

Twinlow Community Based Day Camp



2012 Registration and Congregation Guide

Dear Partner Congregations,

Thank you for choosing to work with Twinlow and our Community Based Day Camp Program. We exist to serve our congregations and we believe that Day Camp is one of the best ways we can do this.

This guide has been put together to describe the details of the Day Camp planning process as well as to give you information about the Day Camp Week. It will be helpful to new Congregational Coordinators or churches who are hosting Day Camp for the first time, but it may also give new ideas to congregations who have participated in our Day Camp Program in the past.

Please make sure that you read this guide in its entirety, even if you have participated in our day camp program in the past.

Thank you for partnering with Twinlow to host Day Camp. We look forward to working with you.

God's Peace,

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Program Director
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Our 2012 Theme is “Got Spirit”

Daily Themes:

- Monday: Welcome others,
- Tuesday: Be a Friend
- Wednesday: Accept Others
- Thursday: Give
- Friday: Rejoice and Share the Good News

Day Camp Cost

Package A

(includes 3 staff, program supplies, and transportation)

Suggested for day camps of 30 or less campers

\$1,200

Package B

(includes 4 staff, program supplies, and transportation)

Suggested for Day Camps of 40 or more campers

\$1,520

Package C

(includes 5 staff, program supplies, and transportation)

Suggested for Day Camps of 75 or more campers

\$1,840

References

We encourage you to call them about their Twinlow Partnership experience with Day Camp in 2011.

Pastor Heather Seman – Community UMC, Coeur d’Alene, ID
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Pastor Naomi Golter – Rosalia UMC, Rosalia, WA
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SOME of the Benefits of Partnering with Twinlow for your Day Camp

- Leadership! Take away the stress of finding leaders year after year for your VBS. Yes, you will still need to provide volunteers, but we provide the LEADERSHIP to help your program succeed and most of your volunteers just need “to show up.”
- Organization – END THE CHAOS. This is a process that works. Volunteers are utilized honored, and appreciated for their help.
- Our staff come ready for ministry, ready to serve, ready to teach, and ready to learn.
- On a year round basis, Twinlow is ready and available to help you get ready, help you promote and market to children your program, and help you recruit volunteers.
- No purchasing curriculum or materials. Twinlow comes equipped with supplies, music, and staff who know how to use them and lead. We call it camp in a van.
- Ministry opportunities – Twinlow Staff can minister to your campers, they can minister to your junior high and high school volunteers. Staff get to stay with church families and could interact with almost everyone in your church. Your campers go home and share with their families, those families share with their neighbors. It could be a snowball effect.

Day Camp Staffing

In order to have an appropriate number of staff for your program, we will need to have an estimate of how many campers that you will be expecting by the end of May. Please keep Twinlow aware of your registration numbers as they increase and we need your final estimate two weeks before your week begins.

Site Coordinator

For this partnership to work well and flourish, we ask that you select, appoint, or commission a Site Coordinator for your church. This will be the contact person between Twinlow and your congregation. Some churches have used a staff member and others have used a dedicated and organized volunteer. This position is critical for our success and Twinlow commits to helping equip your site coordinator to be successful.

Hosting Your Day Camp Team

Your Day Camp Team

- Will be made up of college aged young people who may be from all over the country and possibly other countries
- Our summer staff range in age from about 18 years old to about their mid twenties, and are trained to work in all of our programs. (day camp, on-site camp, partnership programs) Over the course of the summer, our staff switch between programs from week to week.
- Your team will likely be a mix of male and female staff. Every effort will be made to let you know the gender breakdown of your team by the week before your camp starts.
- Our Summer Ministry Team members are hired with the understanding that they will uphold the mission and ministry of Twinlow. EXPECTATIONS include:
 1. Faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior and a willingness to share that faith with others
 2. Enjoyment of people of all ages and the willingness to put their needs and those of the camp community ahead of personal desires.
 3. A general understanding of Christian teachings
 4. Ability to function as a working member of a team
 5. Good physical health, emotional stability, and vitality
 6. Willingness to laugh and have fun
 7. Hold Current CPR and First Aid certifications
 8. Maintain a professional attitude when it comes to service and hospitality
 9. Participate actively in community growth and respect of others
 10. Emphasize safety in all activities including emotional, physical, and spiritual safety

