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YOUTH MINISTRIES • YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES • ADULT MINISTRIES

# Adult Preparation Packet

## FOR ADULTS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING A MOUNTAIN T.O.P. CAMP

Welcome to the Mountain T.O.P. (Tennessee Outreach Project) ministry. I hope this adult packet provides you with the information you need for your upcoming trip to camp. I appreciate your willingness to serve God by giving your youth the opportunity to be in mission at Mountain T.O.P. this summer. By your coming, your youth will be able to learn more about their faith and how to put it into action. The Mountain T.O.P. Ministry salutes you!

**It is critical that you read the enclosed information to ensure a successful experience at camp. The more you can do to prepare yourself for a week of helping kids learn about God and serving others, the more likely your youth will truly experience the Mountain Top!**

In Christ's Service,

Rev. Ed Simmons  
Executive Director

# **Table of Contents**

- The Adult Role
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Interview with Ed
- Week at a Glance
- Special Characteristics of a Mountain T.O.P. Camp Week
- Expectations for Participation
- Foundational Objectives
- Materials Philosophy
- Vehicle Requirements
- Tool Requirements
- What to Bring List
- Participation Forms
- Adult Self-Screening Form
- Adult Covenant Sample
- Youth Abuse Prevention Policy

# **The Adult Role... What's That?**

## **1. The Adult Role during the Preparation Process**

The role of the adult during the preparation process is very crucial. The preparation process is a time of learning together and preparing to be a team in ministry. The adult is often the person who sets the tone of the session by showing enthusiasm as well as seriousness about the importance of preparation. When youth see adults wanting to learn, grow, and prepare, they begin to understand the necessity of working through the material.

Because adults are full participants in the Mountain T.O.P. experience, it is important for adults to share in the preparation process with the youth. This way everyone can build a mission team and learn to work together. By involving adults in the preparation, they will not only feel a part of the group, but will also know what to expect when they arrive at camp.

The adult can help the group leader in discussions by asking questions, by keeping the group motivated to learn more about the ministry in which they will be a part, and by helping to involve those youth who have participated with Mountain T.O.P. before. Involving persons who have been to camp before can be very exciting for the first timers! We encourage you to invite these people to share about their experiences, how they grew at Mountain T.O.P., the people they met in the Cumberland Mountains, and some of the different activities they did at camp. This will help others understand what to look forward to, as well as give them a feel for camp life! The group leader is encouraged to invite persons who have been to camp before to help lead the sessions, plan the closing devotions, and keep the group excited and enthusiastic about the upcoming experience.

## **2. The Adult Role at Camp and with the Camp Staff**

The role of the adult at camp is one of support and partnership with the staff. It is important that all adults and staff work together so that the experience will be one of WHOLENESS for everyone involved. The Mountain T.O.P. experience is designed for youth, with adults playing a supportive role. Adults can empower youth to participate in worship, lead songs and grow in their Christian faith. Encouraging youth to take responsibility in camp is very beneficial to forming community at camp. When youth feel ownership in the experience, they learn and grow more.

The adult is a role model for the youth. Therefore, we encourage all adults to help set a positive, uplifting, spiritual, and motivating attitude at camp so that the TEAM BUILDING concept will work! If there is a problem, the adult who demonstrates care, concern, and love for others during the situation is a powerful model for the youth. In contrast, if the adult is negative, the youth will tend to be negative, thus damaging community growth. By keeping a positive outlook on the experience, adults teach youth a vital lesson in maturity.

Adults are expected to participate in 100% of the camp activities because they, just like staff and youth, are a part of the community forming process. When everyone plays, works, and worships together, people begin to see a Christian community at work in their lives. Everyone working for the same goals and objectives is the power behind a community that is working for GOD!

Adults can hurt the community forming process by being negative, not participating in all activities, and working against the camp staff on decisions and discipline. We want adults, youth and staff to build up one another, empower each other to grow, and meet the needs of the Cumberland Mountain families. Working together really works! The beauty of Mountain T.O.P. is watching youth and adults building up the kingdom of Christ in the Cumberland Mountains.

### **3. The Adult Role in the Youth Renewal Group (YRG)**

The adult is the designated driver for the YRG. The adult is also a team member, which means that we encourage adults to let youth take responsibility and leadership within the YRG. An example of this might be to select YRG leaders for a day. Each youth will select a day of the week to be the person responsible for checking tools/materials and making sure the YRG has everything before leaving camp (lunches, first-aid kits, water, etc.) This gives the youth a chance to experience leadership and taking responsibility. The adult plays a significant role in challenging youth in this area. Letting the group make decisions together is an effective way of being a team member. Some adults have the tendency to play the role of decision maker and decide what the group should do. While letting go of the decision-making can be difficult, we encourage adults to let the leadership formation be a group process so that the YRG becomes a team, working together for the good of everyone. Adults who encourage and empower the YRG to make decisions and take responsibility will see a tremendous difference in the youth with whom they work.

The adult brings to the Mountain T.O.P. ministry a maturity that the people in the Cumberland Mountains appreciate and look for in our YRGs. By guiding youth in decision-making and by sharing personal experiences, the adult adds a tremendous amount of security, safety, and growth to the camp community. We ask each adult to take this role seriously and prayerfully.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What am I getting into?**

You are getting yourself into an incredible experience of serving others and experiencing Christian community. Monday through Friday you will go out with a small team of people to complete minor home repair projects (Service Project) or to build relationships with children through a day camp (Day Camp). We mix up all the churches that come and as a result the community builds quickly. One of the most unique characteristics of a Mountain T.O.P. camp is this deep sense of a community.

