



# Parent & Volunteer Handbook

Welcome to the 2015 Colt Cadets!

Part 1: Parent Guide on how to set up your student for success in Colt Cadets  
Part 2: Volunteer Guide to feeding and caring for the Colt Cadets on the road

## Part 1: Parent guide on how to set up your student for success in Cadets

We encourage you to dive in! Our goals are set up for you as well as the members and staff. Included are our guidelines and procedures for Cadet parents that should make your time with us more enjoyable, productive, and beneficial to the members.

We continue to provide our parents with a handbook in addition to the information your member receives. We have found the more everyone knows, the more smoothly things tend to run. Please take the time to go through this information in detail, as it includes answers to many questions.



Please familiarize yourself with the Member Handbook as well. Each member will receive a handbook and should know what is expected from them at all times. Please take time to review the handbook with your child so that you are both aware of expectations.

### *Always:*

Remember we are creating a place for your child to be successful in new and profound ways. Success and learning occur as a result of being able to make mistakes and learning it is okay to make mistakes. We expect a high level of responsibility from your child, and you will be surprised at how well they follow through.

### *Please help us and the membership by,*

- ☺ **Offering to help the members, but not to do things for them**
- ☺ **Offering praise and suggestions, not criticism.**
- ☺ **Be encouraging and expecting, instead of requiring.**
- ☺ **Being positive and helpful, especially in times of inconvenience.**
- ☺ **Listening, following, and relaying staff instructions.**

## Communication

The more we know, the better we can be. We will mail and email as much information as possible. We will provide you and your child with a detailed itinerary for trips distributed within a week or two of each trip to ensure as much detail as possible. Daily schedules are posted on the door of the trailer every morning.

**ABSENCES** need to be brought to the director's attention as early as possible so rehearsal plans can be developed to accommodate a balance of each child's needs. Your student's consistent attendance is crucial to the success of the Colt Cadets. There are no back-up players! When a student is missing, a piece of our competitive program is missing as well. Unexcused or unreported absences are not tolerated.

Please communicate via email or cell to the director prior to any absence. We obviously understand in the event of an emergency – just let us know as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly.

### If you need to get in touch with us or your child:

**Colts Office: 563-582-4872**

**Email: [office@colts.org](mailto:office@colts.org)**

**Matt's Cell Phone: 443-614-3446**

**Email: [matt@colts.org](mailto:matt@colts.org)**

The director carries a cell phone which is always on. If you do not get through, please leave a voicemail and we will call you back as soon as possible. **While we are on the road**, members do not always have open access to telephones at shows or housing sites. We do allow cell phones on tour, but ask members not to use them during rehearsals or when being given directions by an adult. The best time to communicate with a member is during a meal or during travel time.

[matt@colts.org](mailto:matt@colts.org) is the best way to reach the director. Email is checked regularly and is the fastest way to most answers.

### REMIND101:

Remind101 is an application that allows teachers to communicate with all of their students simultaneously via text message. The director will create a Remind101 group for students and a group for parents to be utilized during the summer. This will allow for students and parents to be notified of sudden changes in schedule, or in the event of an emergency. Simple instructions on how to receive these messages will be distributed closer to summer.



## At Home

Things you can do at home to help:

- Encourage communication- does your student understand the schedule, expectations, etc.
- Reminders to practice help. It will show at rehearsal if they do not know their part.
- Help with packing if needed. Make a list together, and then let them get everything packed so they can easily find things when we are on the road.
- Provide non-carbonated, non-caffeinated beverage options.

**CRITICAL** - *Ensure they have lightly colored apparel, hat, sunglasses, 1 gallon water jug, sunscreen and good athletic tennis shoes for EVERY DAY (no high tops).*

- *SPF rated lip balms are recommended for all students, but especially brass players*

## During Rehearsal

Please feel free to come and watch! We are a family activity and want you to be aware of what your child is learning and doing. We normally do a full run through of our program towards the end of each rehearsal. Check the whiteboard on the red trailer in the morning for exact times.

## Schedules

- Please **arrive 15-30 minutes prior** to scheduled times so we can begin on time.
- Trip itineraries will be distributed at rehearsals and will be made available online as soon as we have the information (usually within a week prior to a trip). Itineraries contain all locations, plans, and details for trips, as well as show details.