Host Families

Your host families open up their homes to the team and provide them with a place to relax in the evening and get a good night's sleep. By doing this, host families have the opportunity to become acquainted with the young men and women who work as summer staff for Twinlow which is one the best ministry aspects of this program. Staff members are expected to be with their hosts each evening and will not make plans to attend concerts, movies, visit friends, or do

anything that does not include their host family or the church. If there are programs or activities at the church or are at another home for dinner, staff members are expected to be with their host families no later than 9:00 PM. Twinlow prohibits staff to use alcohol or family computers during their stay.

Sleeping Arrangements

- Camp policies require that there are at least two staff members to a host home.
- Team members should have their own place to sleep and should not be expected to share a bed. Please remember, however, that these are camp counselors, and that they have sleeping bags that they can bring if necessary.
- Male and female staff cannot share a room, and camp staff should not be expected to share a room with children in the host home.
- Sleeping arrangements need to be made for Sunday – Thursday nights. It is helpful if your host homes are reasonably close to the church. Please keep in mind the time that it will take the team leader to drop off and pick up staff members each day if they are staying in different homes. On Sunday, when the team arrives, please have maps and phone numbers ready to the host homes.

Host Families should keep the following in mind:

- Day Camp is hard work, and team members need some time to relax in the evenings. Our staff loves it when they are invited to participate in something special during their time off, but please make sure that your host families know that they are not obligated to entertain the Day Camp Team.
- Team members will need some personal time to plan their bible studies and activities each night in order to be ready for the next day.

Meals for the Day Camp Team

The Day Camp Team will need meals from Sunday lunch through Friday lunch

Breakfast:

Most churches have the host families provide breakfast for our staff. Occasionally someone meets the Day Camp team at the church early and brings breakfast for the entire team.

Lunch

Lunch is served to the team at your church during the camp day. It's important that the teams lunch is similar to what the campers will have. (i.e. If campers have a sack lunch, it might cause a problem if the team is having Pizza or a meal from McDonalds.) Some churches have a person that makes lunches "to order" on site, while others have a different person bring lunch in every day.

Dinner

Most congregations have the Day Camp Team go over to a different home for dinner each night. Other churches have the team members return to their individual host homes for dinner. These meals can be a tremendous opportunity for your congregation to get to know our staff. Think about who would enjoy spending an evening with these young people and invite them over. Do you have some Methodist college grads, or people who used to work at camp in your church, they might enjoy the chance to socialize with our staff.

Snacks:

It is also a good idea to have healthy snacks around for the staff to snack on if they get hungry. Being a Day Camp counselor is hard work and staff can develop quite an appetite.

Dietary needs:

We train our staff in meal etiquette, in how to be a gracious guest, and how to use their manners. We will work hard to send staff who are flexible and easy going. Sometimes there may be some dietary needs and we will make every effort to inform you of these needs before the week starts. When they arrive on Sunday and meet with your coordinator, these are good times to work out those type of details.

Getting the Word out about Day Camp!

Publicity is very important to making your Day Camp Successful. Keep your entire congregation informed and excited about hosting Day Camp. Remember that the advertising that you do for this summer will help with advertising for next summer.

