



# INFO SHEET

## **WHAT IT IS:**

Chef for the Night is an opportunity to prepare a meal with the residents of My Friend's House and teach them important life skills involved in cooking and socializing. Most groups will select a menu, purchase the groceries and prepare the meal at the house with the boys. **Chef for the Night is only open to adults 21 years and older.**

## **HOW TO SIGN UP:**

We have utilized SignUp Genius for selecting a date. We have three months available to sign up. You can always find the links to sign up on our website: [www.myfriendshousetn.org](http://www.myfriendshousetn.org) then under the GET INVOLVED tab you will find a VOLUNTEER tab which is where you find the links for Chef for the Night.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT:**

Not all boys will want to help cook, but many will. While some boys are familiar with cooking for themselves and are surprisingly good in the kitchen, others are not. The boys who do not want to participate are not required to do so. However, they can still be engaged in conversation or may enjoy playing games with the visiting chefs.

As part of their chores, the boys are responsible for cleaning the kitchen after dinner. Staff will oversee this part of the evening. Afterward, if time allows, the group may like to watch television or a movie or play games with the boys.

## **HOW MANY DO WE FEED:**

We have the capacity for eight permanent residents, so on any given night you will provide dinner for up to eight boys. On occasion, there may be less than eight boys if a boy has transitioned out of MFH. It is best to plan on eight boys and two staff members plus however many are in your group.

## **TIME FRAME:**

On most days, the boys have after school programming until 5:30-5:45pm, so we tell groups to plan on arriving at 5:30pm. The amount of time you spend is up to you, but we request that you do not stay after 7:30pm to allow the boys ample time to complete evening duties and prepare for bedtime. If you would like to come earlier, just ask! Sometimes we can accommodate an earlier arrival time.

## **KITCHEN EQUIPMENT:**

We have a fully operational kitchen with all major appliances and most basic kitchen equipment, except for a food processor. However, you are welcome to bring any of your own equipment (pots, pans, gadgets). In addition, we have both an outdoor gas grill and charcoal grill as well as picnic tables if you would like to prepare and eat dinner outside.

## **IDEAS:**

You select the menu, but please feel free to call and inquire about what the boys might like or what they have recently had for dinners. Some favs are spaghetti, tacos, hot wings and barbecue. If any boys have allergies, we will let you know ahead of time. If you are unable to prepare a meal on-site due to your location or time availability, you may order food to be delivered.

## **CONTACTS:**

Melinda Duncan: [melinda.duncan@myfriendshousetn.org](mailto:melinda.duncan@myfriendshousetn.org), 615-790-8553 ext 3

Tanassa Pillow: [tanassa.pillow@myfriendshousetn.org](mailto:tanassa.pillow@myfriendshousetn.org), 615-790-8553 ext 5, or 615-605-7174 (cell)

**PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION IN REGARDS TO STAFFING.**

## **PLEASE NOTE**

Normally, there are two direct care staff workers present during the evening, but sometimes, there may only be one present during your visit. It is necessary that, if you stay to engage in an activity with the boys (board games, basketball, etc.), all of the boys must participate or be in the same place so they can be properly supervised by the direct care staff on duty. Due to DCS rules, the boys cannot be supervised alone by anyone other than a My Friend's House employee.

We thank you for your understanding.

*\*TIME FRAME: Programming on Tuesday nights is offsite until 6:00pm. Therefore, Tuesday nights are unavailable for the Chef for the Night program.*

## **GENERAL VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

We ask volunteers to follow the guidelines below to follow the Department of Children's Services (DCS) policies, ensure everyone's safety, and to prevent any misunderstandings between you and a resident:

- Anyone under the age of 21 years old is not allowed on campus while the boys are in the house.
- When you are visiting My Friend's House, please refrain from vaping, using tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
- Residents are not permitted to use social media, therefore, please do not give a resident access to your cell phone, computer or other device with Wi-Fi capabilities nor give them our Wi-Fi password.
- Please do not allow a resident to use your cell phone to make personal phone calls.
- Residents will often ask a volunteer to bring them something such as a food or drink item, cash, or phone charger. We encourage you to give residents your time and attention rather than personal gifts. All items must be approved by staff before anything is given to a resident.
- We ask that physical touch be limited to fist bumps. Some of our residents have been sexually abused and are very sensitive to affection by other adults.
- Please do not give a resident your personal information such as phone number, email, or address. It is best to communicate through staff to a resident.

The residents at My Friend's House are male youths between the ages of 12-17 that are currently in the custody of the DCS. We abide by the regulations set forth by DCS to protect the safety and welfare of children in our care. These at-risk youths have often been neglected and/or abused, and this facility is considered a safe place for them and, as such, we follow regulations put forth by DCS and our providers.

We appreciate your understanding.

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