### Please help us by:

- ☺ helping your child understand the importance of being on time.
- ☺ being a great audience! Positive response helps students perform better.
- ☺ holding down conversation close to the corps.
- ☺ not interrupting rehearsal to handle details with your child.
- ☺ stress healthy behaviors (sunscreen, water, hat, sunglasses, light clothes, tennis shoes).

### What can I do if I am unable to travel? **LOTS!!!**

Please take time to read through and fill out the **Volunteer Commitment Form** so that we can match up your time and talents with the things we need. You will see there are many tasks you can accomplish from home to make us a more successful drum corps!

There may be times you see something you have hidden talents for. Just because we haven't asked for it to be done, does not mean we don't need it done. If you have ideas, let us know!



## **Part 2: Volunteer Guide To Feeding & Caring For The Colt Cadets On The Road**



**“The Hardest Volunteer Job You Will Ever LOVE”**

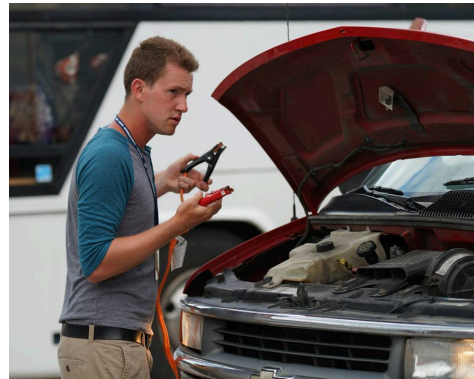
We would like to thank you in advance for volunteering your time and energy from home or on the road to support the Colt Cadets. Like any nonprofit organization, we depend on volunteers to help us be a success! The Colts organization would not continue to exist without the considerable amounts of time donated by parents and friends. More important are the personal rewards and benefits to children from being involved in their lives.

### *The Basics:*

Remember to be flexible! Plans often change due to circumstances beyond our control. We work with the kids to go with the flow, and ask adults to do the same. We are all role models. **On the road we will find many inconveniences, but rarely a “problem.”**



A heavy gust of wind caused this minor *inconvenience* for some CC cooks



A Colt Cadets percussion instructor handles an *inconvenience* in the parking lot at a show

It is important for you to recognize as a parent volunteer, you are a driver or a cook. We do not use the term “chaperone.” We are working to build respectful and responsible students who do not rely on the adult volunteers to pick up their slack. While students might require guidance at times, it is important they take responsibility for their own assignments, belongings, and behavior.



We do not go into any situation anticipating problems and we attempt to be as prepared as possible for any sort of scenario. If you run into a situation you are unsure how to handle, please see a lead parent, director, or a staff member so we can address the issue.

The daily schedule is always posted on the door of the red trailer - please get used to checking the door for schedules when you are with us. We will post as much as possible daily. Check the board at all meal times for any changes.

All drivers, volunteers, and staff are subject to the Seasonal Staff and Volunteer policies of the Colts Youth Organization. A copy of this policy is available on or near the bulletin board on the side door of the trailer.

## Medical Care for Members

### **ALWAYS CHECK FOR ALLERGIES!**

The Cadets trailer is the center of activity on the road, including many of those times that a member is not feeling well or is injured. When you are out on the road with us it is important to remember that you immediately become a parent for every member in the corps. Wear gloves if you have potential contact with body fluids.

We trust that students on prescription medicines will be responsible to carry their prescriptions with them and take them when needed. If you would rather a lead volunteer be responsible to administering your students medications, this can be arranged, please let the director know.

*You may be asked to assist a member with taking their medication or offering a friendly reminder to take medications. Please ask about allergies before handing out any medication. Point out when a medical supply is running low in any med kit.*

**A copy of each member's membership contract and medical form** are kept in a binder on the trailer and in the staff van. When needed, only the individual's file is removed. An adult is sent to the hospital or care facility with any student and, in emergencies, may need to stay back with a member if they are delayed.

