



Arkansas National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program

Building 16414, Box 41
North Little Rock, AR 72199

Welcome to Youth Challenge

In this overview from the Residential Advisors, you will find helpful information that will assist you through your child's enrollment in the program. Please read it carefully. Our guidelines and policies are very strict and we want to ensure clear understanding for compliance.

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RESIDENTIAL ADVISORS

There are four residential advisors in the program. Ms. Edwards, Mr. Berkley, Ms. Dabic and Mrs. Rasul. We are not licensed psychologists, psychiatrists or therapists. We provide residential advisement and teach cognitive behavioral therapy techniques. Advising services are provided by staff on an individual basis and in group settings. We are trained and provide guidance and support to deal with situational issues that impact the cadet's performance while in the program. Cadets may request to see an Advisor as needed and as long as the time does not interfere with their daily academic or required operational schedule. Some group sessions are held in the barracks to address group interaction. Life skills instruction is offered to all cadets in a classroom setting to target key behavioral issues.

MAIL

Please address you letters and packages according to the example.

Your Name
123 Main Street
Anywhere, USA 77777

Last Name, First Name, ARNGYC
Bldg. 16414, Box 41
North Little Rock, AR 72199

- Always put your address on the envelope.
- Put the cadet's full first and last on the envelope.
- **NO NICKNAMES!!!!** We only address cadets by their last name in our program.
- We will not receive letters from nor send letters to any detention or correctional facility (penitentiary/jail). If someone that is incarcerated wants to send your child a letter, have them send it to you and you can repackage it and send it to the cadet. Incoming and outgoing mail will be held and released to you when the cadet goes on pass.
- Cadets **DO NOT** need stamps. We supply postage paid envelopes to them. They can write as often as they would like to. They do not need envelopes or paper but it is allowed if you send it.
- **Family and friends should write the cadet EVERY WEEK if possible.** The cadets heavily rely on receiving mail. It keeps them motivated and encourages them to continue in the program. Those that do not receive letters might feel abandoned. They can never get too much mail!
- If there is anyone that you **would not** like for your cadet to communicate with, you must contact the Operations department (501-212-5308). The cadet's mail will be held for you to pick up at your convenience or released to you at an appropriate time. We cannot guarantee every letter will be captured.
- Every envelope and package incoming and outgoing is inspected. Letters and packages are not opened by staff. The cadets open their letters and packages in front of staff.
- If your child sends you a letter asking you to send it to another cadet at Youth Challenge **DO NOT DO IT.** This is considered fraternization. The cadet will be penalized 1000 points, have mail privileges restricted or they may be possibly terminated from the program.

HOMESICKNESS

Almost every cadet gets homesick. When they do, they may come to our office and become emotional. This can range from just concerned, to crying, or even being irate. This most often happens within the first two to three weeks of being in the program. **Expect it!** Most youth have not been away from home for this length of time. They may come up with every excuse why they need to return home. One of the Residential Advisors or an Operations staff member may call you with your candidate on the phone with the candidate's request to go home. **WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO STAY!** Quickly, let the candidate know your decision is for them to complete the program. This should not be a long conversation. Our staff are trained to address their behavior and help them to manage their emotions.

**THIS IS NOT A "TRY IT OUT AND SEE IF YOU LIKE IT" PROGRAM.
FOR A WHILE, THEY WILL NOT LIKE IT!!!!**

The youth have agreed and each guardian has made a voluntary decision for the youth to be enrolled. The youth cannot and will not make the decision whether or not to remain. For the same reasons you decided to bring them to the program are the same reasons they need to complete it. We advise that you DO NOT make deals for them to participate or stay in the program. We will not bargain with them for their participation or anything else. As adults, we will make a decision if it is suitable for them to remain in the program and expect for them to comply.

You may hear the following excuses:

What they will say	What they really mean
I just can't do this	They don't want to try
This is just not for me	I'd rather be doing only what I want
I'm not going to make it here	This is a big challenge
There are too many people in one place	We are living in barracks like soldiers do
I can't shower in front of people	There are up to 4 cadets in partitioned showers
I can't do the exercises	I'd rather play video games on the sofa
I hate the food	We get 3 meals a day and a snack before bed
I'm not learning anything	I don't want to learn anything they are teaching
Cadre and staff are mean	Staff are firm and consistent
Cadre yell at us	Yes, cadre really will yell sometimes as needed
All this military stuff won't help me	I don't want discipline or work as a team
When one person does something wrong we all get punished for it.	Through acclimation....One for all, all for one... I don't like that concept.
Some of these kids are mean	This is a behavior modification program..... That's why they are here. But all won't stay

