

CLAPPING HANDS FARM ADULT VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

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ADULT VOLUNTEER ROLE at CLAPPING HANDS FARM

Adult volunteers have become very important to our camp staffing. After COVID, our “pipeline” for campers becoming counselors was been disrupted and we didn’t have as many young people applying to be counselors. Adult volunteers were brought in to support staff and fill out our team. Now we have come to realize that we just enjoy having adults in the mix. In particular “senior” volunteers demonstrate in real time that you can keep having fun and keep coming to camp and continue learning and being creative your WHOLE LIFE! Several campers have commented on this since we started incorporating more adult volunteers!

Your responsibilities will be similar to those of our young counselors in many ways, but we also are counting on you to provide support to our leaders by providing an adult perspective with a special eye for safety. We hope you will be open to learning from our amazing counselors and taking their lead in many ways--some of them have been at camp for years and really know what to do and how to do it--but we also hope you will provide gentle good-humored guidance to our youth staff when needed. We want you to be a “vibes watcher”: if you see, hear, or feel that something isn’t quite right OR is going especially well, by all means share that with the Onsite Director.

When staff join in activities with enthusiasm, it raises the energy for everyone, so we want you to do this - while also maintaining your “staff mindset” so that if a camper needs assistance, you can disengage from the activity and are available to help.

We expect adult volunteers to spend time with campers getting to know them and letting them know they are valued members of the camp community and inherently special. Our commitment to CONNECTING with campers is a key part of what makes our program exceptional.

Our camp community is intentionally inclusive by race, religion, cultural heritage, gender diversity, sexual orientation, economic background, and life experience. We are looking for adult volunteers that reflect and embody the entire spectrum of this diversity AND who are open to and respectful of lots of life experiences and points of view.

Volunteering at camp is hard work, physically and emotionally. We spend long days outdoors in summer heat. We focus on other people and their needs. Adult volunteers normally help with every aspect of running camp: chores, working one-on-one with campers, leading or assisting with activities and projects. We work hard to make the week special and have high standards of excellence which requires extra effort to pull off.

At the same time, we want to honor each person's capacity and support good health! We will work with you to set up a schedule that suits you. Sometimes older adult volunteers have worked mornings only, for example.

Being on staff at Clapping Hands Farm means showing up as our best selves, exercising good judgment, maintaining healthy boundaries, and genuinely caring for our campers and co-workers.

Working at camp is also deeply rewarding. You really matter--we cannot run camp without you. The campers genuinely need you and look up to you and remember you as important people in their lives. You are part of a vibrant, loving community; we proactively set out to support one another, communicate well, and bring out the best in each other. We hope you will seek out and lean into that support as you need it!

ADULT VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES

PRACTICAL STUFF

- **Clear Dates and Times** - It's vital that you get all the camp dates and hours on your calendar and communicate with your household/circle so you definitely have an "all clear" for camp. If you have conflicts with ANY of the times from Sunday afternoon staff meeting through Friday night sharing, please clear them with the Onsite Director as soon as possible (in advance of the camp week).
- **Make adjustments in schedule in advance-** if the normal camp day schedule looks like it will be beyond your capacity, please talk to the onsite director and make adjustments WELL AHEAD of the camp or program you are working.
- **Manage Distractions, Device Time and Other Responsibilities** - Adults sometimes have responsibilities to work or family that can intrude into the camp day. Do your best to clear your schedule, but if you have things that can't be avoided, please let the Onsite Director know what is going on and handle those things out of sight of the camp community. In other words, we'd rather set you up to disappear for half an hour than have you checking your phone during a camp activity.
- **The Sunday Staff Meeting is Especially important for Adult Volunteers** - Most of our youth counselors have tons of "camp experience" from being campers for years. Adult

volunteers need our training possibly even more than our youth counselors, especially if you are new.