## **What is provided in the cost?**

- Lodging in cabins with bunks
- Meals from Sunday lunch through Saturday breakfast are provided
- Materials and project coordination
- All programming, including nightly worship
- Camp staffing

## **What is the size of a camp community?**

Usually anywhere from 100-150 people, with about 5-8 different church groups.

## **How long is a workday?**

A workday is from 9AM – 4:30PM

## **Do you eat lunch at the worksite?**

Yes, when the groups gather their tools in the morning before leaving, they will also pick up a food and water cooler. They eat lunch at the family's house and invite them to join in for food and/or conversation.

## **How old does a participant have to be?**

He or she must have finished the 7th grade or be at least 13 years old.

## **Why is there an age requirement to be a participant?**

The type of work being done requires a certain level of maturity and physical stamina. The YRG is comprised mostly of youth that are empowered to take ownership in the work and direction of the team. A certain level of physical and emotional maturity is necessary to help these teams function in the most effective way possible. The experience as a whole is best understood at this age.

## **Where exactly will we be going?**

Mountain T.O.P. serves 7 counties in Tennessee out of two camp facilities in middle Tennessee. Camp Baker Mountain is in Spencer, TN and Camp Cumberland Pines is in Altamont, TN.

## **What are the accommodations like?**

The camps are in wooded areas on top of the Cumberland Plateau. There is a dining hall, pavilion, cabins, worship center, tool shed, infirmary room, snack shop, basketball court, sand volleyball court and grassy field. The cabins have wooden bunks with foam

mattresses. Participants bring their own bedding. Some of our cabins have bathrooms inside and some are in bathhouses a short distance from the cabin. There are no private rooms or married housing; men and women sleep in separate areas.

**Who provides the tools for service project and the materials for day camp?**

Each youth group will be asked to bring the appropriate amount of tools/materials prorated by group size. It is critical that groups understand that they are the ones providing a portion of the tools needed to do the work. For service project, the materials (lumber, paint, nails, etc.) will already be at your project site.

**Can I come late on Sunday or leave early if I have other plans?**

Arriving late or leaving early from the camp week is NOT an option. Leaving at any time during the week and coming back to camp is also NOT AN OPTION. We design our program very carefully to ensure that all participants receive the maximum benefit from their experience. On Sunday our staffs will be breaking the community into work teams and on Saturday morning the community will have its final closure experience; missing either of these would hinder the experience for a person and the community. If there is an extreme situation, we are willing to address special cases.

**What do we do at night?**

The evenings are designed to promote community development within the camp. All youth and adults are expected to participate in the structured activities each night. There will be a time for community fun and recreation, community sharing, worship and some free time. These activities will be with the whole camp community and focus on the "whole" rather than individual groups.

**Will we be able to have meetings to process as a group during the week?**

Because of the way we mix up and build community throughout the week, we prefer if you do not hold any meetings exclusive to your youth group. We recognize that it is very important for you to be able build relationships with the youth based on your experiences together. We have provided a resource to you for debriefing the experience as a group that many groups have found to fit perfect as a break when traveling home. Of course, if an emergency comes up and you need to communicate to all of your youth, we will work with you to make time in the schedule for this. Please ask us if you have any questions.

**What do the adults do?**

The program is designed so that all campers, youth and adults, will participate in 100% of the camp activities. The role of the adults at camp is one of support and partnership with the staff. The camp director will be responsible for behavioral situations and will need the adults to act as role models of appropriate behavior. Many adults will serve as drivers to the various work projects and day camp sites. Within the work team, YRG (Youth Renewal Group), the adult serves as a team player, encouraging the youth to develop their leadership and relationship building skills. The adult brings a level of maturity to the YRG that Mountain T.O.P. and the people of the Cumberland Mountains appreciate and expect.

# Special Interview “From the T.O.P.”

with Rev. Ed Simmons, Executive Director of Mountain T.O.P.

*Introduction: This printed interview has been included in an attempt to convey a personal message to the participating adults. Experience has shown that the key to an effective week of ministry is the preparation level of both the youth and adults. This interview will hopefully add to the preparation level.*

QUESTION: Why is adult preparation so important to the success of the camp week?

ANSWER: The Mountain T.O.P. journey has involved many adults who have consistently provided their counsel and support. Without them, this “laboratory” of putting faith into action could not exist. Sadly there have been some adults who have come not understanding their role or their purpose. The behavior of the contributing adult is significantly more positive than the adult who is more focused on their personal comfort or being in control-- not willing to be a responsible follower. Based on discussions with both, the major problem is lack of preparation, understanding, and willingness to partner with other adults and the Mountain T.O.P. summer staff.

QUESTION: Why is it so difficult to influence adults to prepare?

ANSWER: I think the secret is in the recruitment of the adults chosen to come with the group by the Youth Director or the contact person. The adults-to-youth ratio requirement is difficult to obtain, especially for groups that are adult-poor in their normal youth program throughout the year. I think in order to sign-up the required number the prospect is told, “All you have to do is drive a car-I’ll take care of the rest.” This is only partially true. Without the whole truth, adults are signed-on without the necessary understanding. They are set up to fail! They never realize the importance of preparing until it is too late. When our staff gets confronted with “I’m not going to work in this dirty place!” or “I’m in charge of the work team - what is this YRG stuff?” there is little doubt that they are not prepared. The youth members of the YRG are crippled, and more than likely, they will have a bad experience on the site and in camp – which becomes a missed opportunity to help youth grow in faith and maturity.

QUESTION: So what advice do you have for selecting adults?