- List the Day Camp week as early as possible on your church calendar
- Share the word to children, their parents, and even other people in the congregation. The more people who know about your program, the more people who can help spread the word. Make sure that seniors know that their neighbors and grandchildren are welcome too.
- If you congregation has a preschool or elementary school, send Day Camp Flyers home with students. This should be done in January or February when parents begin to plan their children's summer activities.
- Place Day Camp posters in busy areas of the church to grab the attention of folks. Be sure to have the name and contact information of the site coordinator on each poster. Having volunteer leaders, past campers, and Sunday school kids make your posters is a great way to build excitement.
- Send a letter to the parents of every child ages 6-12. Follow up with phone calls.
- Place a short paragraph in your church bulletin every week, starting about two months prior to the start. Make sure the wording changes so that it continues to be noticed.
- Include articles about Day Camp in your monthly church newsletter starting in January.
- Plan a special "Camp Sunday" to start accepting registrations for Day Camp. Play games and plan outdoor activities and crafts that relate to the Day Camp theme to build interest.
- Give a "Temple Talk" in Sunday worship to explain to the congregation what Day Camp is all about.
- Invite someone from Twinlow to visit your congregation to promote Twinlow and Day Camp. We love to visit congregations but keep in mind that our schedules get very busy as it gets closer to summer.
- If you have had a day camp at your church before, make a display using photos from past years and place it on a table with registration forms. Remember these displays are more effective when staffed by a volunteer who can answer questions.
- Have a phone-a-thon. Gather a group of volunteers to call families from your congregations that have kids between the ages of 6 and 12 and invite them to Day Camp. Snacks and a party always make phone calls more fun.



Market to your Community

- Place flyers on community bulletin boards in libraries, stores, etc. Think about places that attract families with kids.
- Door hangers are very effective. Have teams of people hang them around your church's neighborhood.
- Encourage your day campers to have their friends register too. Consider giving a discount to kids who bring a friend, or to children who are not members of your congregation.
- Invite other congregations to participate in your Day Camp. Ask these other churches to advertise to their families with children.
- Make Day Camp t-shirts and have Day Camp volunteers wear them to church to generate interest. T-shirts can be great advertising for your church and for next year's program.
- Don't forget a volunteer photographer for Day Camp so that you can use the pictures for next year's publicity. Pictures that are taken can be used as a slide show at the end of the week or burned onto a CD and given to campers at the end of the week. This is a great way to leave visiting families with a positive impression of your church.

The Day Camp Week

Sunday – The Team arrives

- The Day camp team is usually able to arrive in time for your church service(s) on Sunday morning. Please try to greet them upon arrival.
- Please let Twinlow know as soon as possible if you would like the Team to participate in worship. Most churches will introduce the team and say a few things about Day Camp. In addition, the team can teach the congregation a song or do the children's sermon.
- We are flexible but this does need to be coordinated ahead of time so that the Day Camp team can be prepared
- Please keep in mind the distance away from Twinlow. In order to have well rested and happy counselors. We ask that our teams not have to leave the camp on Sunday morning before 6am.
- Lunch will need to be provided for the team.

Planning Meeting:

- The Day Camp Team Leader and the Site Coordinator will need to meet and work out the Day Camp details. Any Volunteers are encouraged to attend so everyone can meet each other and get the week off to a great start.



- The Site Coordinator will need to give a copy of all the camper registration forms to the Team Leader to take back to camp. (This can be done at the end of the week if necessary.)
- The Twinlow Team Leaders will ask some questions at this meeting:
- What spaces are available for Day Camp Use. Which spaces are not available.
- Is there access to a copy machine?
- Where will the counselors be staying? (Maps are helpful)
- How will meals be provided for the staff?
- Will there be any field trips or special events during the week?
- Who will let the Day Camp Team into the church each morning and lock up the church each night? (The staff need to be at the church up to one hour before and one hour after to clean and plan)
- Then off to Dinner at a home.

Monday – Friday

Registration and Health Forms

- Twinlow requires a registration and health form for each camper. They cannot stay unless these are turned in or completed by a parent or guardian.
- Camper Registration is the congregation’s responsibility and will not be done by the Twinlow Staff. We realize that Monday mornings can be hectic for the first day of registration, extra volunteers can help this process go smoother.
- We can help provide registration and health forms. Again, please make sure copies of these go back with the Day Camp Team.
- Each camper must be signed in and out of Day Camp each day. This must be done by someone from your congregation as the Day Camp Team will be busy with campers at these times. This is a great time for church staff to meet and connect with Day Camp families. Make sure you remind them of the times so they can “work the crowd!”

Lunch:

- Most congregations have their campers bring their lunch each day. Keep in mind refrigeration may be necessary.
- Some congregations provide lunch for all their Day Camps, staff and volunteers. This is great but not necessary.

