

TEAM 4⚙️99

RoboCamps Handbook



A Guide for Camp Staff

06.23.2022

Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is provided for informational purposes only. Every effort has been made to include accurate information; however, information does change and vary depending on your specific needs and situation. You may find your specific situation requires additional or changed information from what is included in this document. Your use of the information is at your own risk, and use of the provided information does not guarantee any specific outcome.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for volunteering to become a RoboCamps counselor and/or director. Very soon, you will encounter eager young campers who want to learn about the exciting world of robotics. The students will be looking to you, as camp counselors, to help mentor and guide them on this journey.

This handbook has been developed to help orient camp counselors and directors to RoboCamps. It is designed to help the counselors succeed and create a positive camp experience for both the camp counselors and campers alike. In-depth procedures that should be followed during times of emergency are especially important to note throughout the handbook.

ROBOCAMPS MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

RoboCamps is designed to have youth discover and develop science, math, engineering, and programming skills through an engaging robotics competition. Each week-long camp takes students through a project-based challenge, culminating in a fun and interactive competition with peers where students get to put their creations to the test.

It is important to recognize that camp participants come from a variety of different backgrounds and come with a diverse set of expectations and needs. To accomplish the RoboCamps mission, each staff member must work together within the camp community to strike a balance that both safeguards and challenges each participant.

RoboCamps engage the younger students (campers) by introducing exciting hands-on opportunities to learn, grow, and explore robotics. Engaging children at a young age brings robotics into their desired activities and interests and fosters future participation in robotics programs. Additionally, RoboCamps engages the older students (counselors) by providing an opportunity to mentor the campers, as well as grow their degree and depth of talent.

CAMP PROCEDURES

SAFETY AND SUPERVISION

Our number one goal is to do everything possible to ensure the safety and well-being of each camper, both physically and mentally. This handbook covers topics to help you accomplish these goals.

- i. The Camp Director (trained adult 18+) is the ultimate authority and decision-maker in all aspects of each camp. All summer camp staff members (high school counselors) are responsible to the Camp Director and should direct any questions regarding camp procedures to the director.
- ii. Staff members must ensure the safety and security of campers by following these rules:
 - a. All campers will be signed in to camp each day at drop-off and signed out at pick-up.
 - b. No camper will be allowed to leave camp during a camp session without the written permission of (or accompanied by) their parent or legal guardian.
 - c. The Camp Director must approve all requests for campers to leave camp outside of the regularly scheduled pick-up time.
 - d. Campers who leave with permission must be picked up by a parent or legal guardian and sign out the camper with a designated staff member.
 - e. No visitors permitted without the permission of the Camp Director.
 - f. Any strangers loitering or attempting to mingle with camper groups will immediately be reported to the Camp Director, including any individuals who are not camp staff or registered camp participants.

MEDICAL CARE

All campers must have a completed Emergency Medical Information Form on file prior to attending the first day of camp. Forms should be easily accessible over the duration of the entire camp. They will be printed and given in a folder to the Camp Director.

Staff Medical Training

Staff members should be able to assess and treat minor camper injuries and illnesses, including small cuts and bruises. It is highly recommended that the Camp Director is certified in CPR and First Aid, so they may be referred to when injuries of high severity arise.

Medication

- i. If a camper requires a daily prescription or over-the-counter medications, the parent or legal guardian will be responsible for the administration of the medication. RoboCamps staff are not permitted to dispense medication. Additionally, no camper is to self-medicate.
- ii. The Camp Director will develop procedures for campers to have access to their personal EpiPen or inhaler (if applicable) for the duration of camp.

Medical Treatment

- iii. Anytime a camper is injured or becomes ill, the parent or legal guardian should be notified.