ANSWER: Adults should have the ability and willingness to interact with youth and model values of servanthood. Parents are good sources if the parent and child have a clear understanding of their roles, especially for the youth's sake. Young adults with small children make good candidates due to their desire to relate to teenagers in preparation for their own growing child. The YRG concept is powerful because of the opportunity for renewal and throwing away old labels. Adults that enjoy “participation” rather than “observation” are excellent camper prospects. I have made myself available to talk with many of the “difficult”

adults. In most every case, the individual was frustrated and embarrassed at not being prepared. It is important that all participants become “partners” with the staff and the camp community at-large. This requires conscientious leadership on everyone's part.

QUESTION: Does this concept ever fail?

ANSWER: Sure! This is especially true when certain adults are acting “childlike” themselves. Taking charge of the situation becomes impossible. There is a difference in having fun and acting stupid. The youth should never forget that the adult is a responsible adult. This means exercising multiple roles based on the situation so that everyone has the opportunity to have a great experience. Another personal philosophy that has served me well is “It is fun to be a Christian!” Enjoyment and fellowship in worship, work and play become the mortar of building a focused and lasting community experience. This is quite different than allowing youth to be disruptive, take life-threatening risks, or attacking anyone's self-worth. A desire to be liked can override an adult taking the responsibility to stop or correct a disruptive situation.

The Youth Renewal Group (YRG) is a very powerful, spirit -led model. The YRG allows youth to become renewed in their spiritual walk through new friendships and adult modeling. It works, if youth are allowed to experience self-discovery rather than a continual bossing and directing.

QUESTION: What is the relationship between the adults and the staff?

ANSWER: Typically, it is very healthy. However, if adults come to camp either not understanding their role or not willing to assume the appropriate role when needed, their lives, the staff's lives and the youth's lives will be miserable. This is both a preparation issue and an issue of not accepting the staff as the primary leadership for the week. The 7 to 8 young adults on staff at your camp have been intensively trained. They are committed young Christians wanting to be excellent. This staff experience has led many of our former staff into becoming ministers, youth directors, Christian educators, social workers, teachers, physicians, nurses, and attorneys. They return to Mountain T.O.P. with youth groups as they assume leadership positions in their local church. They are a powerful force for our church at-large. This is a rare opportunity for all of us!

We have an obligation to be enablers for these young adults to succeed. They not only need our camp cooperation, but they need our counsel - they deserve it! They spend many long hours trying to ensure that your camp week will be life-changing in a Christ-like way. The staff deserves the benefit of the doubt!

QUESTION: What will be important for adults to do in order to be in partnership?

ANSWER: It means joining the staff in setting the tone for Christian community by participating with enthusiasm and accepting the guidelines for the week. I am not suggesting “blind” agreement, which is difficult with so many different “frames of reference” coming together for such a short time. I do believe that acceptance with mutual understanding is important as long as what is being asked is not life-threatening or contrary to our Christian beliefs and faith.

Our staff will be expecting and asking for feedback from each participating adult. Hopefully, each adult will be expecting and asking for their feedback. Without timely mutual feedback, the community will break down through discomfort, disagreement, and misunderstanding. Everybody loses! The worst thing is that the youth lose! Another missed opportunity!

QUESTION: It sounds like adults do all the giving and no taking. Is there anything that adults should expect to gain?

ANSWER: Most adults will give testimony to getting much more than they gave. What a joy to be a part of offering young people the opportunity to put their faith into action. I have a special place in my heart for each adult participant because of their sacrifice - time away from family, use of vacation time, living in rustic conditions, and carrying responsibility. Why in the world would they do this? I know they love the Lord and they believe in their young people. They want for them the “good” life. The adults that come prepared and demonstrate a good understanding of their roles always feel they received more than they gave. It is in the giving that one receives.

QUESTION: Speak to the adults in terms of forming relationships with young men and women, based on society's heightened awareness of sexual harassment, abuse, and other types of misconduct.

ANSWER: Seasoned youth workers know the fine line that one must walk in forming a nurturing relationship versus a misunderstood sexual relationship. Sometimes people, young and old, misunderstand the true intent of being kidded, telling off-color jokes, hugging and touching. In most recent years we have had more reported cases of young women being harassed by an unsuspecting adult camper. There was no wrongdoing in any of the cases legally. All parties were scarred emotionally, however.

Society is quick to judge! Youth are more aware, as they should be, of conduct that is suggestive of violating their personal being. There is a difference in a Christian hug and a sexual hug. My message is to all adults, especially males, is to please be careful where and how you show Christian affection. It can be misunderstood. Many times perception is the defended truth. Please note what we tell our young adult staff: “Never put yourself in a potentially compromising situation.” Perception may be stronger than truth. These young adult staff

members are placed on a pedestal and sexual attractions by younger campers is natural. Demonstrations of those feelings have no place in our community.

As Jesus charged his disciples in the garden in Matthew 26:38 "...keep watch with me..." and then in verse 40, "And He came to His disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "so you could not keep the watch with me for one hour?" We are all asked to watch and pray - to keep the watch.

QUESTION: Well, anything else?

ANSWER: I do have one other comment. In reviewing the interview questions and answers I am struck that these same answers continue to ring true year after year. The need for the answers continues to exist. A few adults who return still seem clueless about the importance of their role and of preparing for the experience. I am continually amazed at the number of adults who gather for the adult meeting on Sunday each camp week and have not had the opportunity to read this interview. Some are still surprised at what is expected. Their leader has been very unfair to them, to the staff and to the mission. It is a perfect set-up for failure. I plead with the leadership of each group to prepare everyone, especially the adults. It is the single most contributing factor to a poor experience.

As we the summer of 2011, I pray with thanksgiving and for wisdom as there will be opportunities available to either be missed or captured to touch a young life and make a positive difference. I ask everyone to join me in that prayer. Keep the watch!