Youth Night

- During your week of Day Camp, our staff can also plan an evening bible study or game night for your middle school or high school youth.
- This can be a great opportunity for your youth to meet young people who are spending their summer in ministry.
- If this is of interest to your congregation, please contact Twinlow before the week begins.

Going Off Site:

- Some Day Camp churches take their campers to a nearby park or playground, usually because they don't have adequate space for large group games on their property.
- If your congregation chooses to take such a trip, you are responsible for organizing and planning the entire trip and make sure that there is safe and appropriate transportation to and from the site.
- Twinlow Staff are not permitted to drive campers or volunteers in their vehicle.

Thursday Evening Program

- A Thursday Evening Program is an excellent outreach opportunity. Make sure that your entire congregation, as well as camper families are invited.
- Campers will have the opportunity to introduce their counselors to their parents and to show off their classroom or projects that they have made. Twinlow Staff will be able to help lead a 30-45 minute program of singing, skids, and closing worship.
- Most congregations start or end the evening with a potluck, a BBQ, or an ice cream social. Your church is responsible for planning and advertising for the event and any food or help needed for the evening.

Friday

- Day Camp begins at 9am and ends at 3pm Monday – Thursday, but will end at noon on Friday. This allows the staff time to clean up, meet with your church leaders, and drive back to Twinlow for our weekly staff meeting.

SAMPLE Daily Day Camp SCHEDULE

8:15 Staff and Volunteer Team Meeting (Twinlow staff & congregation volunteers)
 8:45 Campers arrive/Check in
 9:00 Morning Worship (starting with story time and/or songs while campers arrive)
 9:40 Group time 1
 10:10 Morning Snacks
 10:25 Energizers
 10:35 Group time 2
 11:05 Group time 3
 11:35 Gather for Lunch
 11:45 Lunch time

12:15 Transition Time
(songs, games, stories, etc)
12:35 Group time 4
1:05 All Camp Activity
2:15 Afternoon Snack (optional)
2:30 Closing Worship
3:00 Campers leave/Check out
3:15 5 minute Prayer time with Staff and Volunteers

FRIDAY SHORTENED SCHEDULE

8:15 Staff and Volunteer Team Meeting
8:45 Campers Arrive/Check in
9:00 Morning Worship (starting with story time and/or songs while campers arrive)
9:30 Group Time 1
9:55 Group Time 2
10:15 Group Time 3
10:35 Group Time 4
11:00 Closing Worship
11:45 Dismiss/Campers leave
12:00 Leadership Team meeting/Goodbyes
12:30 PACK UP
1:00 Twinlow Staff on the road

IDEAS for your DAY CAMP

Service Activity Ideas

- Visiting care facilities
- Making friendship bracelets for children in shelters
- Decorating placemats for soup kitchens
- Check out www.volunteermatch.org for great ideas and for places to serve in your area.

Snack Ideas

- Nutritious
- Easy to make
- Easy to clean up – think no trash too
- Granola Bars
- Water, 100% juice, or Milk

Lunch Ideas

- Sack Lunch that campers bring
- Sack Lunch the congregation provides
- Hot lunch the congregation provides – think volunteers!
- Serve Water or juice instead of kids bringing their own drink

- Offer an environmentally friendly Day Camp site by using non-disposable cups, plates, and utensils for lunch

Intentional & Intergenerational Ideas

We have found Day Camp to be a great time for campers to get to know the Pastor, Associates in Ministry, lay ministers, and other church staff members in a more personal way. We encourage you to invite these adults to take part in the Day Camp program as much as they are available.

