

# Welcome to the 2026 Kids First Sports Center L.I.T. Program!



## **Mission Statement:**

**The Leaders in Training Program is a leadership development program designed to provide teens with the skills and knowledge to interact and communicate successfully with individuals and lead groups of all ages in a fun, safe environment.**

Our program is specifically designed for ages 13-15 and will focus on:

- Social, educational, emotional and personal growth.
- Personal disciplines such as responsibility, patience, altruism, punctuality and persistence are developed and nurtured during the week-long LIT sessions.

While still taking part in typical camper experiences (attending activities and participating in camp events), the LITs have unique opportunities and responsibilities separate from the rest of the camp. Each year the LIT group has completed a service project on camp property. Projects in the past have included canned food drives, a Hoops for Healing basketball event to benefit research at Children's Hospital, and a clothing drive for Matthew 25 Ministries. The service project is designed and completed by the group and few limitations are set as for what can be accomplished.

In order to gain the most from this program, we work closely with Kids First Senior Staff and camp staff. Participation in this program will help teens feel confident in the knowledge, experience and leadership skills needed to apply for a position working with children and be more confident decision makers and leaders within their community. Participants meet and are mentored by camp counselors and Kids First staff. Unlike counselors, however, LIT's are always supervised by staff when working with campers.

This handbook was written to help you better understand our program and policies. Please use this as a source of reference throughout the summer. Included are our policies, procedures and rules. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us at 513-489-7575.

We look forward to an AWESOME summer!

Julie Halusek - Camp Department Leader - [jhalusek@kidsfirstsports.com](mailto:jhalusek@kidsfirstsports.com)

Ashley Elma - LIT/CIT Coordinator - [ashelma@kidsfirstsports.com](mailto:ashelma@kidsfirstsports.com)

Kids First Sports Center and the Camp Department Leader reserves the right to modify, without notice, any information contained within this Handbook.

**2026 LIT CAMP SESSIONS/DATES**

The LIT program runs for 10 week-long sessions from Monday, June 1 through Friday, August 7. LIT's are recommended to attend 5 or more weeks of camp, and those attending more weeks will be considered first for the program.

**CAMP HOURS**

Camp runs from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm. It is mandatory that LITs be signed in/out on a daily basis. This will be strictly enforced. The LITs are required to check in with a counselor at the beginning of the day and are required to check out with a counselor before leaving the building.

**CAMP LOCATIONS AND FACILITIES**

The Kids First Sports Center LIT Camp will be held at Kids First Sports Center, located at 7900 East Kemper Rd. Home base is the bootcamp room located on the second floor to the right.

**CELL PHONE USAGE**

We will not allow cell phone usage to become a problem. LITs cannot have their phone out unless they are talking to a parent. If there is something happening at home or an expected phone call, we obviously allow that for our teens. Please just let the LIT Coordinator know in advance that your teen may have to take a phone call during the day for a certain reason.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

We hope that you understand and appreciate our policies as they directly relate to the safety and well being of each camper. We look forward to your cooperation in helping us provide a pleasant and safe camp experience for your teen.

All forms included on the website must be completed, signed and returned in order for your teen to participate in LIT Camp 2026.

All contact with the camp should be directed through the Camp Department Leader. Our preferred method of payment is online via credit card through our Camp Registration and Billing System, Campsite.

Kids First Sports Center Camp Department  
7900 East Kemper Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45249

**Main Phone:** 513-489-7575  
**Fax:** 513-489-9761

Camp Department Leader..... Julie Halusek - [jhalusek@kidsfirstsports.com](mailto:jhalusek@kidsfirstsports.com)  
Camp LIT Coordinator..... Ashley Elma - [ashelma@kidsfirstsports.com](mailto:ashelma@kidsfirstsports.com)

## Areas of Use

### Kids First Sports Center

We will be doing indoor and outdoor activities for most of LIT camp at Kids First Sports Center, using the offices, conference areas, as well as the gymnasium, camp backyard, dance and cheer spaces at different times.

### Matthew 25 Ministries

Matthew 25 Ministries is a non-profit organization located just minutes down the road that strives to provide help to the poorest of the poor in the world. They also help those people who have suffered the affects of natural disasters. While volunteering at their facility in the past, LITs have sorted through donated items such as clothing and shoes as well as making personal care packages. These packages included soap, body wash, toothpaste, deodorant and many other personal hygiene items. LITs have a great time volunteering for Matthew 25 Ministries in the past! For more information on this organization, visit [www.m25m.org](http://www.m25m.org).

### Various Areas in the Community

Each LIT session will vary depending on the PEOPLE. We will be exploring different careers and community service avenues that will take us on weekly community trips.

## Camp Basics

### Camp Activities/Sample Daily Schedule

9:00 am	Regular Drop off
9:30-10:15 am	Monday Meeting/Discussion/Guest Speaker
10:15-11:45 am	Daily Activities with Assigned Groups
11:30 or 12:15 pm	Lunch
12:15-3:45 pm	Daily Activities with Assigned Groups
3:45-4:00 pm	Regular Pick-up

### Themes

Throughout the weeks, we'll be focusing through our games and activities on key points of interest to develop strong leaders and great members of the community.

Some areas we'll touch upon will be:

- First Impressions
- Volunteerism/Community Service
- Responsibility
- Respect
- Teamwork
- Critical decision-making skills
- Communication
- Change Yourself and Your World Changes

### Field Trips

As part of the LIT camp, we strive to provide the teens with some team field trips. The cost of these field trips are factored into the price of LIT camp.

Field trips are not mandatory although pricing is not adjusted for those who choose to not attend field trips. If your teen is not attending a field trip, you must communicate in advance with the LIT Coordinator or Camp Department Leader, so that they can be assigned to another group.