- **Plan for Rest** - Camp days are long and tiring. It is our expectation that during the camp week you will not have any other significant responsibilities. We do not recommend planning anything at all after camp. We recommend you use the after-camp hours to rest and replenish.
- **Communicate** - If there are changes in what you can commit to, or you have any questions or concerns, please email, text, or call as soon as possible. Also, please read emails and texts from camp, and respond as needed. Camp staff are handling a lot of communications with a lot of people and your responsiveness is appreciated.
- **Sustenance**- Please bring your own lunch and a water bottle with your name on it each day. Camp will provide snacks each day and a staff dinner on Sunday night and Friday night.

PEOPLE RESPONSIBILITIES

- All throughout the day (including the less structured times like snack and lunch), your responsibility is to interact with the campers and participate in the activities that are happening. Our expectation is that you will focus on campers while at camp. Getting to know the other counselors and staff, having a good time, and learning from the artist-teachers is something we WANT for you also! But, these “perks” should happen while we are working together to make sure the campers have what they need. Our commitment to connecting with campers is a key part of what makes our program exceptional.
- When someone else is teaching, your job is to:
 - Model interest and attention. Our campers think you are cool and want to be like you! Please do what we want the campers to do, and they will follow your lead.
 - Give one-on-one attention to campers who need special help in order to be successful. We strive for every camper to be successful at camp.
 - Help campers participate in activities with the group or, if being part of the group is not possible, find an alternate activity that meets their needs that does not distract those in the group.
- You will receive a CARD each day that lists the campers you are giving special “one on one” attention to and the activities you are leading or helping with during the day. Please show up for your one-on-one assignments; that system is a big part of the structures that keep camp running smoothly. Let the onsite director know if you can not show up for something on your card. Please keep track of your card and ask if you have questions or concerns about it.
- Adult volunteers might be rotated through the “Flow Warrior” role. This is the person who holds the “big picture” for periods of time, makes sure everyone is where they are supposed to be, handles first-aid situations and conflict resolution, and in general facilitates things going smoothly.
- You will be part of a “buddy group” that will meet each day to “check in.” Our young counselors LEAD buddy group time, so please step back and allow them to lead, while also supporting them. The counselors and campers in your buddy group are “yours” to

take special care of; please check in with them to make sure they are doing well and to find out if there are any problems. There will be a group “check in” with your buddy group at the end of each day, but we also encourage you to check in with the people in your buddy group individually--and the counselors in your buddy group in particular! A simple “HOW ARE YOU DOING?” sometime during each day can go a long way to connecting with those folks.

- Supporting the other adults on the staff team (the Lead Artists and Director) is also encouraged. This can be in the form of lending an ear OR lending a hand. “How are you doing?” “Do you need anything?” and “What can I do to help?” are all excellent openers!
- It is your responsibility to give praise and positive feedback to staff and campers alike, setting the tone for a great camp atmosphere. We have a “no put-downs” rule and the staff needs to model that brilliantly.
- It is your responsibility to model safe and appropriate behavior; to maintain healthy boundaries and practice consent(ie. “May I hug you?”).
- It is your responsibility to be a stellar role model of positivity and to model having FUN!

CHORES

- All Staff, including adult volunteers, have chores before camp, at lunch, and after camp. Please learn how to do your chores and remember when to do them (we teach you all about this at Sunday training). Getting chores done at the right time is essential and is absolutely required for things to run smoothly.
- Adult volunteers are sometimes asked to help with set up, clean up and other behind-the-scenes tasks.

SELF CARE and COMMUNICATION

- It is your responsibility to honor your limits. If you find you are not sure what to do in a situation with a camper or another staff member, or find that you are too frustrated, impatient, exhausted or _____ (fill in the blank) to handle something well—please ask for help! You can ALWAYS text the Onsite Director and get some assistance!
- It is your responsibility to find or text the director, assistant director, or a lead counselor if you have any concerns about your own experience, a co-worker, a camper, or a camp activity. The sooner the better! Don't let thinking "the director is busy" deter you. We want to hear your concerns. It is VITAL to camp safety and the camp community that important situations be brought to the director's attention. We are working to create an excellent experience for our campers, but we want our staff to have an excellent experience as well!
- We are specifically interested in hearing about situations where racism, sexism, or lack of sensitivity in relation to gender identity or sexual orientation affects you or anyone else at camp. We know it can be difficult to give voice to these concerns, but we feel strongly that we must know about these things in order to preserve a safe camp environment for everyone.