- iv. A First Aid station should be designated and equipped with a standard first aid kit and any additional items needed for minor medical situations such as tweezers, Band-Aids, antibiotic ointment/cream, ice packs, hand sanitizer, masks, etc.
- v. During camp operations, campers suffering from minor illnesses or on-serious injuries may be escorted to the First Aid station to receive treatment.
- vi. In the event of a severe illness/injury or other medical emergency, immediately contact the Camp Director. Ensure the camper's emergency medical information form is on hand.
 - a. Direct other children in the group to sit and wait in a specific location, away from the victim, be visible.
- vii. Under the direction of the Camp Director, necessary steps to deal with the injury or illness should be taken by the counselor(s) only if they have been trained in the procedure(s).
 - a. Provide reassurance to the victim and demonstrate confidence as the situation occurs. A counselor must stay with the victim at all times.
- viii. The Camp Director will make the final decision whether 911 should be called to request EMS treatment/transport of the injured to the nearest appropriate medical treatment facility. If the decision is made by EMS to transport the camper, a staff member should accompany or follow the ambulance to assist if necessary.
 - a. In the 911 call, be sure to report:
 - i. Location from where they are telephoning (Know the street names of nearest cross street and other helpful landmarks)
 - ii. Location of the victim.
 - iii. Condition of the victim, i.e., severe bleeding, unconscious, diabetic, etc.
- ix. A Camper Accident/Incident Report (refer to Appendix A) is to be completed by the staff member who witnessed the accident.

OTHER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Ensure all camp staff are familiar with the emergency procedures for the facility and know the location of fire extinguishers, fire alarm pull stations, emergency exits, and designated shelter areas.

Fire Procedures

- i. Attempt to extinguish the fire if minor. If the fire cannot safely be extinguished, locate the nearest fire alarm and activate the system to notify everyone in the building.
- ii. Safely evacuate the campers using the predetermined evacuation route.
- iii. Once everyone is outside, verify the presence of each camper and staff member.

- iv. If deemed necessary by the Camp Director, call 911 and report the specific location and nature of the fire. **This step should be completed as soon as possible if the fire is severe.**
- v. The Camp Director will initiate contacting parents to pick up campers if necessary.

Active Shooter or Similar Threat Procedures

- i. Immediately notify the police and the Camp Director of any situation that poses a threat to any campers or staff.
- ii. Whether you have firsthand knowledge or receive reliable information from someone else about a significant threat, go into Lockdown procedures.
 - a. Do not alarm campers and try to keep them calm.
 - b. Immediately account for all campers and secure them in the nearest interior room, preferably without windows.
 - c. Lock doors/windows, close blinds/curtains, and turn off equipment/devices which emit light/sound.
 - d. Barricade doors/windows with furniture and equipment if time permits and if Camp Director deems necessary.
 - e. Prevent anyone from exiting the facility until receiving an "All-Clear" or until directed to evacuate.
 - f. Call 911 to report relevant information such as gunshots or the suspect's movements. Silence phones and control communication until direction is received from police.

Shooter Nearby or Similar Threat Procedures

- i. Immediately notify the police and the Camp Director of any situation that poses a threat to any campers or staff.
- ii. Whether you have firsthand knowledge or receive reliable information from someone else about a significant threat, go into Shelter-In-Place procedures.
 - a. Do not alarm campers and try to keep them calm.
 - b. Immediately account for all campers and secure them in the nearest interior room, preferably without windows.
 - c. Lock doors and windows; close blinds/curtains. Work will progress as scheduled.
 - d. Prevent anyone from exiting the facility until receiving an "All-Clear."
 - e. Be prepared to transition rapidly to "Active Shooter or Similar Threat" procedures should the threat advance closer.

Lost Camper

- i. Any camper found wandering should be brought immediately to the activity in progress.

- ii. At any point during a camp session, if a camper cannot be accounted for, the situation should be immediately reported to the Camp Director and a search begins until the camper is located. The camper's last known location and description should be provided to all camp staff. All areas of camp activities will be thoroughly combed.
- iii. If the camper has not been located within 15 minutes, the Camp Director will notify the authorities and parents of the child.