# The Week at A Glance

## ARRIVE ON SUNDAY MORNING

8:30am	Gates Open
9:00am	Registration, unload and move-in
10:15	Adult Meeting with the Director
11:15	Orientation: What is this week going to look like?
12:00pm	Lunch
1:30	Worship Field and Program Orientation Major Group Division YRG Division
6:00	Dinner YRG Development Time Community Moment
10:00	Lights Out

## FRIDAY SCHEDULE

7:30am	Breakfast
8:00	Daybreak
8:30	Major Group meetings and then load up tools/coolers
9:00	Go to site for the day <i>Work, work, work</i>
12:00pm	Lunch at site
1:00	YRG Celebration in county
3:30	Return to camp – church load up
6:00	Dinner Campfire Fishhook worship service

## MON - THUR SCHEDULE

7:30am	Breakfast
8:00	Daybreak
8:30	Major Group meetings and then load up tools/coolers
9:00	Go to site for the day <i>Work, work, work</i>
4:30pm	Return to camp unload tools/coolers
6:00	Dinner
7:00	*Evening Community Program (for everyone) Recreation Sharing Worship

## SATURDAY SCHEDULE

7:00am	Breakfast Camp Evaluations
7:30	Daybreak
8:00	Camp Cleanup Closing Circle
10:00	Departure

\*The evening activities vary from night to night: Tuesday evening the Camp Director will lead a brief Adult Huddle, Wednesday evening all adults will be honored by the Mountain T.O.P. support staff, Thursday evening the Camp Director will lead a Prospective Staff meeting for those interested in serving on the Mountain T.O.P. summer staff.

## **Special Characteristics of a Week at Mountain T.O.P.**

### **DAYBREAK**

In order to be intentional about our time with God while on His holy mountain, we provide each participant with the opportunity to begin their day with the Lord. Daybreak is a 15 - 20 minute time after breakfast when campers sit alone for study, reflection and prayer. Campers will need to bring their Bibles, journals or any other items desired for this time to breakfast. Mountain T.O.P. will provide materials to guide this time that relates to the focus for each day as it pertains to programming. We pray this helps participants grow closer in their relationship with God.

### **YRG (YOUTH RENEWAL GROUP)**

Each participant is part of a YRG, which consists of 6-7 people, including 1-2 adults. The YRG experience is designed to give youth the opportunity to renew themselves, discover new meanings about their lives, increase their self-esteem and confidence, make new friends, and be a contributing part of a team with a common goal. When dividing into YRG's our staff members will ensure that they are as balanced as possible across age, gender, experience and home church.

### **COMMUNITY EVENING PROGRAMS**

These programs are a time for fun and fellowship with the whole camp community. Programs may consist of group recreation, group builders, singing time, guest musical acts, or free time.

The evening always includes a sharing time and worship. Sharing gives everyone the opportunity to express their thoughts and insights from their day with the community. Worship is an ecumenical experience designed to focus on serving God. It is an opportunity for campers and staff to engage in reflective moments as they seek to grow closer and further develop their commitment to God.

### **MAJOR GROUP WORSHIP**

Mountain T.O.P.'s style of worship is often participatory, engaging campers to connect with the Lord in creative, tangible and unique ways. One aspect of our camp weeks that may differ from other organizations is Thursday evening Major Group Worship. Each group will be responsible for planning their own worship service. The Major Group Leader will facilitate the planning. This experience gives youth the opportunity to be on the planning end of programming. For some youth, this will be the first time to really be apart of thinking about how to extend the opportunity to worship to others. This challenges youth to explore their own faith while also giving them the chance to be creative and develop skills.

### **YRG (YOUTH RENEWAL GROUP) CELEBRATION**

This is the closing time for each YRG on Friday afternoon before returning to camp. It is a time for each member to express his or her thoughts and feelings to the others about the team experience along with rejoicing in the growth and renewal that comes from giving of yourself to others.

### **FRIDAY CLOSING WORSHIP**

This worship is dedicated to celebrating the journey of the camp community throughout the week and to asking participants to commit to being a fisher of people in the valley below. This time of reflection is designed to highlight for participants that the Mountain T.O.P. experience does not stay on top of the mountain, but it goes home with each participant in their hearts.

### **SATURDAY MORNING CLOSING CIRCLE**

This celebration is designed to reconnect participants with their own youth groups and to challenge the youth groups to go forth and continue to share God's love in the valley below. Mountain T.O.P. seeks to enrich the lives of its participants so they will take their experience and build on it when they return home.

# Expectations for Participation

The following are some of the basic expectations we hold for all youth and adults who participate at Mountain T.O.P.

**The Mountain T.O.P. Summer Staff has overall responsibility for all activities. Therefore, camp directions and expectations given by the staff are to be followed.**

**Camp Attendance and Participation** - Arriving late or leaving early from the camp week is NOT an option. Leaving at any time during the week and coming back to camp is also NOT AN OPTION. We design our program very carefully to ensure that all participants receive the maximum benefit from their experience. On Sunday our staffs will be breaking the community into work teams and on Saturday morning the community will have its final closure experience; missing either of these would hinder the experience for a person and the community. If there is an extreme situation, we are willing to address special cases. Everyone (youth and adults) is expected to attend and participate in all structured activities, recreation, programs, and worships. Please do not ask us for any exceptions to this camp participation expectation. We want everyone to gain the most they can while at camp together.

**Dress Code** - Shirts are to be worn at all times. Shirts with beer, liquor or other possibly offensive subject matter should not be brought to camp. Additionally, halter or spaghetti-strap tops, bathing suit tops, sports bras, shorts with an inseam less than 4" and jeans with offensive holes are not appropriate and should not be brought to camp. For safety reasons, the youth and adults with Service Project are to wear long pants, closed-toe shoes and shirts with at least short sleeves during the workday. Youth and adults with Day Camp can wear shorts instead of pants. Shorts are fine at camp in the evening.