HOURS

Each camp has a staff meeting before camp. For most summer camps, this meeting is held on the Sunday before camp. The adult volunteer portion of this meeting is usually from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., and dinner is provided.

Staff come to camp an hour earlier and stay at camp an hour later than campers. So, if a camp day for campers is 9-5, the staff day will be 8-6. If a camp day for campers is 9-3, the staff day will be 8-4.

On Fridays the day is extended by two hours to allow for a Friday sharing with parents and then a community potluck closing staff meeting and staff dinner provided by camp.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR

ADULT VOLUNTEERS at Clapping Hands Farm are young adults to retirees; they are artists, parents, CHF alum, and friends.

Key attributes for an excellent adult volunteer are:

- Reliability: We count on counselors to run our program, so showing up on time and ready to work is key. Please communicate promptly if you are unable to meet your commitments or there are changes in your schedule.
- Excellent “people skills”: The role of a camp counselor is mostly about connecting with campers and working as a team with other staff, so good communication, healthy boundaries, experience with conflict resolution, and an ability to connect with others are all valuable traits. Simply liking people, compassion, kindness and patience are also essential.
- Self Care: We find that self care is a key element in both reliability and excellent people skills. We find taking care of the basics— eating well, getting enough sleep is key to showing up solidly for camp.
- Artistic passion or skills: We are an art camp, so counselors with talent or experience in any art form are a huge asset.
- Diversity and Inclusion: Counselors with specific identities and life experiences related to our proactive intention of creating a diverse camp community AND counselors who have experienced living and working in settings that are inclusive or multi-cultural will be prioritized.
- Leadership experience
- Love of Service
- Enthusiasm, stamina, and energy
- First aid and CPR training

ABOUT CLAPPING HANDS FARM

Clapping Hands Farm runs camps and programs for young people ages 2-18, families and adults. We focus on art, nature, culture and community in our programming. Our offerings

consist of week-long summer camps; a homeschool art camp and homeschool academic programs during the school year; online workshops year round; and occasional retreats, workshops, campfires, and special events.

Clapping Hands Farm is an off the grid camp with solar panels for electricity, a rainwater collection system, and a hand pump at the well. Our “camp headquarters” consists of the cleared area around our homestead, a spacious pole barn, a couple of county-inspected, health department approved (no kidding) outhouses, a few “use your foot” hand washing sinks, a stone circle in the woods, a “fairy forest” and a games field. . . plenty of room for projects, games, and gatherings. Excursions to acres and acres of nearby trails, woods, fields, and a pond are also part of our camp terrain.

Our mission is to create an inspired learning community in a natural setting that models good stewardship of the earth. Each week of camp brings together a diverse group and strives to give participants a healthy balance between group responsibility and self directed choices. Our farm setting invites participants to engage directly with the natural world, involves campers in working together to make the camp run, and requires that the learning and fun we create together is made from our own hands, ideas, and simple materials. Our farm also provides a living example of renewable energy systems, water conservation, and outdoor living skills at work.

The themes of Art and Nature are our specialty and our lead teachers each week are working artists and naturalists. Our staff is primed to lead amazing activities AND to connect with campers on an individual basis and provide special support as needed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR CAMP PROGRAM

Our [Website](#)

Our [Guide to In-Person Camp](#).

HOW TO APPLY

Please fill out this [Camp Counselor & Adult Volunteer Application 2025](#) if you are interested in being an Adult Volunteer.

If you have questions or would like to talk to someone about your application, please contact Louise Omoto Kessel, camp founder and artistic director at clappinghandsfarm@gmail.com