Severe Weather

- i. Immediately notify the Camp Director upon realization of imminent severe weather conditions, including tornadoes, thunderstorms, and floods.
- ii. Do not alarm campers and try to keep them calm.
- iii. For tornadoes, thunderstorms, and other like events:
 - a. Guide all campers to the nearest interior room, away from windows and doors. Keep campers away from potential falling objects.
 - b. Instruct campers to sit against the wall in a curled fetal position with their head between their knees and arms over their head until the weather is cleared or the Camp Director instructs otherwise.
 - c. If deemed necessary by the Camp Director, 911 may be called.
- iv. For floods and other like events:
 - a. Guide all campers to a high area and keep them away from moving water until the weather is cleared or the Camp Director instructs otherwise.
 - b. If deemed necessary by the Camp Director, 911 may be called.

PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE STEPS

Counseling: When a discipline incident occurs, the student will be counseled and given a description of the behavior change required.

Time-Out: If subsequent incidents occur, the student may be asked to take a "Time Out." A "Time Out" is a 5 to 10-minute period that the student spends quietly reflecting on the incident. The child then rejoins the group.

Parent Contact: If a series of discipline situations occur, the child's parent or guardian will be contacted. This is to be done in conjunction with the Camp Director.

Suspension: A student who continually disregards instructions will be suspended for 1 day. The parent/guardian will be advised.

Termination: If the child's behavior remains unacceptable, then the parent or guardian will be informed and the child will be dropped from the program.

Discipline-related absences are not eligible for refunds. Major first-time incidents may progress the student directly to step 4 or 5. Examples of such incidents include bullying, fighting, vandalism, ditching, and insubordination.

A Level 3, 4, or 5 discipline response shall involve the Camp Director.

ROBOCAMPS LOGISTICS

Preparing for Camp

Prior to the first day of the first camp, the facility at the venue should be set up. This can be done on a previous day (recommended) or coming in several hours early on the first day of camp. Workspaces should be designated for each team. Set up materials and parts for building the robot. Set up the fields, and assemble the competition game elements. Set up a charging station where robot batteries can be charged. Set up the First Aid Kit station.

Familiarize yourself with areas designated for campers to place backpacks, lunches, etc. Familiarize yourself with any emergency procedures specific to the facility and overall venue. Ensure that the location of restrooms is known.

Start of Camp

Each camp day, you should plan to arrive one hour prior to the start of camp. One to two camp counselors will be designated to handle check-in of campers. It is often convenient, especially the first day of camp, to have a check-in table at the entrance. This allows parents to easily determine where to drop off the children, and for collection of needed paperwork, etc. After the first day of each camp session, having a camp counselor with a clipboard and check-in sheet at the entrance is generally sufficient. Inform parents of the check-in/check-out procedures as campers arrive. Answer any questions.

RoboCamps Agenda

Daily Schedule

Block 1: 9:00 - 10:30

Break: 10:30 - 10:40

Block 2: 10:40 - 12:00

Lunch: 12:00 - 1:00

Block 3: 1:00 - 1:55

Break: 1:55 - 2:05

Block 4: 2:05 - 3:00

Daily Goals

Monday: Begin building the base robot.

Tuesday: Begin the programming for the robot and discuss potential strategies for the game.

Wednesday: Discuss different sensors and its usage, then implement the sensors onto the robot.

Thursday: Explore gear ratios and finish up working on the robot.

Friday: Put your robot to the test by completing autonomous and teleoperated challenges in a VEX IQ game!