All Camp Ideas

- Guest Speakers – bring in the firefighters or a veterinarian
- Cookouts!
- Trip to the local park or swimming pool
- Field trip to the zoo
- Service Activities

Evening Program Ideas

Evening Activities provide an opportunity for staff to meet other members of the congregation and to share their faith, commitment to the ministry, and enthusiasm for the Gospel. *If your congregation is requesting an evening program, Twinlow will provide, within reason, what is necessary to run that program.*

- Evening Vesper Services
- Church wide Group Building Games
- Make your own pizza night
- Putt Putt and Prayer
- City Wide Scavenger Hunt
- Fun Campfire and S'mores
- Middle School Night
- High School Night
- Young Adult Night
- Family Night

Details to Think About

Campers with special needs:

- Our Day Camp program is designed for children that are used to being in a large group setting, and our usual ratio is one counselor and a volunteer helper per every 10-12 campers. (This depends on the number of campers that you have, of course.)
- We do not want to exclude other children from participating in Day Camp, but you may need to make special arrangements to provide one-on-one help for them.
- Please be as clear as you can in your communications with parents in order for everyone to have a positive Day Camp experience.
- If you have any questions regarding special needs campers, please contact Twinlow.

Camper Fees and Payment:

Your congregation establishes the fee you charge campers who attend Day Camp. Some churches have been able to build Day Camp into the annual budget. Others have divided the total fee between the estimated numbers of campers and have then established the fee based on passing all costs on to the campers. Fees have ranged from FREE, to \$5.00 per camper and up to \$40 per camper based on the estimated numbers, church finances, the number of campers needing financial assistance, and other local expenses. Indicate your established fee clearly on all documents used to promote the event.

The final bill will be given to the site coordinator at the beginning of the week. Since fees are established by your congregation, payment to Twinlow at the end of the Day Camp should be made in a single check from the church instead of the individual checks received with the registration. Check with your congregation's treasurer or Church Council to establish a system for depositing the camp fee funds and for final payment to Twinlow at the end of the Day Camp week.

Insurance:

- The congregation is responsible for insurance to cover the use of church facilities and potential liability for this co-sponsored program.
- Twinlow provides secondary insurance for accidents that may occur during the Day Camp day. The secondary insurance covers expenses not covered by the family's policy.
- If you would like a copy of Twinlow's liability insurance for your records, please let us know.

Policy on Reporting Abuse or Suspected Abuse

- Twinlow Staff are Mandated Reporters and trained in recognizing and dealing with situations of abuse. They are trained to speak with the Twinlow Camp Director when this situation arises and we will likely ask the staff member to speak with a leader of the church before making the phone call.
- We will ask our staff to write down facts and what the camper says. Twinlow may follow up with Pastor or leader to make sure the right action was taken.

Protecting yourself:

- Do not spend time alone with a camper where other people cannot see you
- DO NOT ENGAGE IN ANY INAPPROPRIATE TOUCH WITH A CAMPER - OR ANYONE ELSE. YOU WILL KNOW WHAT IS INAPPROPRIATE.
- Write down and report ALL injuries.
- Report ANY suspicion of abuse

- Don't insist (force) children to do things they are not comfortable doing i.e. trust falls, activities involving touch, swimming, etc.

Volunteers:

- Our Day Camp Team cannot effectively minister to your kids without your volunteers! These volunteers will be working with the Day Camp staff and assigned to small groups and activities. They will also be helping out with registration, daily sign-in and sign-out, snacks, lunch, and helping out wherever they might be needed.

We ask the following of your volunteers:

- They must have completed *at least* their Freshman year of High School.
- We need at least one volunteer per Day Camp Team member (4), if not more. Another ratio is 1 volunteer for every 10-12 campers.
- Your volunteers need to be present and available to help during the entire Day Camp Day. If you (the site coordinator) won't be able to be on site for the whole week, make sure that you have someone to take your place.
- That they help out the Day Camp Team! Volunteers will be supervised by the Congregational Site Coordinator and the Twinlow Team Leader, and must be willing and able to step in wherever they are needed. So, one day they may be needed to help with crafts, but another day they may need to help clean up after snack time.
- You may use Jr. High aged helpers to assist with registration and snack time, but they must be directly supervised by an adult volunteer who is at least 21 years old. *Jr. High helpers cannot work alone directly with the day campers.*
- *When you recruit volunteers, please keep in mind that we are relying on you to find volunteers that will be an asset to the program.*

Finally

Our Mission is to serve your congregation. We exist to serve you. Talk to us about what you need and how we can continue to do things better.