**Alcohol & Drugs** - Do not bring any alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs to camp. Those who bring such items can be sent home at their parent's expense.

**Prescription Drugs** - Sharing of prescription drugs is strictly prohibited. Those who do can be sent home at their parents' expense.

**Fireworks** - Do not bring fireworks into camp – these are dangerous items, especially in wooded areas.

**Lights Out Policy** - Your camp staff will set times for "lights out" each night, and they typically set a slightly later time on Friday night. The staff will take responsibility for the initial bed check at the designated lights out. Our expectation is that everyone will stay in his or her cabins after this time. We do not intend for the staff (nor are they able) to stay up for hours putting people back to bed and/or chasing them around camp. We ask for your group's understanding and cooperation in this matter. We depend on the leadership and maturity of the adults present in camp for assistance. If campers are found out of

their cabins, the staff will find the youth group leader and have the camper call their parents. If there is a second incident of them sneaking out, the policy is to send the camper home at their parent's expense.

**Tobacco** - The use of tobacco is discouraged and prohibited in some cases due to camp regulations, sensitivity and fire hazards. Our tobacco policy follows the guidelines of the United Methodist Social Principles. Anyone under the age of 18 is prohibited from smoking, using or possessing tobacco in any form during a Mountain T.O.P. camp week. Mountain T.O.P. recognizes the need to establish a designated tobacco area for those who use tobacco. This designated area is to be in a private and discreet area of camp. This is due to our desire to discourage the use of tobacco products and the need to not promote the use of tobacco as a social activity or as a part of the community process.

**Electronic Devices** - The use of cell phones, iPods, radios and headsets is prohibited at the work sites. We want to encourage socializing and visiting with each other and the Cumberland Mountain families. Also, we want to be sensitive to one another's musical tastes. The use of these items in camp is strongly discouraged for the same reasons. Therefore, Mountain T.O.P. asks the following as a minimum:

- No cell phone or music player usage at any work site other than the YRG driver and only in emergencies.
- No cell phone or music player usage during any Mountain T.O.P. programs, including, but not limited to limited to Daybreak, all meals, sharing, and worship.
- 6. Cell phone or music player usage in camp should be limited to cabin areas only.

**Camp Visitation Policy** - All our Partners, family, and former staff members are welcome to visit our camps during program periods with prior notification and approval of the camp director. In your desire to come visit please acknowledge that part of the Mountain T.O.P. participant experience is to get away from the norms and expectations of their every day life. Mountain T.O.P. values providing this environment to its participants and discourages visitation to a point that it becomes distracting to the individual or community. For this reason, the number of visitors will be limited each evening and will be handled on a first come first serve, case by case basis. If you want to visit, please let us know as far ahead of time as possible so that we can make appropriate accommodations. Call the administrative office (931)692-3999 to schedule your visit.

# Foundational Objectives

Mountain T.O.P. is people helping, caring, sharing, learning, and growing spiritually. A Mountain T.O.P. camp is a unique setting that brings participants away from their everyday world. Camp becomes one of the most positive environments for teaching and learning values and skills, witnessing and affecting change in individual's lives.

Mountain T.O.P. has three foundational objectives. The ministry strives to promote each objective equally in all programs. No one objective is more important than the other. Our energies are evenly distributed between all three objectives seeking to enhance each one as we serve God in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee.

## **Objective #1**

*To help meet the physical, spiritual, social, and emotional needs of the Tennessee Cumberland Mountain people*

The ministry strives to meet all of the four needs identified above for the families and individuals with whom they work. Mountain T.O.P. service projects provide the people of the Cumberland Mountains with the opportunity to have home repair and renovation needs met. Mountain T.O.P. day camps provide a place for children, ages 6 - 17, to experience a Christian community. Names of those who may have needs are given to the Mountain T.O.P. staff by community service workers, Human Resource Agencies, Referral Services, Ministers, community leaders, teachers, family, friends etc.

## **Objective #2**

*To actively encourage the Christian growth of the participants and staff who come to work with Mountain T.O.P.*

The community forming programs in the evenings at camp are a chance for campers to share their daily experiences. This is where the community begins to base its thoughts, feelings, values, and beliefs on an experience grounded in Christian faith put into action.

## **Objective #3**

*To develop the leadership skills of participants and staff members*

Staff members gain invaluable skills in making decisions, leading groups, working with a variety of people from different backgrounds and cultures, broadening their perspectives about life and people, and in communicating their faith. It is a chance for people to learn more about themselves and their capabilities.

Participants are given the opportunity to develop leadership skills while they are working with their teams and at camp with the whole community. Participants may help lead singing, recreation, community prayers, or even parts of the worship services. Participants learn how to work with other youth and adults from different backgrounds and cultures. They increase their self-confidence and enhance their abilities while at Mountain T.O.P.

# Materials Philosophy

The Mountain T.O.P. experience can be a joyous and rewarding one - a community of believers gathered together for a week to serve the Lord. Mountain T.O.P. is in partnership with the people of the Cumberland Mountains and with the youth and adults who volunteer. A firm understanding of this concept is crucial to forming significant relationships during the week and after participants return home.

Mountain T.O.P. participants join a partnership agreement with the people in the communities they serve. There are three partners:

- 1) Mountain T.O.P.
- 2) Youth and adult volunteers from across the country
- 3) People living in the Cumberland Mountains

Each partner brings a unique element and makes the whole greater than the sum of the parts. The idea that 1+1+1 is greater than 3 represents the synergy that occurs on the mountain.

What does each part bring? Mountain T.O.P. provides structure, staff, field work, and management of financial resources. The volunteers contribute money through their participant fee, labor and tools. Individuals, churches and businesses from the communities also contribute financially.