Field trips will be paid for in advance, so failure to cancel weeks of camp by June 1, 2026 will result in a forfeit of the transportation fees for those weeks. We will be having LITs participating in Camp-A-Palooza field trips as well as LIT-only field trips.

### **2024 LIT-Only Field Trips**

Week 1: June 2-6 - Wed. June 3 - Matthew 25 Ministries  
Week 2: June 9-13 - Wed. June 10 - Great Parks- Winton Woods  
Week 3: June 16-20 - Wed. June 17 -Reds Game  
Week 4: June 23-27- Wed. June 24 - Kings Island  
Week 5: June 30-July 4 July 1 - Escape Room  
Week 6: July 7-11 - Wed. July 8- Stepping Stones  
Week 7: July 14-18 - Wed. July 15 - Top Golf  
Week 8: July 21-25 - Wed. July 22 - Hope's Closet  
Week 9: July 24 -Aug.1 - Wed. July 29 - Matthew 25 Ministries  
Week 10: Aug. 4-8 - Wed. Aug. 5 - Dave & Busters

### **T-Shirts are Required**

For easy identification and security purposes, each teen is REQUIRED to wear their camp shirts on all bus field trips or they will not be permitted to go (special exceptions will be made so they can take them off when they are in water). All campers will receive two camp t-shirts that will be given to them on their first day of camp. **Additional camp t-shirts can be purchased for \$10.00. If a camper arrives at camp on the day of a field trip without his/her camp shirt, it will be necessary for you to purchase a t-shirt before your teen(s) can participate.** This policy will be strictly enforced for the safety of all campers. This fee will be charged to your camp account. Camp t-shirts are for field trips only and need not to be worn each day at Kids First.

**We hope to schedule guest speakers to share their knowledge, experience and expertise with the campers. Just some of our ideas are:**

- Kids First Sports Center Owners and Executive Staff
- American Red Cross Instructors (CPR/First Aid and Babysitting Training)
- Weather Center - Meteorologist
- State Police/Sheriff
- Community Organizations
- College Admission Counselors

**More on what the LIT Camp is all about:**

All teens need the opportunity of proving themselves to themselves. Each and every day, they will participate in activities that will provide:

- Experiential Learning
- Personal Development
- Community Service
- Education
- Adventure
- Team Work
- And of course, FUN!

**“Tell me, and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I will understand.”**

**~Kurt Hahn**

LITs will have the opportunity to give back to their community in ways that they feel are most important. Just some of the Community Service Ideas we've thought of....

- Food Drives
- Wounded Warriors
- Public Service Announcements
- Building benches for the community/town
- Environmental Services and many more...

**We'll be working with the teens in this program to see what they all vote on to do!**

Teamwork skills and communication strategies are a large part of both onsite and offsite activities. All LITs will gain experience leading groups of various ages throughout the weeklong session. LITs will be planning and implementing games and special events for Kids First campers, organizing community outreach projects, and taking part in special field trips, aimed to increasing their leadership abilities.

The LITs will rotate into the summer youth day camp throughout the summer to assist and “try out” the ideas and activities they've learned while at their LIT camp. The Camp Department Leader will assess when and if each LIT is ready for this experience. A schedule will be made based on their availability and the needs of the groups.

**“DREAMWORLD EXPERIENCE”**

To encourage our campers to dream big and to help them have the best experience possible at summer camp, we introduced in Summer 2016 our “Dreamworld Experience.” The Dreamworld Experience is designed to encourage our LIT's and CIT's to stretch their imagination, to be resourceful, timely and to encourage leadership skills in the process.

**Who will be participating?**

LITs and all CITs!

**What is it?**

We don't want to give too much away, but basically we'll be encouraging our campers to dream big! LITs and CITs will be helping make these dreams come true. From big to small, easy to outrageous, this will be a chance for LITs to stretch their imagination and become the magic makers of camp! The Dreamworld Experience will be every other week of camp. Week 1 of Dreamworld is Trial Week. The

week after is an evaluation week to figure out what worked, what did not, what other resources could possibly be used, etc.

### **Service Hours**

Each clock hour that an LIT spends at Kids First can typically count towards any service hours that may be needed for school. If you would like us to keep track of your hours, please let us know and we would be more than happy to do that. We will also provide you with a confirmation letter at the end of the summer that contains when you worked, a description of what each LIT did, and how many hours were accumulated. Please let us know as early as possible if you would like those hours to be documented so that we can get started on them at the beginning of the summer.

### **Parent/Guardian Communication**

Communication, cooperation, and teamwork is a critical part of the Parent/Guardian-Camp relationship. Our staff appreciates parents/guardians who keep us informed of their teen's special circumstances or any transitions in the home life. This keeps us sensitive to your teen's needs.

### **Parents must contact the camp when:**

- Information on your registration has changed
- Someone other than those listed on your teen's registration will be picking your child up
- A teen is not able to be picked up on time
- An incident or change occurs in your child's life that alters his/her attitude or causes severe distress
- Emotional upset (i.e. divorce, loss of pet, death in family)
- Your teen has a contagious disease (i.e. head lice, pink eye, chicken pox)

### **Parents will be contacted immediately when:**

- Your teen has received an injury which could require immediate medical attention and/or EMT's have been called. We ask that if we do have to contact you regarding an emergency that you would immediately come and tend to your teen.
- Your teen exhibits a medical condition which could be contagious or threatening to others in the program.
- Your teen is ill and/or is unable to participate in daily activities.

### **Parents will be notified at pick up time when:**

- Your teen receives a minor injury that does not require the service of a professional in the medical field.
- Your teen complains of a non-emergency condition or symptom.
- Your teen exhibits unusual behavior.
- We want to share your teen's accomplishments.