### **HEAT EXHAUSTION/DEHYDRATION IS A MAJOR CONCERN**

**Heat exhaustion and heat stroke:** Know the difference! Heat exhaustion is a first aid issue and heat stroke is a serious, life-threatening medical emergency. Both occur due to excessive fluid loss in a hot environment. Fluid replacement must occur all day. Please remember you are drinking for tomorrow today (if you become thirsty, you are already one quart low!).

Treatments: (if heat exhaustion goes untreated it may progress to heat stroke)

- ☺ cool down with cool cloths on forehead, back of neck, wrists and ankles; ice packs on pulse points
- ☺ time down to cool off in the shade, lay down and elevate feet 8-12 inches
- ☺ give Gatorade or other juice or sports drink whenever possible.
- ☺ provide saltines, bananas, or other bland gentle foods.

**Sunburn:** Cool with cold cloth, apply aloe, do not pop blisters, aspirin helpful (Check for allergies!).

**General aches and pains:** Provide ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, etc.) and heat or cold treatments. (Check allergies!)

**Bumps or Bruises:** "RICE" Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation.

**Scrapes:** Wash with soap and water. Cover with gauze or Band-Aid.

**Nausea:** Try pepto bismal tablets (check for allergies first). If vomiting occurs, give nothing to eat or drink for a short time. Start with water or clear, white, pop.

**Diarrhea:** Start Imodium AD and have them check back with you (check for allergies first).

**Sore throat:** Give pain reliever and gargle with salt and warm water solution 3-4 times per day. You can also dispense throat lozenges as needed. Monitor sore throats to be certain they are not carrying strep throat. Check temperature throughout the sore throat episode. (Check for allergies first).

**Muscle spasms/cramps:** Muscle spasms require potassium replacement and fluids. Bananas, pickle juice, or watermelon are recommended ASAP. Direct pressure on cramping muscle and gentle steady stretching of the muscle is also helpful. Give ibuprofen if not allergic.

### **When We Travel:**

We take pride in how well we take care of our members and this is something the Colts are known for throughout the activity. We work very hard to keep this reputation and part of our program is a big success due to YOU! *Thank you!*

We travel by convoy in the following order: lead vehicle, lead bus, 2<sup>nd</sup> bus, truck and trailer, staff van, any other support vehicles. We stick together (even with a wrong turn) and do not allow personal vehicles between the buses for the safety of our members.

Those traveling with us will get free admittance to the shows for volunteering on the road. **We distribute passes to adult volunteers and drivers before each show and collect them after each show.** If you are attending only a day of an extended trip, please buy a ticket to the show, as passes are limited.

### **On the Bus**

Parent volunteers should expect to ride on the bus. At times, we will put overflow support in an extra van.

Expect a butt in every seat as space is limited (do not expect to get a pair of seats to yourself).

While riding on the bus, we expect good behavior. We will not and do not expect you to tolerate swearing or inappropriate conversation.



Members select their seats at the beginning of the season for the year, and seats in the front of the bus are saved for parents. Noise level tolerance is determined by the **bus driver**.

The bathroom on the bus should not be used – it needs to be kept for emergency only. If you have an emergency, tell the driver first and we may be able to stop.

**“Lights-out” on the bus occurs 1/2 hour after we leave a show at night.** Members need to stop talking 1 hour after we leave a show. This is important, because “down-time” on the bus is often part of our scheduled amount of sleep time. Lack of sleep can affect our rehearsals and performances the next day.

### **At the Show and Housing Site**

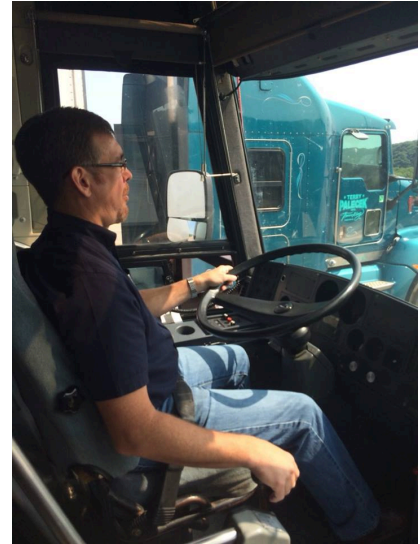
Members have assigned jobs while on the road. Accepting responsibility for these duties is part of what we teach in corps, so please let the members do those jobs. If you notice something is *not* being done, please find the member responsible for the task or notify a staff member.