The families that Mountain T.O.P. directly works with give whatever they can. Their contribution is very important to the empowering of the people of the Cumberland Mountains (detailed in the Statement of Values). Families that cannot afford to contribute to a project financially are asked to find alternative ways to participate; which could be joining in the work or making a jug of tea. The resulting partnership raises the level of ownership and involvement of the families with whom we serve.

Occasionally a participant may want to make a contribution to a family. We encourage this kind of generosity, but ask that the partnership philosophy is always kept in mind. That same contribution made to Mountain T.O.P.'s materials fund may be better utilized and possibly applied to many projects. Mountain T.O.P. has year-round involvement in the community and will know well where resources are needed the most to help the most people.

# Vehicle Requirements

*It is your responsibility to provide adequate transportation for the week. At a minimum, we ask you to provide:*

- 1 vehicle for every 7 participants in your group.
- Each vehicle you drive during the camp week must have 7 seatbelts for Service Project or 12 seatbelts for Day Camp.
- Each vehicle used during the week must have a first aid kit.

## **Service Project**

The most suitable vehicle is one 7-passenger van per every seven participants. This allows six to seven YRG members, tools/materials and a cooler for lunch to be transported to and from the work site. Each vehicle must seatbelt at least seven people, at a minimum.

## **Day Camp**

The required vehicle is one 12-passenger van per every seven participants. This allows five YRG members to pick up 5-7 children from the county every day for camp. If you have to rent a 12-passenger van in order to participate in the day camp program, we may be able to offer you a rebate. Our funds are dependent on a local grant. Make this request on Sunday when you arrive to camp, and if the funds are available we will have the rebate check for you by the time you leave on Saturday.

## **Tennessee State Law**

All vehicles must be equipped with seat belts for each passenger. Campers will not be allowed to ride in vehicles without seat belts or in truck beds.

## **Sharing the Transportation Cost**

Please be prepared to help share the cost of a van if you have extra participants over increments of 7 for whom you do not have a vehicle. This is an equitable way for everyone to help bear the burden of transportation costs. If you bring extra people over increments of 7, you may be responsible for helping to secure and pay for an additional vehicle for the camp week. The churches that are bringing extra people will be responsible for making the arrangements for van rental and delivery.

## **Van Rental**

If you need to rent a van, we recommend that you call Tennessee Car and Van Rental. They have offices in both Murfreesboro and Nashville, and offer delivery and pick up right to and from camp. At least one to three month advance notice on rentals is advised. For more information, please contact Bill in Nashville at 800-254-1632 or Glenn in Murfreesboro at 800-895-0045 and be sure to tell them you are with Mountain T.O.P.

# First Aid Kit Requirements

*Each vehicle must have a complete First Aid Kit.  
Mountain T.O.P. will be responsible for restocking all kits as needed.*

## Must Have-Items

Band – Aids	Adhesive Tape
Sterile Gauze Pads	Ace Bandage
Antibiotic Ointment	Tweezers
Hydrogen Peroxide	Anti-itch Cream
Rubbing Alcohol	Non-aspirin Pain Reliever
Cotton Swabs	Cold Medication
Scissors	Antihistamine pills
Motion Sickness Medicine	Small Ziploc Bags (2)

## Desired Items

Thermometer	Heartburn/Gas
Laxative	Topical Ointment
Throat Lozenges	Other Medication(s)
Anti-Diarrhea	Muscle Pain Reliever

# Van Bucket Tools

The following is a list of tools needed **FOR EACH VEHICLE.**  
Please put all of these tools in a “van bucket” to keep them organized and during the week they will **STAY** in your vehicle.

<b>TOOL</b>	<b>Per Van</b>	<b>NOTES</b>
2-cycle oil mixture	1	Bottle
Baby Oil	1	For driving nails/Clean-up
Bug Repellent	1	
Bucket (extra) with lid	1	5 gal
Carpenter's Levels	1 of each	4 ft & Line level
Chalk Line	1	With chalk
Cooler – Water	1	5 gallon
Cooler-Ice Chest	1	48 qt for lunch each day
Drill-cordless	1	With driver & bit set
Drill-corded	1	With driver & bit set
Drop Cloth	2	For painting
Electric Adapter	2	2 prong to 3 prong
Extension Cord	1	50' +
First Aid Kit	1	See list for requirements
Hammer	7	16 oz +
Hand Sanitizer	1	Medium sized bottle
Hand Wipes	1	
Measuring Tape	2	16' +
Paint Brush - Wide	4	
Paint Brush - Thin	3	
Paint Roller	3	
Paint Roller Pad	6	
Paint Scraper	5	Wide & thin
Paint Tray	3	
Pliers	1	
Putty Knives	3	
Rags	10	Bring them clean
Rope/Ratchet strap	At least 2	To tie down ladders
Safety Goggles	2	
Saw - Circular	1	With extra blade(s)
Saw - Hack	1	
Saw - Hand	1	
Screwdrivers - Flat	2	
Screwdrivers - Phillips	2	

Scrub Brush	3	
Socket Wrench Set	1	Optional
Square, or Speed Square	2	
Sunscreen	2	Bottle/Can
Trash Bags	1	box
Tin Snips	1	
Utility Knife	1	
Wasp/Bee Spray	2	
Wood Chisel Set	1	Optional
Work Gloves	7	
Wrecking Bar	1	

\*This cooler will not stay in your van all week. You will turn drop it off in the evenings and pick it up in the mornings so the kitchen staff can fill it with your lunch.

