



# JOURNEY TO DREAM

## Volunteer Handbook

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## **WELCOME!**

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to JOURNEY TO DREAM. We are thrilled you're interested in volunteering for JOURNEY TO DREAM! Whether serving with youth in a group setting, assisting at fundraising events, or helping behind the scenes administratively, your support and time are invaluable to us. We truly could not do this work without our volunteers!

By asking you to join our team, we are demonstrating that we believe you have the ability to contribute in a unique way to the success of our Agency. We hope you will find JOURNEY TO DREAM a great place to volunteer and that your time with us will fulfill your expectations and meet the needs of our organization. JOURNEY TO DREAM's mission and values are as follows:

## **MISSION**

JTD's mission is to empower, equip, and embrace victimized, at-risk, and homeless teens to overcome adversity and homelessness through education, life skills, and positive experiences, enabling them to function as self-sufficient, productive adults.

## **HISTORY**

JOURNEY TO DREAM has been an integral part of the North Texas community since 2004, with a mission dedicated to helping teens overcome adversity and live purposeful lives. JOURNEY TO DREAM's curriculum-based programs address issues plaguing today's teens such as substance abuse, depression and cutting, bullying, teen pregnancy and homelessness.

Journey to Dream has been serving homeless teens since 2004 through outreach programs that offer support for meals, clothing, and transportation, as well as life skills training.

In 2005, we launched our first pilot program at Hebron High School aimed at preventing destructive behavior in youth. In 2009, JOURNEY TO DREAM expanded its programs to all high schools and middle schools in the Lewisville ISD, positively impacted tens of thousands of teens with a message of hope and overcoming.

The school program continues to be successfully delivered in middle schools and high schools throughout LISD.

By 2013, the issue of youth homelessness had become a priority for cities across the country, including those in Denton County. JOURNEY TO DREAM was there to support the community and fill the gap: helping support a growing population of homeless teens. We established new partnerships with other organizations to provide programs and resources for homeless youth. JOURNEY TO DREAM served 79 homeless students in 2013.

The next step for JOURNEY TO DREAM was the opening of Kyle's Place in 2017. It was the first emergency shelter for unaccompanied youth ages 14-18 in Denton County at that time.

Kyles's Place became licensed in 2018 to serve foster children in Texas as a transitional living program. The goal is to help teens work towards independence.

Kyle's Place does much more than provide a safe place to live. Youth at Kyle's Place learn a new way of life, experiencing love and support, many for the first time while breaking negative cycles, achieving goals, and being hopeful about the future.

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The home is complete with all the amenities and it is a comfortable place for teens to live and pursue meaningful futures. While living here, teens work with family counselors, case managers, residential specialists, and mentors who help with life skills, and provide access to community resources. After leaving Kyle's Place, teens have the skills to confidently put one foot in front of the other towards a brighter future.

Kyle's Place Provides:

- A safe caring place to live, clothing, and nutritious meals
- Life Skills Training
- Individual Counseling
- Academic Support
- Medical and Dental Care
- Case Management
- Mental Health Care and Assessment
- Community Outreach and Resources
- Recreational Outings
- Spiritual Development

## **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

We are pleased to provide you with your *Volunteer Handbook* ("Handbook"), which will acquaint you with policies, guidelines and expectations that apply to all volunteers. The material in this handbook is presented as a matter of information only and its contents should not be interpreted as a contract between the Agency and its volunteers. One of your first responsibilities is to be familiar with the contents of the Handbook. You should read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the Volunteer Handbook. It describes many of your responsibilities as a volunteer and outlines the programs developed by JOURNEY TO DREAM.

Please understand that this Handbook only highlights certain sections of JOURNEY TO DREAM's procedures. It is by no means exhaustive. There are a number of procedures and rules dealing with our business, which are established by laws, regulations, and standards that are dictated by state and federal authorities, and are followed by your JOURNEY TO DREAM, while every attempt has been made to create these personalized policies consistent with federal and state law, if an inconsistency arises the policy(s) will be enforced consistent with the applicable law.

No Handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. For this reason, you should always contact the Volunteer Coordinator or Supervisor if you have a circumstance or question for which you cannot locate an answer in the Handbook.

As JOURNEY TO DREAM continues to grow, the need may arise and JOURNEY TO DREAM reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the Handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate in its sole and absolute discretion. Volunteers will, of course, be notified of such changes to the Volunteer Handbook as they occur.

## **VOLUNTEER PLAN**

### **Volunteer Needs**

Volunteers are a valuable resource to JOURNEY TO DREAM, its staff and clients. Volunteers shall be given meaningful assignments and recognized for the assignments performed.

### **Definition**

A "volunteer" is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of JOURNEY TO DREAM. A "volunteer" performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of JOURNEY TO DREAM. A "volunteer" must be officially accepted and enrolled by the JOURNEY TO DREAM prior to performance of the task. Volunteers are not employees of the institution.

### **Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance and direction to JOURNEY TO DREAM management, staff, and volunteers. These policies are intended for internal management guidance only. They do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. JOURNEY TO DREAM reserves the right to change any of these policies and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Unless specifically stated, these policies apply to all volunteers in all programs and projects undertaken on or on behalf of JOURNEY TO DREAM.

### **Special Case Volunteers**

JOURNEY TO DREAM accepts as volunteers those participating in client intern projects, employee or corporate volunteering programs, church group volunteers and other volunteer referral programs. In each of these cases, the volunteer group may be required to identify a "point volunteer" who in turn may be subject to additional, but reasonable, screening or job assignment such as a volunteer supervisory role over the group.

### **Group Volunteers**

Special arrangements may be made when members of a group or an organization volunteer their time as a group. These arrangements may include changes in normal orientation, training, screening, and recordkeeping requirements as determined necessary and appropriate by JOURNEY TO DREAM.

### **Scope of Volunteer Involvement**

As assigned by JOURNEY TO DREAM, volunteers may be involved in programs and activities as appropriate. Volunteers are not used to displace paid employees from their position.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### **Working Environment**

JOURNEY TO DREAM endeavors to promote a comfortable and productive working environment for all volunteers. In keeping with this policy, sexual, racial, religious, ethnic, or other kinds of harassment of volunteers is a violation of policy and will not be tolerated. We expect volunteers to treat each other, those we work with, and JOURNEY TO DREAM staff with respect. Please let us know if you experience any difficulties. All volunteer policies are administered without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

## **Volunteer Requirements**

- Volunteers must be a minimum of 18 years of age to volunteer. (Occasional, case by case offsite opportunities for minors)
- Volunteers who bring children to assist them in volunteering will be responsible for their direct supervision at all times. No children or students may volunteer directly with clients.
- Volunteers may not have any prior related charges of a sexual or violent nature against them.
- Volunteers working directly with clients are required to pass a Criminal Background Check.
- Should a background check reveal felony or child abuse related charges; a volunteer will be informed in writing that he or she is not allowed to volunteer at JOURNEY TO DREAM.
- Volunteers that will be transporting clients must obey all traffic laws, possess a valid driver's license, proof of auto insurance, and use a vehicle with current registration and inspection.
- Volunteers that will be transporting clients should undergo a driving record check and have no more than one moving violation during the last three years.
- Volunteers that will be transporting clients must carry a copy of the participant's health insurance and emergency contact information in the transporting automobile at all times in case of emergency.
- Volunteers that will be transporting clients are required to comply with all state and local laws regarding the use of hand-held devices while driving during working hours. All employees must use a hands-free device while driving.

## **Program Specific Policies**

Individual programs within JOURNEY TO DREAM may have specific standards and procedures. Volunteers are required to abide by program policies and procedures in addition to those in this handbook. Supervisors are responsible for sharing this information with the volunteers and should give out copies of written policies as part of the volunteer's orientation.