Drivers and co-drivers are expected to primarily worry about driving and vehicles, and are not expected to assist in other areas (although, they often may be able to – just ask!). Please allow these individuals as much quiet sleep as possible.

**Drivers and co-drivers must rest during the day so we can travel safely through the night.**

Volunteer CDL drivers must adhere to the same DOT rules and regulations as professional truckers. Please do not confuse this with “laziness” or “lack of wanting to help.” If a driver is unable to assist with another project, there is likely reasoning behind it.



**Any adult on a trip not designated as a driver or co-driver is expected to help as a “cook.”**

***Life as a Cook:***

There will be a parent assigned as “head cook” for each trip who will delegate and divide responsibilities so no one is left out or confused. The head cook will typically be a “veteran” parent and their assignment will last between 3-4 days before a new head cook is assigned. The head cook will work with the director to fit 4 meals into each day’s schedule.



On an overnight trip or when we are not with Colts, the following is a typical parent schedule:

**BREAKFAST** - Prepared 1-2 hours before wake-up. Breakfast clean up usually takes 1/2 hour. After breakfast – Prep for lunch. Between meals is a great time for grocery shopping and showers. Shower 1 or 2 people at a time to ensure there is always a team at the truck.

**LUNCH** - (usually 12:30ish on normal days) Lunch clean up usually takes 1/2 hour. After Lunch - Prep for dinner. Depending on the day, dinner could be served at the housing site, or it might be served at the show site. If departing and serving dinner at a new location, any advance prep work is incredibly helpful.

**DINNER** – For the times we have dinner at the show site, as soon as we pull into a lot, the food is the first thing off the trailer, and we begin preparation immediately! Dinner needs to be ready within 60 minutes of arriving. The kids will unload and warm up during the prep time.

**SNACK (Meal 4)** - We schedule approximately 90 minutes to serve, clean up and assist in loading the truck. After snack, reload and secure all food safely for travel.

Please remember menus are planned before we leave. We try to prepare as much as possible before we leave town. We typically serve in 45 minutes. Schedules are posted on the trailer, and ask the “head cook” or director if you are confused about a schedule.

### ***FOOD! DETAILS. . . and Helpful Tips***

*Members are NOT to have carbonation or caffeine.*

**WATER:** The kids will need filled water bottles at parades, during show warm-up, at the gate, and immediately following a performance.

**PUNCH:** We use 10 gall. water & 20 gall. punch drinks for meals.

**PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY:** Available at all meals for anyone.

**CEREAL:** Set out as an option for every breakfast.

**MILK:** Set out for breakfast with cereal, and glasses of milk are often offered at snack.

**SECONDS:** Seconds are only offered after all staff, students and volunteers have eaten. Students are expected to reuse their plate and cup, rather than be given a new one.

Parents should ALWAYS take time to eat and typically eat after the members. If a parent must eat before a member, that is fine, but typically the members and staff eat first, because they have more limited time. **Use common sense here** (diabetics may need immediate food). Staff will generally eat with the kids, but at times may need to eat first, and at other times plates should be made and saved for them. If you need a plate saved for you, please confirm with the head cook before the designated meal time.

**ALL** parents should be able to attend the Colts and Colt Cadets performances at events. After the corps performs, the cooks return to the truck to set out snack. This will mean not all parents may be able to watch the final corps. The head cook will determine ahead of show time who will be responsible for taking care of snack setup and re-load.

### **REMEMBER SPECIAL DIETS!**

Vegetarians, pescatarians, and gluten allergies are just a few examples of unique diets we have encountered with our members. We respect the dietary needs of these students and vow to prepare a substitute dish if a student is unable to eat a certain meal. Specialty dietary needs are to be communicated at the beginning of the season. A student cannot spontaneously “claim” to be a vegetarian simply because they do not like what is being served at a particular meal. There is always a peanut butter and jelly option. Due to the nutritional needs of our members, we are unable to sustain vegan diets, nor are we able to be sensitive to other “diets” while on tour.