Detailed Breakdown of Tasks

Monday

Before lunch break -

- Assign teams
 - Teams should be assigned based on experience and age.
- Introduce the challenge
- Start the base robot

After lunch break -

- Finish base robot

Tuesday

Before lunch break -

- Prepare for programming
- Start on programming

After lunch break -

- Brainstorm strategies for the game
- Attempt programming challenges

Wednesday

Before lunch break -

- Introduce different sensors
- Start implementing sensors

After lunch break -

- Finish implementing sensors
- Test sensors and their usages
- Attempt sensor challenges

Thursday

Before lunch break -

- Introduce the basics gear ratios

After lunch break -

- Finish building and testing the whole robot
- Attempt gear ratio challenge

Friday

VEX IQ Challenge Competition

Time	Activity
9:00 - 9:30	Musical Chairs Activity
9:30 - 10:00	Auto Challenge Matches & Prep
10:00 - 10:20	Driver Skill Challenge Prep
10:20 - 12:00	Skills Challenge Matches
12:00 - 1:00	Lunch
1:00 - 2:00	Team Challenge Qualification Matches
2:00 - 2:10	Alliance Selection
2:15 - 2:45	Team Challenge Elimination
2:45 - 3:00	Award Ceremony

End of Camp

At the end of the camp day, campers should be checked out. This includes ensuring the camper is released to an authorized individual.

On the last day of camp, at the end of the full RoboCamps session (end of the week), camp counselors stay extra time at the end to “reset” robots for storage or the next camp.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

WHAT IS A COUNSELOR?

By: Phyllis Ford

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Somewhere between adolescence and adulthood there occurs in human development an age which is physically and psychologically impossible. It is that unfathomable stage known as the camp counselor, a creature undefined by psychologists, misunderstood by camp directors, worshiped by campers, either admired or doubted by parents, and unheard of by the rest of society.

A camp counselor is a rare combination of doctor, lawyer, and chief. He is a competent child psychologist with his sophomore textbook as proof. He is an underpaid babysitter with neither television nor refrigerator. He is a strict disciplinarian with a twinkle in his eye, a minister to all faiths with questions about his own. He is a referee, coach, teacher and advisor. He is the example of manhood in worn-out tennis shoes, a sweatshirt two sizes too large and a hat two sizes too small. He is a humorist in a crisis, a doctor in an emergency, and a song leader, entertainer and play director. He is an idol with his head in a cloud of wood smoke and his feet in the mud. He is a comforter in a leaky tent on a cold night and a pal who has just loaned someone his last pair of dry socks. He is a teacher of the out-of-doors, knee-deep in poison ivy.

A counselor dislikes Reveille, waiting in line, inspection and rainy days. He is fond of sunbathing, exploring, teaching new games, an old car named Henrietta, and days off. He is handy for patching up broken friendships, bloody noses and torn jeans. Good at locating lost bathing suits, fixing ax handles, playing the uke and catching fish, he is poor at crawling out of bed on rainy mornings, remembering the salt and getting to bed early.

A counselor is a friendly guide in the middle of a cold, dark, wet night on the winding trail to the latrine. He is a dynamo on a day off, exhausted the next day, but recuperated in time for the next day off. Who but he can cure homesickness, air out wet bedding, play 16 games of lummi sticks in succession, whistle "Dixie" through his fingers, carry two packs, speak Pig Latin in French, stand on his hands, sing 37 verses of "You Can't Get To Heaven," and eat four helpings of Sunday dinner?

A counselor is expected to repair 10 years of damage to Tommy in 10 days, make Jerry into a man, rehabilitate Paul, allow John to be an individual, and help Peter adjust to the group. He is expected to lead the most prized possessions of 16 adults much older than he. He is expected to lead them in fun and adventure...even though he spends nine months a year in New York, Chicago or Los Angeles; to teach indigenous activities...when he can't even spell the word; to guide youngsters in social adjustment...when he hasn't even reached legal age; to ensure safety and health...with a sunburned nose, a band-aid on his thumb and a blister on his heel.

For all this, he is paid enough to buy the second text in psychology, some aspirin, some new socks, two tires for Henrietta, and some new tennis shoes. You wonder how he can stand the pace and the

pressure. You wonder if he really knows how much he is worth. And somehow, you realize you can never pay him enough when, as he leaves at the end of August, he waves goodbye and says “See Ya Next Year!”

