

You will be notified of your placement on your first day of camp.

## What if I don't like my placement?

If you are unhappy with your placement, you will be encouraged to work with that group for 3 days (After all, how can you know you don't like it if you haven't even tried it?). After the 3 day trial period, we will discuss your experience; what you did and did not like about the placement (always important to find the positive in everything) and determine if a switch is necessary or if you will remain where originally assigned.

## Should I wait to talk to my Program Director if I'm having a bad day?

Of course not! We can't help you with a problem if we don't know there is a problem! There will be days when it seems like we're doing a million different things, but find us and we'll stop and speak with you! Additionally, if you're comfortable talking with your group's counselors—feel free! They're here to help you too.



# RULES AND REGULATIONS

## (AKA–THE REALLY IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW)

1. Only authorized personnel may administer **first aid and medication** to staff and/or campers. CITs are not authorized to do so.
2. All **notes from parents** MUST be given to the CAMP OFFICE.
3. All CITs may be moved into **another position** as needed, at any time, during the camp season at the discretion of the CIT Program Director and Camp Directors.
4. Direct **contact with parents** regarding camper issues is the responsibility of the administrative staff and Program Directors. If a parent has questions, please advise them to speak to the Program Director.
5. You have a moral obligation to report **unethical/illegal behavior** to the Camp Director.
6. **Smoking or vaping** is not permitted at ANY TIME, ANYWHERE in camp or at any off-site camp activities and is cause for immediate dismissal.
7. **Drinking or possession of alcohol** is prohibited and is cause for immediate dismissal.
8. Possession or use of **illegal substances** is prohibited and cause for immediate dismissal.
9. Possession of any item that can be used as a **weapon** is not allowed in camp and may be cause for immediate dismissal.
10. **Striking, grabbing, pulling** or any physical force used on a child is grounds for immediate dismissal.
11. **Sexual harassment** violates the civil law which requires respect to all persons. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. Be aware that any form of sexual misconduct must be reported to a state agency and is grounds for immediate dismissal.
12. **Abusive or foul language** is not permitted and is grounds for immediate dismissal. Personal conversations should never take place in camp or at any off-site camp activities.
13. CITs are not allowed to be **alone with a camper**.

# Q AND A

## (THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS EVERY CIT MUST KNOW!)

### 1. What **SHOULD I WEAR** to camp every day?

- You **MUST** dress for any type of weather or activity every day. You need to wear your CIT shirt each day (except for dress up Wednesdays).
- You **MUST** wear sneakers every day – flip-flops are for the pool only.
- You **MUST** wear a bathing suit (swim trunks for boys and a one-piece swim suit for girls). Part of the CIT program is to help during instructional swim and to be an extra pair of eyes during free swim.

### 2. What **TO BRING** to camp each day: (please make sure to label all items).

- Swim Suit- One-piece swimsuit for girls, swim trunks for boys
- Towel
- Sunscreen
- Sneakers and Socks
- Waterproof watch
- Pool shoes
- Your smile!

### 3. What **to NOT TO BRING** camp each day:

#### **CAMP WILL NOT ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOST, DAMAGED, OR STOLEN POSSESSIONS!**

- Electronic Games, Trading Cards, Speakers, iPods, Smart Phones, and Smart Watches.
- Expensive or favorite possessions, bags or clothing
- Phones
- Jewelry and/or Money
- Waterproof watch
- Glass containers

**IMPORTANT:** JCC Rockland Camps is a cell phone and smartwatch free program. Cell phones and smart watches are not permitted on the JCC campus during camp hours. Air pods and earbuds are not permitted at camp.