

# Sound of Children



## Summer Program Handbook

**St. Peter Church**  
17231 Sherman Way  
Van Nuys, CA 91406

**St. Leon Church**  
3325 N. Glenoaks Blvd  
Burbank, CA 91504

### Sound of Children Mission Statement

The purpose of creating the “Sound of Children” organization is to spread the good and the beautiful thru the voices and actions of our children.

Our mission is to reach out to as many children as we can and give them the chance to love and learn the esthetics of our culture thru music and art.

Today, our children are deprived from the most important gifts that surrounds art and music; skills that are essential to their development and growth. Our mission is to install identity awareness into our young generation, so that as they advance their minds and intellects and reach to higher places in life, they can always keep their souls in peace and at home.

Our mission is NOT to earn profit from the work we do, but to care, love, give and educate our children so that thru their beautiful voices we can spread kindness, knowledge, and beauty.

And, most importantly, together we CAN SAVE our beautiful ancient culture that was inherited to us by our great-grandparents from elimination.

*Sirvart Kavoukjian*

Director – Sound of Children Cultural Programs

#### Tuition and Fees:

- Minimum 2 weeks registration is required per camper
- Registration fee is non-refundable
- Full payments required at sign-up
- Registration fee includes 2 T-shirts. Armenian Text/Workbooks and Music Text/Workbook
- Discounts may apply:
- Sibling discount / Returning Campers discount / Open house Discount / Full course registrants discount (6-8weeks) participation required for this discount
- Combined discount per child cannot exceed more than \$40.00 per week

### **General Daily Schedule:**

Campers will participate in the following activities which will be scheduled per group:

- Morning Exercise / Pray time (30 minutes – daily)
- Armenian Language classes (45 minutes daily)
- Music Education / Choir – (30 minutes daily)
- Science Lab (30 minutes 3 X a week)
- Arts & Craft (45 Minutes daily)
- Chess Club (45 minutes 3 X a week)
- Dance Class (45 minutes 3 X a week)
- Acting Class/Story telling (2X a week)
- Outdoor play / Water games / Slides (1 hour daily – water time 2 X a week)

### **Other Activities at Camp:**

Magic Shows, Puppet shows, Armenian/English Story Telling, Petting Zoo, Cooking classes, Talent Show and by-weekly performances are also part of the program.

### **Staff Meeting**

Every Monday we will have a staff meeting from 8:00-8:15AM. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory for all staff.

### **Friday Church day**

On Fridays, groups will take turns and visit our church and hear God's word. They can also light a candle and pray. Children will learn prayers like "Our Father" and other Armenian children prayers. We ask parents to donate whatever they feel like one time for our church for the candles.

### **Lunch & Break Schedules:**

Children, Teachers and aids will be given a schedule for breakfast/lunch & break times.

We provide two breaks and 30 minutes lunch for all staff. The two (15 minutes) breaks are included and paid for, however, lunch will be deducted from hours worked. All staff must follow assigned schedules for lunch and breaks. We ask all teachers and helpers to always be present and help serve kids during mealtimes. The groups are also responsible to clean after themselves when they leave to have it ready for the next group. Once children are all seated and eating, teachers and aids can also help themselves and join in and eat with the children.

### **Water**

We will have pitchers with fresh cold water on the tables during all mealtimes, however, we encourage that children bring their own water bottles with fresh water daily. Teachers must always remind children and / or help them carry their waters with them. The summer months get pretty hot and water can help keep children hydrated at all times.

### **Drop off and Pick up locations:**

All children (extended and regular hours) must be dropped off at the front desk across the playground every morning. All parents must sign campers in and out each day. Any other person signing in for a child must be on the child's pick-up authorization form or if they're not on the form, the parent must contact the office in advance to arrange the pick-up.

Teachers will be provided daily attendance checklists every Monday morning. They are asked to monitor attendance and advise the office if children assigned to their groups are absent. They will then make name corrections accordingly and give it to the office for corrections.

At the end of the program day, teachers must bring the attendance check list with the children that are part of the extended care program and assign them to the teacher in charge for after care of that day. The after-care counselor will then monitor the checklist and leave the list in the office before leaving.

Teachers and Aids will take turns and have before and after care duty times once a week. On those days they're asked to be present from 7:45AM to 5:30PM. A weekly schedule will be printed and passed out on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of duty.

Children are gathered in the playgroup accompanied by their teachers and aids. Teachers and aids should engage children with games, plays or group dances. **Always keep in mind that the children's safety is our number one priority and we always must keep our eyes on them and not leave them alone at any time.** When children are outside playing the teachers and aids must walk the playground and engage with them not sit on the benches and chat with the other teachers. Group exercise will start exactly at 8:45AM following by morning prayer and important announcements about the day's activities, etc.