# Tool Process

- The day is here! Our Tool Process used to read, “one day, groups will only need to bring van buckets.” Because of the generosity of many of our participants, **2012 will be the first summer that YSM campers do not have to bring Community Tools!** Thank you for making this dream a reality.
- **Van Buckets are still required** and will be checked by your Field Manager when you arrive at camp. Planned projects cannot be accomplished without the appropriate tools. Van bucket lists are compiled based on years of experience. As a minimum, please bring all the tools requested. Feel free to bring any extra tools! Any church who donates their van buckets will not have to bring them again. Our goal is that one day we will have a supply of van buckets in our tool shed so that churches will no longer have to bring them.
- Mountain T.O.P. is in constant need of updating our Community Tool Shed Tools that we make available to all YRGs throughout the summer as well as using during other MTOP programs. We are providing this list (our entire tool shed stock) as a guide for you to know what is going to be provided as well as to let you know **what you can donate**. Much of our tool shed was stocked by church groups leaving their tools with us. We would appreciate your help with keeping our tool sheds stocked and our tools in good working order.

## *Community Tool Shed Tools*

TOOL	SPECS
Axe	Double headed if possible
Bucket with lid	5 gal, for mixing paint
Hatchet	
Hedge Clipper	
Hoe	
Hoe – Grubbing	
Ladder – Extension	20ft.
Ladder – Step	
Mattock	
Pencil Point Bar	Sounding rod/Spud bar
Pick	
Post Hole Digger	Quality
Pruner – Hand	
Pruning Shears	
Pruning Saw	
Rake – Gravel	
Rake – Leaf	
Shovel – Flat	

Shovel – Spade	
Sledge Hammer	10lb.+
Swing blade	
Trowels	Any type
Wheel barrow	

- It is possible that a tool may be broken during the week. Please take the time to collect tools that are in good working condition. Mountain T.O.P. tools are marked BLACK.
- We are providing tool colors for your convenience. The key to getting tools back to their owners is proper identification. This means clearly color-coding the tools in your Van Buckets so that they do not mix with Mountain T.O.P. tools. It is also a good idea to put church names on the tools. This makes separation easier at camp and at home. Your tool color will be assigned in late March. There will not be time to color code your tools after arrival, so please come prepared. We suggest these options for color-coding tools: colored tape, spray paint, paint with brush.
- Any power tools, such as reciprocating saws, chain saws, drills, and even tool boxes are extremely helpful and can be lent out at your discretion.

# What to Bring

## Must Haves:

- Work clothes for one week
- Casual clothes for one week
- Bedding for a twin bed: sheets and blanket or sleeping bag
- Pillow
- Bath Towel
- Toiletries
- Shower Sandals
- Rain Gear
- At least one long-sleeve shirt, jacket or sweatshirt for possible cold evenings
- Sunscreen
- Bug Repellent
- Flashlight
- Hat or visor
- Bible
- Pen / pencil
- Watch (so you can be on time)
- Closed-toe shoes / work boots

## Optional:

- Portable camp chair for more comfortable seating than the ground offers
- Fan (might need small extension cord for it)
- Spending money for canteen, camp store (T-shirts and other items will be sold, local dairy bars, local shops, etc.
- Musical instrument (if you play one)
- Plastic bags for wet, soiled or filthy clothing

## Special Notes:

- Required during workday
  - Service Project - Long pants, closed-toe shoes or work boots and shirts with at least short sleeves
  - Day Camp - Shorts are okay, closed-toe shoes and shirts with at least short sleeves
- All clothes should be conservative when it comes to their content (i.e. no beer or possibly offensive designs) and how revealing they are.
- Bring enough clothes for the entire week. Laundry facilities are not available.
- Please leave valuables at home and/or locked in vehicle for the week. This includes expensive jewelry, iPods, and large amounts of cash. Although we do the best we can, we cannot always ensure the security of the facilities.
- There are no separate sleeping accommodations for married couples.

**ALL THREE PAGES MUST BE KEPT IN THE VEHICLE IN WHICH  
YOU ARE TRAVELING AT ALL TIMES.**

**(One copy plus the original must be brought to camp for each participant)**

**This is a 3 page form and must be FULLY completed.**

## **Medical Information Form**

Last Name _____			First _____			MI _____		
Address _____			City _____			St _____ Zip _____		
Phone _____			Occupation _____					
*Social Security Number _____			Date of Birth _____					
Church _____			Church Phone _____					
Church Address _____			City _____			St _____ Zip _____		
Personal Physician _____			Phone _____					
*Insurance Company _____			*Phone _____					
*Policy # _____		*Insured ID # _____		*Prescription Card # _____				
In case of emergency contact:								
Name _____			Relationship _____					
Daytime Phone _____			Evening Phone _____					
Name _____			Relationship _____					
Daytime Phone _____			Evening Phone _____					
Medication(s) you cannot take _____								
_____								
Medication you are currently taking _____								
_____								
These medications are to be administered by (circle one): Youth / Contact Person / Staff								
Allergies / special health problems or concerns _____								
_____								
Do you have a current tetanus shot? Yes / No								
If yes, indicate date _____ If no, we encourage you to get one before you come.								

***\*In lieu of this information, you may provide a copy of the front and back of your medical insurance card.***

## Statement of Activities and Release Form

Youth Service Ministry (YSM) at Mountain T.O.P. is a Christian Service ministry to the people of the Cumberland Mountains in Tennessee. Volunteers participating in the activities of this ministry will be expected to be involved in all activities and to respect the people of the Cumberland Mountains at all times.

Volunteers will participate in (but will not be limited to) yard work, porch and steps repair, flat roof painting and repair, outhouse construction, winterization projects, painting, cleaning, insulation, window repair/replacement, and other minor home repairs as need determines and are within the capability of the volunteer service team. These activities include may include the use of hand tools and the handling of materials and supplies. Power tools will only be used under the direct supervision of an adult and then only if the individual has the necessary skills to appropriately handle the power tool. Participants are never forced or required to engage in any work or activity in which they feel they are not able to participate safely.