## **Volunteer Orientation**

JOURNEY TO DREAM volunteers receive a general orientation on the nature and purpose of the operation of the service to which the volunteer is assigned. The nature of the orientation is determined by JOURNEY TO DREAM, and depends on the service to be performed. In lieu of or in addition to formal orientation, JOURNEY TO DREAM may provide volunteers with on-the-job training to provide the volunteer with the information and skills necessary to perform. The methods for such training should be appropriate to the position and the capabilities of the volunteer. Staff members with responsibility for delivery of services may have an active role in the design and delivery of orientation or training. Experienced volunteers may be included in the design and delivery of orientation or training.

## **Training**

Volunteers should receive training by their volunteer supervisor to provide them with the information on 1) knowledge and skills necessary to perform their volunteer assignment, 2) the operation of the program encompassing their volunteer activity, and 3) the purpose and requirements of the assignment. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the assignment and the capabilities of the volunteer.

## **Volunteer Activity Log**

JOURNEY TO DREAM programs are made possible because of community involvement, which also includes donations and grants. These funders require that we report statistical data to be eligible for additional funding.

Please keep track of your hours at the [Volunteer Hours Log Form website](#). Update the sheet each time you volunteer in any activity, meeting or event. The hours are compiled each month and serve a great value to the program. Additionally, we want to appropriately recognize you for your hard work.

One-time event volunteers will sign-in and sign-out on the sign-in sheet provided.

#### **Grounds for Disciplinary Action and/or Dismissal**

- Reasons for Dismissal of a volunteer include, but are not limited to:
- Taking action without program approval that endangers the client or is outside the authority of the program.
- Failing to complete the orientation training requirements
- Violating a program policy
- Breach of confidentiality
- Failing to demonstrate an ability to effectively carry out assigned duties
- Falsifying his/her application or misrepresenting facts during the screening process
- Having allegations of client abuse/neglect and other criminal charges brought against the volunteer
- Existence of a conflict of interest which cannot be resolved

#### **Background/Driving History Checks**

JOURNEY TO DREAM is committed to providing a safe, efficient, and productive work environment. To help minimize the risk of criminal activities including theft, fraud, and violence, volunteers will be asked to provide authorization for criminal background checks every two years. Checks will include criminal history checks of Federal, state, and local records. Additionally, volunteers of positions which require driving (either Agency or personal vehicles) will also be subject to pre-hire and periodic Motor Vehicle History checks. Applicants who wish to volunteer at the shelter and have resided outside of the State of Texas anytime within the previous five (5) years will be subject to FBI fingerprinting.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

##### **Confidential Information of the Agency**

It is the responsibility of all volunteers of the Agency to safeguard confidential and privileged information about clients, vendors, other employees, volunteers, donors, and other Agency proprietary or confidential information which employees may encounter. It is vital that you never divulge any confidential information or use it improperly. You must always keep the information in confidence. Disclosing confidential information to unauthorized persons will likely result in your immediate termination. Any breach of this policy should be reported immediately to the Supervisor.

##### **Non-Disclosure**

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of JOURNEY TO DREAM. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- computer programs and codes
- client information
- donor information
- vendor information
- financial information

- marketing strategies
- pending projects and proposals
- research and development strategies

## **POLICIES**

### **Drug and Alcohol Use**

It is JOURNEY TO DREAM's desire to provide a drug and alcohol-free, healthy, and safe workplace. To promote this goal, volunteers are required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition to perform their jobs in a safe and satisfactory manner.

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

To provide constant care, JOURNEY TO DREAM expects volunteers to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. In case a volunteer will be unable to arrive at work on time or as scheduled, the volunteer should notify their immediate Supervisor as soon as possible, or at least one hour in advance of the anticipated tardiness.

### **Personal Appearance**

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all volunteers and affect the business image JOURNEY TO DREAM presents to customers and visitors.

During business hours or when representing JOURNEY TO DREAM, you are expected to present a clean, neat, and tasteful appearance. You should dress and groom yourself according to the requirements of your position and accepted social standards. This is particularly true if your job involves dealing with clients or visitors in person. While JOURNEY TO DREAM has no formal dress code, it would never be appropriate to wear shorts (shorter than fingertip length), short skirts, or revealing clothing.

