

**Heart to Heart
Summer Camps**

2014

**PROSPECTIVE
COUNSELOR
INFORMATION
GUIDE**

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Welcome to Heart to Heart Summer Camps!

心连心夏令营欢迎你!

We're glad you're interested in becoming a counselor with us! Whether you're interested because you want to teach English, you want to visit China, or for any other reason, Heart to Heart Summer Camps (H2HSC) will be sure to provide you with a unique and unforgettable summer experience.

So come on and join us! 2014 has some big things in store, and this guide will go over just about everything you need to know as a prospective counselor for 2014!

About Us

WHO WE ARE

Heart to Heart Summer Camps is a nonprofit organization that seeks to **bridge** the youth of two countries through English-themed summer camps taught entirely by **passionate American teenagers** to the impoverished youth of China. The camps are centered around learning English, fostering cultural exchange, and nurturing friendships and bonds.

OUR GOAL

Through both financial support and our **powerful**, one-week summer camps, we strive to provide **support** and **motivation** for China's impoverished youth to continue to work hard in their studies and to ultimately rise out of poverty through education.



Why H2HSC?



Cost-Friendly Heart to Heart Summer Camps is more affordable than most other volunteer abroad programs. An individual fee of \$450 covers all living and transportation expenses over a stay that lasts about two weeks (air fee is separate, as is the norm with volunteer abroad organizations).



Freedom to Customize and Individualize

Camps When you are assigned to be the counselor at a camp, the camp literally becomes yours. No teaching materials are given to you. What happens at your camp is entirely up to your group to decide; there are no limits!

Sustained Friendships H2HSC has a tradition of sustaining friendships beyond the camps. As an example, in what is becoming a tradition, students write letters to their counselors that cannot be opened until Christmas, and then the counselors read them and mail a response back during Christmas season. Many counselors also keep in touch with their students through email, blog, or QQ, China's top social networking site.

Why H2HSC?



A Wonderful Way to Visit China The H2HSC experience lasts about two weeks. One week is the camp, and the rest of the time is for you to enjoy China. In fact, the out-of-camp experience is one of the most underrated perks of becoming a H2HSC counselor. There are three aspects widely considered to be key to an amazing visit to a foreign country: cultural immersion, traveling with friends, and feeling safe. H2HSC uniquely offers all three; counselors interact extensively with locals (host family, students), travel with their fellow American teenage counselors, and are in safe hands with H2HSC. The camp leader will also serve as a guide of sorts, suggesting activities for the counselors to partake in, but the experience as a whole is highly flexible and tailored to the preferences of the counselors.

Future Opportunities As an expanding organization, Heart to Heart Summer Camps is constantly looking for volunteer help. Counselors will have access to future opportunities, whether it is being a camp leader at a future camp, designing a t-shirt for H2HSC, or working with H2HSC to develop an free online English curriculum. If you're passionate about our cause, H2HSC will have a spot for you.

Camp General Information

Camp Length 7 days.

Camp Time ~9:00 a.m. to ~4:30 p.m.

Camp Types There are two types of camps: high school camps and middle school camps. Middle school camps place an emphasis on making learning English fun and providing positive encouragement and support to motivate the students in their future studies.



This year, H2HSC will be hosting its first high school camp teaching English to impoverished high school students. High school camps will promote a more intense academic setting than middle school camps, with an emphasis on preparing high school students for the gaokao (college preparatory exam).



Maximum age to be a high school counselor 24 (prior to start of camp)

Maximum age to be a middle school counselor 22 (prior to start of camp)

Numbers of Counselors 4-6

Number of Students 30-50

Food Lunch is served at the camp by a local cooking group. Each course varies, but a meal will typically consist of rice, two dishes (which usually contain meat), and soup. Accommodations can be made for special eating needs.

Location Most camps will be taught at schools. Some, however, may be taught at other locations, such as cafe's and orphanages.

Local Teachers Most camps will have one to two local adult

teachers from the school on hand at all times primarily to ensure counselor and student safety.