A GOOD COUNSELOR

- Fills the needs of campers with guidance in:
 - creative, varied activities
 - educational experiences based upon individual needs
 - satisfactory social experiences
- Understands how to mentor and lead, not do for the camper.
- Has the ability to exercise democratic leadership — be resourceful.
- Personality traits include friendliness, a sense of humor, tact, patience, sincerity, and an attractive appearance.
- An emotionally stable and mature individual — subscribes to high moral and ethical principles — shows character and integrity in her daily relationship with campers — displays sound judgment — makes adjustments necessitated by conditions and situations.
- Caries an infectious enthusiasm for the camp program.
- Has a genuine liking for working with young people.
- Is considerate of other staff members, respecting their wishes and feelings, giving credit for their strengths and assisting them in conquering their weaknesses.
- Understands the aims and objectives of the camp and utilizes them.

WHAT ARE CAMPERS LIKE?

What are 8-10 year olds like?		
Physical Development Steady, slower growth. Increased body strength and hand dexterity through physical activities. Improved coordination and reaction time. Increased small muscle coordination allowing them to learn complex craft skills. Refinement of finger control. Refinement of group game skills and team sport skills. Development of manual skills.	Mental Development Development of critical and abstract thinking skills. Development of their own games with complicated rules. Develop competitiveness. Become curious as to how things work and how they are made. Asks many questions to develop their own point of view. Cares about fairness and develops a sense of right and wrong. Start to understand puns and riddles. Begins to express creative thinking through writing, inventing, designing.	Social/Emotional Development Learn to cooperate in group settings and group activities. Enjoys those which focus on a common interest. Develops problem solving skills, negotiating, and compromising with peers. Grows and glows under praise for right actions. Needs practice in helpfulness, kindness, cooperation, unselfishness, consideration. Imitates adults, wants adult approval. Becomes critical of their own performance. Can change emotions quickly. Enthusiastic about working hard to tackle a skill. Can become discouraged. Begins developing sportsmanship and needs to learn about winning and losing gracefully.
What are 11-13 year olds like?		
Physical Development Is active and exuberant. Is growing in independence. Is not too tidy. Likes to participate in a variety of activities that utilize large and small motor skills. Follows rules and procedures designed for safe participation. Applies skills and strategies in individual and team sports. Grows moderately. Learn to adjust coordination due to physical growth.	Mental Development Is alert and critical of own work. Learning active listening and nonverbal communication skills. Learning how to understand applying things like math/numbers in a real world context (like sales tax). Uses imagination to form and express thought, feeling and character. Has a strong need to develop independence, yet yearns to be part of a peer group.	Social/Emotional Development Defines themselves through their environment, friends, culture. Starts showing empathy. Is interested in fairness. Prefers own pals; dislikes opposite sex. Influenced by peer-pressure and group mentality. Learning to handle emotions such as fear, frustration, and rejection. Developing leadership and persistence. Learning to express individual ideas in appropriate ways. Learning to accept and value other points of view. Developing ability to set personal goals.
What is a young teen like?		
Physical Development Grows fast and unevenly; gains 25 to 30 pounds a year, and from 4 to 6 inches in height; heart doubles; lungs, bones and muscles increase. Girls mature earlier than boys. Is embarrassed by clumsiness which is caused by uneven growth. Experiences alternate spurts of energy and slumps of fatigue.	Mental Development Mental development is more rapid and complex than before. Shows continued growth of capacity for abstract thought. Can be prone to jump to conclusions. Developing deeper moral reasoning. Greater capacity for setting goals. Evolving decision making and risk taking behaviors. Over-responds emotionally. Demands to make own life-decisions. Can be unduly sensitive, brutally frank, subject	Social/Emotional Development Understands abstract ideas. Develops moral concepts and views including rights and privileges. Begins to have a more mature sense of themselves and their purpose. Questions old values without losing their identity. Seeks independence and challenges authority. Begins establishing relationships – non romantic friendships including cliques and clubs. Peers form a safe haven for testing new ideas. Members of peer groups often try to act like, dress alike, have secret codes or rituals, and participate in the same activities.

	to extreme moods, rebellious and critical.	
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BULLYING

What is bullying?