### **Social Media**

At JOURNEY TO DREAM, we understand that social media can be a fun and rewarding way to share your life and opinions with family, friends and co-workers around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. We ask that you not share any information on your own social sites that would disclose personal or identifying information about JOURNEY TO DREAM clients, staff or other volunteers.

### **Reporting Abuse**

It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to report any suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation to the Child Abuse Hotline and the Child Care Administrator.

Reports must be made to the CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE either by phone or online:

Online: [Texas Abuse Hotline](#)

Phone: 1-800-252-5400

### **Staff Contacts**

CEO: Nesa Grider: [nesa@journeytodream.com](mailto:nesa@journeytodream.com)

Director of Operations: Anita Lansmon [anita@journeytodream.com](mailto:anita@journeytodream.com)

Community Engagement Coordinator - [erin@journeytodream.com](mailto:erin@journeytodream.com)

Director of Social Services and Case Management: Ravain Owens – [ravain@journeytodream.com](mailto:ravain@journeytodream.com)

## **Volunteer Code of Conduct**

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, JOURNEY TO DREAM expects volunteers to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of the organization.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs or abuse of prescription drugs in the workplace, while on duty, or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct
- Engaging in unethical or illegal conduct
- Violation of safety or health rules
- Smoking in prohibited areas
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness or any absence without notice
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential proprietary information
- Conduct that reflects adversely upon you or JOURNEY TO DREAM
- Making or publishing false or malicious statements concerning an employee, supplier, client, or Kyle's Place
- Violation of personnel policies
- Violation of Agency policies
- Other circumstances which warrant discipline
- Volunteers should never provide personal contact information to clients
- Volunteers are not permitted to be alone with a student or client.

## Kyle's Place (TLP) Volunteers

Kyle's Place will aim to identify worthwhile and satisfying opportunities for volunteers and will produce a volunteer description. Discussions will be held with all prospective volunteers to ensure that their skills and interests are best served by the prospective volunteering opportunity. Volunteers coming into the shelter, with access to the clients, will be transitioned into the agency via a structured induction period, to familiarize themselves with the work of Kyle's Place in general and the specific responsibilities of their assignment. Training will be offered to help each volunteer fulfill his/her role.

All volunteers will be asked to:

- complete a *Volunteer Application Form*;
- *Affidavit for Applicants in Licensed Operation*;
- sign a *Volunteer Agreement* which requires them to abide by the rules and principles of the organization;
- complete an *Authorization for Criminal Background Check* form, authorizing the agency to conduct a criminal background check;
- submit to an FBI fingerprint check (if the volunteer applicant has lived outside of the State of Texas at any time during the past five (5) years) or is requested by the Department of Family and Protective Services;
- complete a drug screening through Quest Diagnostics; and
- complete 3 hours of training covering orientation and shelter expectations.

Each of these items will be clearly explained and copies of appropriate policies and procedures made available. All volunteers will be briefed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality and asked to sign a *Confidentiality Statement*. The background check will be resubmitted and renewed every two years. The drug screening will require updating if reasonable suspicion exists. In that instance the volunteer will be asked to complete another drug test or resign as a volunteer.

Children are vulnerable and need to be kept safe. All volunteers will need to demonstrate to Kyle's Place that they are fit for the role that they are undertaking. Although volunteers are significant to the functioning of Kyle's Place, they will not take the place of staff at any time and therefore will not be considered as part of ratio, nor have the ability to discipline or restrain a client.

All volunteers will have a named staff member as their main contact. They will be provided with regular supervision to give feedback on progress, discuss concerns, and plan future activities.



# JOURNEY TO DREAM

## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

The volunteer handbook describes important information about my involvement with JOURNEY TO DREAM and I understand that I should consult with my staff contact/Supervisor regarding any questions not answered in these policies.

I acknowledge that revisions to the handbook may occur. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

Only JOURNEY TO DREAM has the ability to adopt any revisions to the policies in this handbook.

I have received the handbook (OR: I acknowledge that I have access to the handbook via the Internet and that I will not receive a paper copy of the handbook), and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

Volunteer name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_