They perform a variety of organizational tasks, but they **do not teach** with the counselors.

Local teachers have the ability to disallow an activity if he or she feels it is too unsafe.

Camp Resources Heart to Heart Summer Camps provides the following resources at each camp:

- Local teachers
- Lunch for all students and counselors everyday
- T-Shirts for all students
- Drinking water and cups
- Health Supplies
- Camp activity supplies



Counselor Experience



Overview Life as a counselor is not glamorous. Counselors endure long and tiring days without air conditions, live in dirty conditions, and are victim to incessant onslaughts of bug bites.

Perhaps that's what makes the experience a special one. Teenagers from two countries are put in a room without adults and all barriers are torn down between them. Through the whole week, the counselors will bake under the **same** sun and feed the **same** mosquitoes as the students. They will eat the **same** exact food, and laugh at the **same** jokes.

This is the **essence** of the counselor experience: being **together** with the kids and **bonding** with them. As a counselor, you aren't an American teaching English to Chinese kids over a cultural divide, but bridging the divide **together** and uplifting the kids with a sense of community and support.

Here are some of the general things you can expect as a counselor.

- **Have fun!** You're working with some other passionate teenagers to teach English and think up exciting activities for the kids. After the camp each day, you will be together for most of the time, whether it's eating out, enjoying karaoke, shopping, or preparing material for the next day. Be young and enjoy yourself!
- **Improve your Chinese skills.** Whether by osmosis or through training yourself, your Chinese will improve.
- **Become a stronger leader.** Your passion will bring out the best of you. Your independence will come with additional responsibility. You will be expected to be a role model for the students.
- **Hugs.** Yes, you will receive hugs. Even if it's against your will.



Camp Planning

Counselors will be given complete freedom to work in their groups to develop an appropriate schedule of activities for their students. Much of this will be done before the camp starts.

Once counselors formally commit to their camps in March, they will be contacted by their camp leaders (who will also be counselors themselves) to begin the camp planning process.



The camp leader will hold weekly Skype meetings and assign tasks for each counselor to perform between meetings. Before the counselors depart for China, it is the camp leader's responsibility to make sure the camp's activities, supplies, and lesson plans are all well prepared.

Just to give an idea, previous camp activities have included:

- Climbing mountains to a local temple, where an English speech contest is held
- Game show games, such as Jeopardy, Million Dollar Drop, and Wheel of Fortune
- Learning American football
- Karaoke sessions

Often, the individual talents of the counselors for each camp will influence the activities planned. For example, if a camp had a counselor who was a talented singer, the camp might plan an "English songs" activity.

A Day in the Life of Counselor

8:00: Rise and shine!

8:30: Depart for Camp

9:00: Camp officially begins for the day!

9:00 - 11:00: English-themed Relay Race

11:00- 12:30: Stations -- students break up into three groups rotating between three sessions (cursive, idioms, and translating picture books)

12:30 - 2:00: Lunch / naptime *optional volleyball game at lunch

2:00 - 3:00 - Board and card game session -- Counselors bring and teach games like Monopoly, Life, and Jenga

3:00 - 4:00 - Jeopardy. At 4:00, Camp officially ends for the day.

4:30 - 5:30: Counselors visit a local historical landmark, an ancient temple dedicated to a Chinese war hero

5:30 - 6:00: Relax!

6:00 - 7:30: Dinner at a hot pot restaurant, celebrating the birthday of a member of the host family.

7:30 - 10:00: - Prepare for next day's camp.

10:00-10:30: Grab a quick bite at a small Chinese barbecue eatery with other counselors

10:30 -12:00: Time to debrief / personal time before going to bed



Thanks for celebrating my birthday with me, H2HSC!

2014 INFORMATION



Timeline and Dates

February 10, 2014: Applications due for all counselors

February 24, 2014: Counselors informed of Selection

March 3, 2014: Assignment Preferences due

March 8, 2014: Counselors informed of Assignments

March 24, 2014: Commitment and Individual Fee due

June - August 2014: Camps Held

Application Process

The application to become a counselor for H2HSC in 2014 will be due **February 10, 2014**. In the application, we will primarily look at your personality traits, your language skills, your teaching experiences, and what special skills you might be able to offer to the camps.

