

Chameleon Project: Text Messaging System Instructions

Overview

This document provides instructions for implementing the daily text message system for the Chameleon Project's 8-week summer program. The text messages are designed to reinforce weekly themes, encourage authentic living, and maintain engagement between in-person gatherings.

Setup

Technical Requirements

1. Text Messaging Platform

- Use a group messaging platform that allows scheduled messages (GroupMe, Remind, or a dedicated mass texting service for youth ministries)
- Ensure the platform complies with parent permission requirements
- Test the system before the program begins

2. Contact Database

- Create a spreadsheet with:
 - Student name
 - Phone number
 - Parent/guardian name
 - Parent/guardian phone
 - Signed permission status
- Tag students by age group (Jr High/High School) if you want to customize messages

3. Permission Forms

- Include text messaging permission on program registration forms
- Specify that students will receive approximately 1 message per day
- Inform parents that message content will reinforce program themes

Implementation Schedule

Pre-Program (1 Week Before)

1. Send a welcome text:

Welcome to the Chameleon Project! 🦎 We're excited for 8 weeks of discovering your true colors this summer! Your first message arrives on [START DATE]. Reply STOP to opt out anytime.

2. Send a reminder text the day before the first gathering:

Chameleon Project starts TOMORROW at 7pm! Can't wait to see you there! Location: [VENUE]. Bring a friend and wear comfortable clothes!

Weekly Implementation

1. Message Timing

- Send messages at consistent times
- Recommended schedule:
 - Weekdays: Between 3-4pm (after school)
 - Weekends: Between 10-11am
- Avoid sending messages after 8pm

2. Weekly Theme Introduction

- Send the first message of each week's theme immediately after Wednesday night service
- Example: "Tonight we talked about [THEME]. This week, watch for messages about living your true colors!"

3. Message Frequency

- Regular days: 1 message per day
- Special event days: 1 additional reminder message
- Sundays: Consider a reflection question related to the week's theme

Message Customization Guidelines

1. Personalization

- Add student names to messages when possible
- Reference specific program moments that resonated with the group
- Add local references when appropriate

2. Response Management

- Decide in advance if students can reply to messages
- If allowing replies:
 - Designate a leader to monitor and respond
 - Establish response time expectations (within 24 hours)
 - Create standard responses for common questions

3. Adaptation Suggestions

- Feel free to modify messages to match your speaking style
- Adapt scripture translations to match what your group uses
- Add emojis for enhanced engagement
- Include links to song suggestions that reinforce the day's message

Special Considerations

1. Fundraising/Events

- Send additional reminder texts 2 days before and the morning of events:
 - Car Wash (July 12)
 - Bottle Drive (July 25)
 - Social Events (July 9 and August 1)
 - Putt-Putt & Pizza (July 3)
 - Camp Out (August 29)

2. Points System Integration

- Consider sending weekly point total updates to each student individually
- Use texts to announce point-earning opportunities
- Remind students about reward redemption options

3. Tracking Engagement

- If your platform allows, track which messages receive the most interaction
- Note which messages generate conversations at in-person events
- Use insights to improve future messaging

Weekly Message Plans

Below is a breakdown of when to send each message from the provided message bank. Send exactly 7 messages per week, with messages timed strategically:

Week 1: DON'T BE A CHAMELEON (Living Your True Colors)

- Wednesday after service: Message #1
- Thursday: Message #2
- Friday: Message #3
- Saturday: Message #4
- Sunday: Message #5
- Monday: Message #6
- Tuesday: Message #7

Week 2: FILTERS OFF (Living Authentic in a Fake World)

- Wednesday after service: Message #10
- Thursday: Message #11
- Friday: Message #12
- Saturday: Message #13
- Sunday: Message #14
- Monday: Message #15
- Tuesday: Message #16

Week 3: CANCEL-PROOF (Standing Firm When Culture Pushes Back)

- Wednesday after service: Message #20
- Thursday: Message #21
- Friday: Message #22
- Saturday: Message #23
- Sunday: Message #24
- Monday: Message #25
- Tuesday: Message #26

Week 4: LEVEL UP (Pursuing Purpose Over Popularity)

- Wednesday after service: Message #29
- Thursday: Message #30
- Friday: Message #31
- Saturday: Message #32
- Sunday: Message #33
- Monday: Message #34
- Tuesday: Message #35

Week 5: MAIN CHARACTER ENERGY (Finding Your Identity in Christ)

- Wednesday after service: Message #38
- Thursday: Message #39
- Friday: Message #40
- Saturday: Message #41
- Sunday: Message #42
- Monday: Message #43
- Tuesday: Message #44

Week 6: NO CAP (Dating Different in a Hookup Culture)

- Wednesday after service: Message #47
- Thursday: Message #48
- Friday: Message #49

- Saturday: Message #50
- Sunday: Message #51
- Monday: Message #52
- Tuesday: Message #53

Week 7: SQUAD GOALS (Choosing Your Circle Wisely)

- Wednesday after service: Message #54
- Thursday: Message #55
- Friday: Message #56
- Saturday: Message #57
- Sunday: Message #58
- Monday: Message #59
- Tuesday: Message #60

Final Week (Leading to Awards Event)

During the final week leading up to the Awards Service (last Sunday of August), send these specially crafted messages:

- Monday:

Looking back at our 7 weeks together, what's one way you've stopped being a chameleon and started living your true colors? #ReflectionTime

- Tuesday:

"For we are God's masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus to do good works." Eph 2:10. You are a masterpiece showing your true colors! #MasterpieceInProgress

- Wednesday:

Remember Week 1? You learned that God created you to STAND OUT, not blend in! How have you been standing out these past 7 weeks? #FullCircle

- Thursday:

You've earned [X] points so far! Final chance to earn points tomorrow at our Camp Out event (5pm-noon)! #LastChance #PointCheck

- Friday (Camp Out day):

Camp Out tonight! As we gather under the stars, think about how God has helped you shine your true colors this summer! See you at 5pm! #CampOut

- Saturday:

Awards Service TOMORROW at 6pm! Invite your family to celebrate how you've grown from chameleon to champion this summer! #Celebration

- Sunday (Awards Service):

TODAY'S THE DAY! 6pm Awards Service. Can't wait to celebrate YOU and all God has done these past 8 weeks! #TrueColors #8WeeksOfSummer

- After Awards Service:

Congratulations on completing the Chameleon Project! 🦎 Remember, this isn't the end—it's just the beginning of living your true colors every day! #KeepShining

Troubleshooting

1. Opt-Outs

- Respect immediate opt-out requests
- Follow up personally (not via text) with students who opt out to ensure they still feel welcome at in-person events
- Keep opt-out list updated across platforms

2. Delivery Issues

- Have a backup plan if primary texting system fails (email or social media)
- Keep a log of any delivery failures to address with your texting service

3. Inappropriate Responses

- Develop a protocol for handling inappropriate responses
- Include when to involve parents or other leadership

Measuring Success

1. Attendance Correlation

- Track attendance patterns in relation to text engagement
- Note increased participation following specific message themes

2. Feedback Collection

- Midway through the program, ask for feedback on text messages
- Include a text message evaluation question on end-of-program surveys
- Sample: "On a scale of 1-5, how helpful were the daily text messages?"

3. Behavioral Observations

- Watch for students referencing text messages in conversations
- Note when students incorporate text message challenges into their lives

Remember that consistency is key! These text messages serve as daily touchpoints to reinforce the powerful messages students hear on Wednesday nights. By maintaining regular communication, you're extending the impact of the Chameleon Project beyond weekly gatherings.