### **What is the kitchen like?**

The Colt Cadets carry everything they need from instruments, uniforms, food, and kitchen equipment on the 46 foot red trailer. Inside is an upright freezer, a mini fridge, and a microwave. Food is prepared using our portable oven designed to fit over a 2-burner propane grill. This oven accommodates restaurant-sized baking pans and allows a lot of food to be prepared at once. One might compare the Colt Cadets kitchen to something you might encounter while camping, except on a much larger scale.



Many of our menus revolve around pre-cooked items and only require assembly prior to warming them up. Pre-tour help with things like cooking noodles and browning meat from home equates to hours of time saved once we hit the road. Our goal is always to provide a high calorie and nutritious meal for all staff, students, and volunteers.

### **On the trailer:**

Emptying trash and doing dishes are EVERYONE's jobs.

Cooks must wash hands and sanitize often. Use plastic gloves when available and please use good judgement and common sense when handling food. The last thing we need is 80+ sick kids!

Label and write dates on leftovers going into the fridge or freezer.

Make sure to use parchment baking sheet liners whenever baking directly on the large metal pans. This will save hours of clean up time.

Cooks need to follow the same rules as corps members when it comes to adequate nutrition and hydration. Don't skip meals and drink LOTS of fluids.



Maintain a small supply of Ice Packs (ziplock baggies with ice) in the freezer to be used in case of injury. There are also first aid kits on the trailer, stored on the cereal shelf.

## **COMMON QUESTIONS:**

### **How do I get on the tour schedule?**

We strongly encourage you to sign up in advance using our Volunteer Commitment Form. You can also check with the director to see when additional help might be needed.

### **How do I get on and off tour?**

One way is to just leave and return with the Colt Cadets when they go on tour. If this does not work with your schedule, several "de-tours" will be made throughout the summer. This will allow volunteers to assist on a portion of the tour by being able to "hop on a tour" or "leave a tour" when a van makes one of many scheduled stops in Dubuque. Please communicate your request using the Volunteer Commitment Form. Only volunteers that sign up on the commitment form will be guaranteed housing and transportation with the corps.

### **Can I bring my own vehicle on tour?**

We do not recommend this. You will be awake all day and we drive through the night. Time traveling is time best spent sleeping. Let our drivers do the driving! If you must bring your own vehicle, please remember to drive in the back of the convoy, and that you will be asked to park in the spectator parking lot when we go to shows. If traveling in your own vehicle and staying with the corps, please remember you will be expected to help.

### **Do we only sleep when we travel?**

You'll also have a chance to sleep at the schools along with the rest of the drum corps. The typical arrangement is the floor of a classroom. Bring an air mattress, foam mat, or a cot to make the floor more comfortable. Definitely bring a sleeping bag. Temperatures inside schools and busses vary from broiling to freezing, occasionally in the same night. Sleeping bags also roll up quickly on the way out of town. Bring your own pillow and alarm clock.



### **I want to volunteer, but going on the road just isn't for me, can I still help?**

Absolutely! We need people who can volunteer part-time with us while the corps camps in the Dubuque area. We need help at our June & July camps, and at our Armory housing site for out-of-town members. It is much easier to come and go during these events, and eliminates some of the head ache of overnight travel (as these events tend to be extended stays in the same location). You can sign up for these events on the Volunteer Commitment Form.

### **Will I be able to spend time with my corps member?**

Not very much. The schedule is hectic and there is little free time for either corps member or volunteers. There may be times to watch rehearsals or catch their members after a meal.

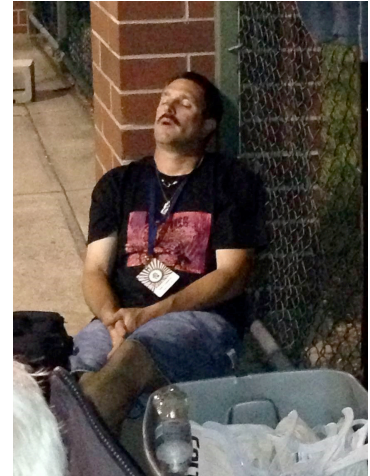


**Will I be able to watch the competitions?**

ABSOLUTELY! In fact, depending upon the timing and number of other workers, volunteers may be able to watch other corps as well. All assigned volunteers will be provided with a pass to allow for free entry into the event. Because of the limited number of passes available, only volunteers that are signed up for tour ahead of time are guaranteed a pass.