YSM participants understand that photos and video may be taken during the course of the camp week that may be used by Mountain T.O.P. in the future promotion of our ministries and programs.

Participants are expected to follow all guidelines of participation, philosophies, and expectations set by the organization and camp staff. Participants are expected to follow all camp guidelines, philosophies, and expectations set by the ministry and camp staff. Examples of unacceptable behavior include sneaking out after lights out, violating the tobacco policy and other Mountain T.O.P. policies, going to places in the area which have been identified by camp staff as dangerous, and being disruptive to the camp life.

We acknowledge that every effort has been made in preparing the participants for this mission experience. We therefore release Mountain T.O.P., Incorporated, its agents, employees, and any and all persons connected therewith from any and all liability, claims, and causes of action of any type whatsoever arising out of or in any way connected with participation in the activities of the Mountain T.O.P. mission project.

Further, consent/permission is given for (participant) \_\_\_\_\_ to be treated by competent medical personnel in the event of an accident or medical emergency and to receive reasonable medical treatment as deemed necessary by a licensed physician.

In the event treatment is called for which a physician and/or other professional health care provider in the hospital/clinic refuses to administer without my consent, we hereby authorize:

Adult Group Leader (Print full name): \_\_\_\_\_

*and*

MTOP Camp Director (Print full name): \_\_\_\_\_

to give such consent for us in the event that we are not readily accessible by phone. If in the event it becomes necessary for either of the identified persons to give consent for us, we agree to hold such person free and harmless of any claims, demands, or suits for damages arising from giving such consent. We understand that Mountain T.O.P. requires proof of personal insurance or acknowledgement of financial responsibility for all medical expenses. We agree that our insurance company (if applicable) will be used for all necessary medical expenses and we are aware that we may be billed by the medical provider for any medical expenses not covered by our personal insurance policy and will be responsible for payment of those expenses.

This is the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (Parent or Guardian if participant is a minor)

**THIS FORM MUST BE NOTARIZED for anyone under the age of 18:**

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public signature

My commission expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Notary Public seal or stamp required above

# Adult Self-Screening Form

Camp week \_\_\_\_\_ Camp \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation and Employer \_\_\_\_\_

\*Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License number \_\_\_\_\_ Issuing State \_\_\_\_\_

*If you will be driving during the camp week, you must fill out the following two lines:*

Car Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Policy # \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

*Circle One*

1. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? **Yes** **No**
2. Have you ever been convicted or formally accused of any sex related or child abuse offense? **Yes** **No**
3. Have you had a background check completed within the past 3 years to verify the responses to the above questions? **Yes** **No**
  - Have you participated in Safe Sanctuary or a similar youth protection training program? **Yes** **No**

- If you answered YES to questions #1 and/or #2, please fully explain on back of form.
- If you answered YES to question #3, what was the date of your background check?

Date of check / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ **Your background check MUST be on file at your church.**

- If you answered NO to question #3, you must have a background check completed before arrival to camp. If your church does not offer this service, Mountain T.O.P. will have one processed. You will need to reimburse Mountain T.O.P. for this cost; fees vary by state.

YES, we need Mountain T.O.P. to process a background check for me. \*SSN only needed if Mountain T.O.P. is completing background check.

I fully support Mountain T.O.P.'s effort to increase the probability of having a safe environment in our camp week for youth to perform mission work without fear of irresponsible adults who may take advantage of them or put them at risk of being hurt. I certify, to the best of my knowledge, the information that I have provided on this form is true and accurate. I authorize any investigation, including a background check, of any or all statements made on this form.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Pastor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Youth Abuse Prevention Policy

“Safe Sanctuary” for Mountain T.O.P., Inc.

**Introduction:** Mountain T.O.P. (MTO) is an ecumenical faith-based Christian organization, affiliated with The United Methodist Church and holds a covenant relationship with the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church. The ministry agrees with the following statements of the General Conference and the policies and procedures that it recommends. The General Conference of the United Methodist Church, in April 1996 adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of abuse of children and youth in the church. This would include sexual, emotional, physical, and ritual abuse, and neglect. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes a child...welcomes me” (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our futures, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones...it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea” (Matthew 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church state “...children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse” (Paragraph 161C).

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse (“ritual abuse” refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) occur in churches, large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church, and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church – 2000*; pp. 180-181. Copyright © 2000, The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.)

Thus, in covenant with the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church, and in commitment to the church universal and to God Almighty, Mountain T.O.P. adopts this policy for the prevention of abuse of youth at our camp locations, worksites, and en route to and from our worksites. The purpose and intent for establishing this Youth Abuse Prevention Policy (including the Mountain T.O.P. Operating Procedures) is to demonstrate the absolute and unwavering commitment of MTO to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of youth participants.

**Statement of Covenant:** Therefore, as a Christian ministry of faith and service to God and others, we, Mountain T.O.P. pledge to conduct the ministry of the Gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our youth participants, summer staff, administration, and people for whom we provide home repairs. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of staff; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our staff and administration regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs. We will strongly encourage each church participating in the ministry of Mountain T.O.P. to establish its own “Safe Sanctuary” policy and procedures.

**Conclusion:** In ministry to and with youth, Mountain T.O.P. is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each youth will be “...surrounded by steadfast love, ...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (From “Congregational Pledge,” “Baptismal Covenant II,” The United Methodist Hymnal, p. 44).

**Endorsed by:**

Mountain T.O.P. Board of Directors

*Adapted from Youth Abuse Prevention Policy, Safe Sanctuaries for Youth; Reducing the Risk of Abuse in Youth Ministries by Joy Thornburg Melton, Discipleship Resources 2003.*