Regarding personality, please just be yourself in the application! There is no 'right' or 'wrong' personality; we mainly just want to get an idea of whether you will be able to deal with the challenges that you may encounter during the camp. Additionally, if you are accepted, your personality gives us an idea of who you might work well with as we construct the counselor groups.

In addition to offering counselor positions, Heart to Heart Summer Camps may offer a Media Manager position at a few camps this year. A Media Manager would be responsible for taking pictures and making videos for the camp, along with assisting the counselors as needed during activities. The Media Manager does not need to have as strong language skills as a counselor would. The overall experience for the Media Manager would be similar as that of a counselor (living with a host family, traveling with other counselors); only the work done for the camp would be different.

You do not need to do anything different on the application if you want to be considered for a Media Manager position. All applicants will first be evaluated for a counselor position and then a media manager position. If, however, you are only interested in serving as a media manager (and not a counselor), please indicate so somewhere on your application.

Applicants will be informed of a decision by late February. At that point, accepted counselors will have one week's time to indicate how many camps they would like to participate in and their preferences for which camps they would most like to be assigned to.

Counselors, when indicating their preferences, will have access to detailed description sheets about each location and specifics regarding that camp. Heart to Heart Summer Camps is currently still finalizing camp locations, but expects to have camps in cities such as Chengdu, Mianyang, Guizhou, and Yunnan this year.

Once assignments come out on **March 8, 2014**, counselors will have until **March 24, 2014** to formally commit to camps they are assigned to. They will have to pay their individual fees at this time too.

And that's the application process! After committing, counselors can focus on buying their plane tickets (while prices are still low), applying for VISAs, and beginning the camp planning process.



Costs

The cost of the trip can be divided into three categories: plane ticket price, individual fee, and personal expenses.

Plane Ticket Prices and Information

Each counselor is responsible for purchasing his or her own plane ticket. In other words, as a counselor you will not be purchasing a plane ticket through Heart to Heart Summer Camps. After you commit to your camps, your camp leaders will give you detailed information for buying plane tickets, including which airports to fly to, a range of dates for arrival, and a range of dates for departure. Counselors are expected to have their plane tickets purchased at least **one month prior** to their departure dates.

Individual Fee

Each counselor will pay an individual fee of \$450. The payment will cover:

- Contribution towards camp expenditures
- Basic living expenses (food, transportation, etc.) for the entire trip, unless the counselor decides to extend his or her trip individually.

Personal Expenses

Counselors are encouraged to bring at least \$100 for emergency purposes, and more if they intend to shop or spend for personal reasons. Keep in mind the H2HSC experience lasts about two weeks, and the camp will take just one week of that time — meaning counselors will have time to do things like shop and visit tourist attractions.

Housing

Counselors will stay with host families during their stay in China. Should counselors prefer hotel housing, they are to let their camp leaders know. Hotel housing may cost extra.



Participating in Multiple Camps

Counselors may elect to participate in multiple camps. Counselors who participate in multiple camps must take part in the camp planning processes for all the camps they elect to participate in.

Costs

Counselors who participate in multiple camps must pay an individual fee for each camp, and are responsible for all transportation costs and living expenses between camps, as well as any additional personal expenses.

What will I do in between camps?

In the time between camps, counselors are *entirely self-responsible*. Some options for things to do in between camps include visiting family in China, living in a hotel and exploring China on one's own, or continuing to stay with one's host family (if permitted). Regardless of how the time is spent, counselors are encouraged to let H2HSC know their plans for this period.

While H2HSC assumes no legal responsibility for the counselor in between camps, in some cases H2HSC may assist in making the transition between camps as smooth as possible. For example, if the counselor wishes to continue to stay with his or her host family, H2HSC may try to help arrange that.



Contact

Heart to Heart Summer Camps

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