Youth will be challenged to follow strict directions and told (not asked) how to do **EVERYTHING**. They are expected to work as a team with the other cadets in their barracks and they will receive praise and/or discipline for their actions accordingly. **This is a quasi-military behavior modification program.** Guidance provided is stern and training is rigorous. Compliance with our rules and guidelines is strictly enforced. Cadets will learn principles that will help them become more respectful and have greater self-discipline. After acclimation, it gets easier. The more they get engaged with program activities, the more they get accustomed to their new lifestyle while with us. We make no guarantee for their change in behavior. Cadets will get the maximum benefit of this program according to their cooperation and willingness to apply the training given.

SUPPLIES

- You are allowed to mail or drop off supplies (hygiene products, clothing, etc.) for cadets as often as they need. If you mail supplies, use the same mailing address for sending letters.
- Please do not send any items that have wire binding (i.e notebooks or note pads, calendars, etc.) Composition notebooks and stapled binding is allowed.
- If bringing supplies call Operations at 501-212-5308 or Administration 501-212-5302 before 03:30 to arrange a time to meet someone at the Camp Robinson visitor's center. You cannot drop them off and leave them at the visitor's center. They will not take your items. Call 501-212-5306 to drop off medicine.
- **Only send the items that are on the approved list.** Everything else will be confiscated. Confiscated items will not be held or returned to you. They will be discarded. After week 3 you can send more pictures and even books (limit 5). Books cannot contain any adult content or violence. Pictures cannot contain nudity, items or people showing gang affiliation, or any inappropriate gestures.
- **Never send money or food of any kind. It is not allowed and will not be given to the cadet.**
- Do not send newspapers, news articles or magazines. It's helpful not to inform tell them about hurtful situations they cannot control and may have a negative impact on the cadet and could potentially impede their performance. If there is such news they need to be made aware of or if a death should occur, please contact an Operations staff member or a Residential Advisor so we be with them and assist them through the emotional and/or bereavement process.

DRIVER'S EDUCATION

Driver's Education is held in May. Ms. Edwards will send you more information about it in April which will inform you of what is need and the timelines you need to complete and submit the documents. Do not send anything before April. After you have received your instruction letter you must send the following 2 items **only if you want your child to participate:**

1) Original or State Certified Duplicate Birth Certificate

- U.S. citizens born out of country must present a "Birth Abroad Certificate".
- **No photocopies, birth cards, or translated birth certificates will be accepted!!!!**

2) Financial Responsibility Form – Ms. Edwards will send this form to you.

- The form will be mailed to you in April. The Financial Responsibility Acceptance portion of the form **must be completed, signed, and notarized.**
- If they do NOT already have a DL or State ID, write “NA” (not applicable) in the designated box. If they have an ID already, it must be current (not expired)

Your child’s birth certificate and their permit (if achieved) will be put in their exit packet and given to you at the Youth Challenge graduation.

CHECKING ON YOUR CHILD

We will not contact you for every infraction that occurs with your child. Sometimes, if incidents have been too frequent or have become volatile, we may reach out to you for assistance. No news from us is always good news. Your child will receive a weekly point’s sheet after week 2. Ask them to share it with you when you speak with them each weekend. We cannot provide weekly updates. Please, trust we are giving our best efforts to work with your child while they are with us. If you have not heard from us, it means their actions and participation is manageable. More details about points and academic progress reports will be shared with you in your orientation packet from Administration.

UPDATING YOUR INFORMATION

Should you change addresses or phone number(s), you must contact us immediately. We will send you correspondence and call you regarding your child throughout the program for various events and activities. Current contact information is critical to the success of your child.

Our Contact Information

Most staff do not sit by their phones but are out working with the cadets. If you call and no one answers, please leave a message and some will return your call at their earliest convenience.

Advisors: Ms. Edwards 501-212-5309, carmen.d.edwards7.nfg@mail.mil | Ms. Dabic, 501-212-5329 slavica.dabic.nfg@mail.mil | Mrs. Rasul 501-212-5341, valerie.r.robinson.nfg@mail.mil | Mr. Berkley 501-212-5322, fletcher.l.berkley.nfg@mail.mil - **USE EMAIL FIRST, if possible**

Operations 501-212-5308

Administration 501-212-5302

Mentoring 501-212-5329

Academics 501-212-5236

Admissions 501-212-5565

Medical 501-212-5306