**Will I have much free time?**

To answer this honestly, NO. Volunteering is a big commitment and the cook crew will not be successful without you there. There are a lot of people depending upon you (the members, the staff and other volunteers). You honestly might choose to spend any free time you do find sneaking in a quick nap before the next big event.

**May I bring other children along with me?**

This is simply not possible. We don't have the space, and you won't have the time. The same rules apply to pets, girlfriends, boyfriends, etc. Organizational policy is that all persons traveling with the corps (who are not members) must be at least 22 years of age. Exceptions must go to the director for approval.

**What about attendance at church services?**

The schedule often makes church attendance difficult, but not impossible for the occasional service. Please check the schedule and services carefully before asking the director.

**If I want to drive, will you help me get my CDL?**

Yes, if you want to drive bus or truck, we have the equipment to train you, and will pay for your licensing. Although our drivers are volunteers, they are still expected to adhere to the same DOT regulations as professional truckers. Ask the director how to get started!

**Okay... I'm ready to help! How do I get started?**

It's simple! Let us know your availability and how you are able to help by filling out the Volunteer Commitment Form. This form will be mailed to you in April. If you need a new copy, just email [matt@colts.org](mailto:matt@colts.org). Return the form to the Colts office and we will get you on the schedule.

**WELCOME TO THE COLT CADETS FAMILY!** We are thrilled to have you aboard. Please reach out the the director ([matt@colts.org](mailto:matt@colts.org)) if you have any questions about volunteering or about how to ensure a successful and enjoyable summer for both you and your student.

See you on the road!



## **On the Road Job Descriptions and Responsibilities.**

***Volunteer Coordinator:*** This person will assist the director in coordinating all supplies and in scheduling volunteers for tour. They will maintain an on-line sign-up list for food donations and coordinate the collection of donations. The volunteer coordinator may also serve as the conduit between the director and volunteers while on tour.

***Food Program Coordinator:*** This person handles menu planning, including providing detailed food prep instructions for the cook crew. They handle the ordering of food product from the commercial vendors and coordinate any necessary food deliveries while on tour. They ensure grocery shopping is completed prior to departure, and make certain all supplies needed for tour (food, propane, etc) get loaded onto the trailer prior to departure. These duties may be delegated as needed.

***Head Cook:*** This person is ultimately responsible for the planning and timing of all meals on tour. The head cook divides duties amongst the other volunteers and works with the director and volunteer coordinator to ensure the corps is fed. Most meals will be pre-planned and only require assembly. Menus and directions to prepare each meal will be provided by the head cook.

The head cook is responsible for maintaining an inventory of items on the trailer and makes arrangements to have items restocked as needed. The head cook is responsible to make certain any prep-work for the following day's breakfast meal is completed before retiring for the night.

***Cook:*** All volunteers that are not drivers are considered cooks, however, not all "cooks" cook. There is extensive set-up, tear-down, and cleaning that needs to be done, along with the preparing of food. The cooks are the backbone of the food program. The cooks work under the guidance of the head cook to ensure successful preparation, serving, and clean up of all meals.

***Souvenir Vendor:*** This person handles the set up, operation and disassembly of the souvenir stand at shows. Because of the unique schedule and demand of this duty, the souvenir vendor often functions on a separate sleeping and traveling schedule than other volunteers. However, the souvenir vendor may be available to help with kitchen duties from time to time.

***Driver/Co-Driver:*** Drivers have arguably the most difficult job at hand, being responsible for the safe operation of their vehicle, along with the lives of everyone on board through long hours of night-time driving. Each driver of a corps vehicle will have a co-driver. This co-driver stays awake with the driver throughout the night. Often the drivers and co-drivers will help unload the kitchen supplies from the trailer to unwind after a long or stressful drive, however, it is the drivers main duty to drive.

Volunteer CDL drivers must adhere to the same DOT rules and regulations as professional drivers. Please do not confuse this with "laziness" or "lack of wanting to help." If a driver is unable to assist with another volunteer project, there is likely reasoning behind it.