

## **RYLA COUNSELOR ROLE/JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Overview:**

The volunteer counselor staff is an integral part of the Camp RYLA leadership team. Passion for youth as well as enthusiasm and dedication to working with youth are key characteristics of the RYLA counselor. Communication skills – both the ability to listen and to speak – are critical to the success of RYLA counselors. RYLA counselors are the gateway for RYLA campers to experience positive adult role models that exemplify the ideals of Rotary, ethical behavior and the 4-way test, and service above self. This is demonstrated in the commitment of time and giving of themselves to achieve an exceptional RYLA experience. RYLA counselors receive professional level training in small group facilitation, working with different personality types and effective communications, and then have the opportunity to put these skills into action throughout the week. RYLA counselors often comment that their own personal growth exceeded that of even the campers. Truly a life changing experience!

### **General Description:**

RYLA counselors will be asked to actively participate in all activities, training and orientation related to Camp RYLA. They will be required to fill the role as cabin counselor and work group counselor. As cabin counselor, they will have oversight of approximately 10 campers. A work group will consist of approximately 10 campers. A counselor is expected to be willing to challenge themselves and step outside their own comfort zone. They should approach activities with an open mind and be willing to grow themselves. They should be eager to engage in conversation, initiate activities, provide oversight and guidance to campers, and constructive feedback to Camp staff and directors. The ability to be flexible and work cooperatively with others is a must.

### **Key Roles of RYLA Counselor:**

1. Participation – Counselors are expected to take an active role throughout the camp. Counselors must be willing to “open up” and be authentic with the campers as appropriate. Counselors must also be cognizant that the camp is for the youth, and therefore they must judiciously limit their participation in some activities.
2. Facilitator – Counselors will be asked to discuss and debrief presentations and activities with their cabin or work group.
3. Presenter – Counselors may be asked to lead an activity with their cabin group or work group.
4. Role model/leader – Counselors will be expected to set an example for campers in the way they interact with campers, RYLA staff and Grizzly Creek Ranch.
5. Cabin chaperone – Counselors have direct responsibility for a cabin consisting of approximately 10 campers of the same gender as counselor. Counselors sleep in the same cabin as the campers in a separate room.
6. Observer – Counselors will be asked to be observant of the campers so that issues that arise can be addressed.
7. Camp guidelines/rules – Program directors will outline and request campers to make a commitment in following camp guidelines/rules. Counselors will be responsible for oversee the campers’ commitments to follow camp rules as needed. If necessary, counselors should refer concerns to Camp Director and Program Director for further action.
8. Coordinator – Coordination between campers, work group, other counselors, camp director, program director, and medical person as needed.

*Important note: The RYLA counseling staff is not trained to provide psychological assistance to campers, and should never attempt to do so. Counselors can provide an avenue for campers to discuss insights and issues in a safe environment. RYLA counselors should immediately advise the camp director of suspected child abuse or psychological problems so that appropriate action and assistance can be provided.*