### **Staff & Positions:**

Main room counselors must be at least 18 years of age and have graduated from high school. They will be guiding and participating with children during their daily activities. The main room counselors are responsible to provide the director with weekly lesson plan (in accordance with the weekly theme) each Friday for the following week. Additionally, they need to advise our directors if school supplies are needed at least 2 days prior.

Junior Counselors and aids should be at least 16 years of age or over and will perform tasks as appropriately delegated by the main room counselors.

The CIT's (counselors in training) and underage volunteers are 14-15 years old and they should not be performing counselor's duties but should be assisting in those duties to learn and aid the counselor. Their primary function is to help with assigned tasks while also learning how to be good counselors. CIT's should never oversee a group by themselves and they must obey the main counselor and the rules established in the group class they're in. They should be good examples in every way possible for our children to look up to. Junior counselors and CITs are not to leave the campground premises at any time while on duty, including during breaks. All paid staff members will receive a bi-weekly salary which they will get on Monday morning following pay day. The administration will reward the volunteers with incentives or bonuses based on their performance during the summer camp.

## **Dress Code / T-shirts**

All counselors/aids/volunteers must have decent outfits during their service at our camp. If the outfit is inappropriate the director can ask the counselor/aid/volunteer to go home and change. On the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Camp and every Friday following, we ask that all counselors/aids/volunteers wear the camp T-shirts that will be provided to them in advance.

## **Attendance / Time Off / Tardy**

All counselors / Aids / Volunteers must report at least 10 minutes prior to their daily work schedule. Unexcused absence and tardiness not allowed. After 3<sup>rd</sup> time of tardy, the counselor/aid/volunteer can be expelled from the program.

If a time off is needed, the camp director must know as soon as possible to plan for a substitute. We ask for your full dedication and participation during the 8-week program. Counselors/aids/staff will not be paid for their time off. The program does not include sick or personal paid days during the summer program.

## **Cell Phones:**

Except for emergencies, cell phones should not be used while on duty. All cell phones must be stowed away. Your attention to our children is most important and any disruption will impact the affectability of your responsibility.

Children with cell phones also cannot use their cell phones during class/play or activity times. All cell phones must be collected in a basket when they check in and can be distributed at the end of the day. Children can use their phone once or twice a day if they need to call their parents or if there is an emergency or other special circumstances.

## **Camper Safety:**

Our number one objective is to do everything possible to ensure the well-being and safety of each camper.

Moving children – Each counselor will be responsible for his/her children when moving from one location to another as a group. This will eliminate campers running ahead in an unsupervised manner.

During water days, we ask counselors to be extra attentive and careful, so kids won't run or slip or push each other when sliding. We also ask counselors to make sure children are all wearing sun protection before they're out playing. Children must have time to get dry while sitting on the benches outdoors, before getting back to bathrooms or air-conditioned rooms.

## **Injuries:**

For any non-serious injury (scrapes and bumps), first aid supplies are available to counselors at the following locations:

Common / Eating area

Camp Office

Ice / ice packs/water can be found in our main kitchen.

## **Camp Medical Emergency Plan**

In the event of an emergency/accident within the camp, the following guidelines should be adhered to:

Assess the situation (ask for Director's assistance if needed)

- Is this truly an emergency? Is the injured breathing, conscious, bleeding, moving or in pain?

If any of the above warrants the situation, take control

- Provide reassurance to the camper involved
- Direct other children in the group to a safe location and ask for help
- Stay with the camper
- Dial 911 and provide location

All accidents must be reported to the Camp Director and be logged on the injury log. Forms are provided in the main office.

Parents must be made aware of any injury their child incurred at the camp. The camp director can make the call and report.

## **Allergies**

It is not uncommon for campers to come to camp with, what is called, an EpiPen, because they are allergic to bee stings and / or have other allergies. A bee sting or an ingestion of certain foods can be life threatening to someone with the allergy.

- An epinephrine auto injector is a medical device used to deliver a measured dose of epinephrine using auto injector technology. The Room Counselors must know where any such medication is stored in the main office and have access to it at any time if necessary.

## **Camper Disciplinary Actions:**

Counselors can take the following actions when a disciplinary action is required

- Counsel the camper by describing them their behavior and their wrong doing
- Time out (5-10 minutes) period to campers to spend quietly reflecting on the incident.
- Advise Director if the action requires more disciplinary actions.
- Contact the parent if a series of discipline situations occur and ask for their cooperation and help.

## **Before and After Care Counselors**

The extended time is still part of the program and children must be busy and engaged doing something fun. Please attain children by engaging them in group activities/games. On the days you have after care duty, please come prepared and discuss your activities with your partner counselor. Please keep in mind, during after care, children must always be accompanied to bathroom and while playing in playground. Please follow the drop-off and pick-up instructions before, during, and after care as well.

