

Pedalheads Parent Guide

Level 11: Jr. Instructors

Does your child have the ambition of working with Pedalheads someday? If so, you have likely wondered what the best path for them is to fulfill that goal. Below are some of the frequently asked questions we get from parents and the tips and tricks that successful candidates have used to secure the opportunity of their dreams!

What is the process?

Like any job, your child will need to apply to become a Pedalheads Jr. Instructor. This is a valuable experience for everyone looking to get in to the workforce. We do not ask for a resume, simply a completed application form with character references that are not relations. Once we've had a chance to speak with those references, (which can take up to a couple of weeks) we will contact the applicant. When applicants are keen, flexible and follow-up by completing and submitting their journals, they get a letter confirming their participation, and potentially a paid position in the future.

What is involved with volunteering?

Each Jr. Instructor is paired up with an instructor to help teach children the Pedalheads program. We teach kids starting from 4 years old, so sometimes volunteers are helping them learn balance and steering, other times they are riding with the upper levels, to ensure that everyone in the class is safe. Jr. Instructors are also assigned tasks that most need their help, which may include help with set-up, take-down, security, and generally doing whatever is required to run a safe and enjoyable camp.

What does my child get from volunteering?

As with all volunteer opportunities, there are plenty of benefits to working with Pedalheads. The most obvious is future potential employment, but that's certainly not all, it's also a healthy and fun way to spend part of your summer.

It has been our experience that Jr. Instructors flourish under the attention of our instructors. As well, being given the responsibility of nurturing and training others often has a considerable impact, not only on their work experience, but on their self-esteem.

Those that complete their journals receive letters for their burgeoning portfolios, as well as potential references for future endeavours. They also get a T-shirt, networking opportunities and the chance to garner constructive feedback on their performance.



What can my child do to enhance their chances?

Although our Jr. Instructors are volunteering their time, they are being groomed for paid positions. This is their opportunity to show us their employment potential.

As it is many youths first time undergoing these formalities, we expect them to get some coaching at home in completing their application forms etc. Having said that, unless parents are applying to work for us, we also expect the youths to do the hard work themselves: that means contacting us directly via email or telephone, rather than having their folks do it for them.

Candidates do not require previous Pedalheads experience, nor to be expert riders. Relevant biking experience, is one of the things we look for in a potential candidate, but mostly, we look for people who take their own initiative, have a strong work ethic, an interest in working with kids, and are enthusiastic and willing to do whatever is required to ensure a safe and enjoyable class.

Compassion, enthusiasm and an understanding of the significant impact they have on the lives of those under their care will also stand them in good stead. We need to ensure that all potential Jr. Instructor candidates take their duties and responsibilities as seriously as we do -- it's not just riding.

Why are there minimum age requirements?

Pedalheads has minimum age requirements to help keep the young children in our camps safe and ensure their parents are comfortable entrusting them with us. Historically, we've found that the younger the individual is, the less equipped they are for dealing with many aspects of the position. In this age range, a year can make a big difference in someone's attitude and behaviours.

On occasion, we have been known to make exceptions for exceptional candidates. Having said that, the person requires maturity beyond their years and needs to be truly ready for the responsibility this kind of job entails. We always require a high level of confidence in an applicant's history, character and abilities; this is magnified when we consider exceptions.

As well, even if the individual is perfectly capable of being an amazing role-model, not susceptible to peer pressure and able to communicate effectively with parents, sometimes parents will judge someone's abilities based on how they look. It is natural that parents are protective of their babies, so we need to ensure that the individuals we authorize to work with them are ready for these kinds of expectations and scrutiny. As a guage, ask yourself if you would feel comfortable.