### **Be on alert for bullying**

Bullying can occur in a day camp setting. Many children attending camp are susceptible to a number of potential bullying situations. New campers, campers who perform poorly, and campers who struggle to make friends or appear different from others are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of bullying. Bullying episodes may consist of exclusion by other campers, the creation of rumors about a fellow camper, taunting during a sports game. Children may gossip about new campers, or spread rumors about a campmate. Some children who attend camp are bullies in their school or community. If camps set the right tone and create a positive and respectful environment, bullies have a chance to change their behavior and engage in more positive interactions with their peers. Creating positive relationships is key to preventing bullying at camp. It is essential for directors and counselors to build relationships with, and earn respect from, their campers. These relationships help campers feel comfortable voicing their concerns and seeking help when bullying incidents occur. It is important that counselors take action when they observe behaviors that may eventually lead to bullying. If counselors hear about or see bullying, they should intervene immediately. If an incident is ignored, it will escalate quickly.

### **What you should tell your campers about bullying . . .**

Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. If someone is bullying you, it's O.K. to stand up for yourself, walk away, or ask a friend or counselor for help. Responding to bullying by fighting back doesn't usually work—and may make matters worse. Violence encourages more violence and fails to solve problems. It is important to report bullying when you see it and when you hear about it. Telling is not tattling. Bullying is against Sound of Children program's policy and if the action is not corrected, children can be expelled for this reason.

### **What NOT to do:**

Don't think it will be just another year of camp. You will now have all the responsibilities of making the week enjoyable for your group. Don't be passive. Interact with the campers! Don't just tell them what and how to do things... do it too! (Play cards with them, sing and dance with them, pray with them, eat with them, tell them stories and hear their stories, play ball games with them and engage in other outdoor games with them). It makes the day so much more fun for you too. NEVER be alone with a camper: Keep the door OPEN and have a witness, especially if the camper is of the opposite sex. (This is mainly for CIT's and young aids and volunteers). Also, be very careful with physical contact of any sort.

**Additionally, here is what we've learned from our experience and from our children and peers are the keys for being an amazing counselor, aid or even a staff volunteer.**

1. ***Know what the job entails.*** Being a counselor is a very draining experience. You will be surprised how much energy your group of campers have. It should be the counselor's desire to spend his/her days giving kids one of the greatest weeks of their lives. You really must evaluate why you want to be a counselor. It's a lot of fun, but a lot of work. You must be responsible for kids small and big and be able to handle any situation that comes up. You are an authority figure now and the children are looking to you for guidance, support, safety and friendship.

2. ***Prepare*** - You will go through CPR/First Aid training and complete counselor orientation. Go online and research fun games, google on child development activities, etc.

3. ***Become friends with the other counselors.*** You don't all have to be best friends forever, but it is essential that you all get along, at the minimum. If counselors are arguing, even if it's done far outside earshot of the campers, they will pick up on it. Most likely, you will have to work and share common areas or classes with the other counselors, everything goes smoother if you are friends.

5. ***Memorize the camp schedule.*** You will want to know what is going to happen next. We understand that you may change groups or schedules from week to week, but do your best to be prepared.

6. ***Get to know your campers by names.*** Play name games. It will help you and the campers to get to know each other.

7. ***Get to know your camper's personalities.*** Certain campers you will love, certain campers you will not like as much.. The key is to know what they will do. You have to know who has to be watched constantly, and who always does what they are told. You must anticipate how they will react to each other, and during activities. Try to spend at least few minutes of face time with each camper each day. They will like you more if they feel that they are the center of attention, and it will allow you to understand them better.

8. ***Break up cliques early.*** It is unavoidable that there will be cliques. Make sure that you make them mingle as much as possible. Try making them sit with different people at lunch or make them partners with someone that they would not normally talk with. Don't overdo it. They will not all be best friends, accept it; just make sure that they all respect each other and don't bully or fight.

9. ***Be PROACTIVE rather than REACTIVE.*** Anticipate what is going to happen and then plan accordingly.

10. ***Have a great time.*** It might seem like a lot of work, but you will change lives. It is amazing to see the quiet camper that sat in the corner at the beginning of the session getting along with other campers, or to see what they have learned. You are a positive role model; give yourself a pat on the back.

**And finally, what you'll need to have for a fantastic summer as a counselor:**

Energy / A positive attitude / A passion for our music and culture / A love for working with children / Flexibility / and, of course, plenty of Coffee.

# Sound of Children Summer Program Handbook Acknowledgement / Receipt Page

## Counselor assignments and commitments

Counselor Name \_\_\_\_\_ Assigned Role \_\_\_\_\_

Program Location service will be provided:

St. Peter Church (Van Nuys) \_\_\_\_\_ St. Leon Church (Glendale) \_\_\_\_\_

Assigned service dates and hours \_\_\_\_\_

- My signature below indicates that I have received a copy of the Sound of Children Program Handbook.
- I understand that this handbook contains information regarding the expectations and regulations, which affect me as an employee.
- I acknowledge that I have read and understood Sound of Children Summer program's policies.
- I also understand that the organization may revise, supplement, or rescind policies or procedures described in the manual, with or without notice.

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please give original to office and retain a copy for your files.