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional, involving an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time. A child who is being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself.

Bullying can take many forms, such as hitting or punching (physical bullying), teasing or name-calling (verbal bullying); intimidation using gestures or social exclusion (nonverbal bullying or emotional bullying); and sending insulting messages by email (cyberbullying).

Prevalence of bullying:

- Studies show that between 15–25 percent of U.S. students are bullied with some frequency (“sometimes or more often”), while 15–20 percent report that they bully others with some frequency (Melton et al., 1998; Nansel et al., 2001).
- Recent statistics show that although school violence has declined 4 percent during the past several years, the incidence of behaviors such as bullying has increased by 5 percent between 1999 and 2001 (U.S. Dept. of Ed., 2002).
- Bullying has been identified as a major concern by schools across the U.S. (NEA3, 2003).
- In surveys of third through eighth graders in 14 Massachusetts schools, nearly half who had been frequently bullied reported that the bullying had lasted six months or longer (Mullin-Rindler, 2003).
- Research indicates that children with disabilities or special needs may be at a higher risk of being bullied than other children (see Rigby, 2002 for review).

Bullying and gender:

- By self-report, boys are more likely than girls to bully others (Nansel et al., 2001; Banks, 1997).
- Girls frequently report being bullied by both boys and girls, but boys report that they are most often bullied only by other boys (Melton et al., 1998; Olweus, 1993).
- Verbal bullying is the most frequent form of bullying experienced by both boys and girls. Boys are more likely to be physically bullied by their peers (Olweus, 1993; Nansel et al., 2001); girls are more likely to report being targets of rumor spreading and sexual comments (Nansel et al., 2001). Girls are more likely to bully each other using social exclusion (Olweus, 2002).
- Use of derogatory speculation about sexual orientation is so common that many parents do not think of telling their children that it could be hurtful (NEA2, 2003).

Consequences of bullying:

- The stress of being bullied can interfere with students' engagement and learning in school (NEA Today, 1999).
- Children and youth who are bullied are more likely than other children to be depressed, lonely, anxious, have low self-esteem, feel unwell, and think about suicide (Limber, 2002; Olweus, 1993).
- Students who are bullied may fear going to school, using the bathroom, and riding on the school bus (NEA1, 2003).

Many children attend camp during the middle school years, when children are most at risk for bullying and being bullied.

Children attending camp are susceptible to a number of potential bullying situations. New campers, campers who perform poorly, and campers who struggle to make friends or appear different from others are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of bullying. Bullying episodes may consist of exclusion by other campers, the creation of rumors about a fellow camper, taunting during a sports game, sexual harassment during when changing for the pool, or physical tormenting during periods such as “free time.”

Bullying can occur even before camp begins or after camp has ended for the day or summer. Campers communicate by instant messaging, e-mail, social networking sites, and cell phone, discussing group selections and devising plans to create cliques or leave others out. Children may gossip about new campers, spread rumors about a campmate, or post inappropriate and hurtful content about a camper or counselor on the Internet.

To prevent and target bullying in a camp setting, camp directors and counselors must create a positive and caring community. A successful camp environment occurs when directors and counselors set an appropriate tone, gain and give respect, build relationships, and set clear rules and expectations for behavior. Some children who attend camp are bullies in their school or community. If camps set the right tone and create a positive and respectful environment, bullies have a chance to change their behavior and engage in more positive interactions with their peers.

Creating positive relationships is key to preventing bullying at camp. Counselors' actions toward campers, and toward one another, can either set the tone for respectful, inclusive relationships or can contribute to an environment where bullying is likely to occur. It is essential for directors and counselors to build relationships with, and earn respect from, their campers.

These relationships help campers feel comfortable voicing their concerns and seeking help when bullying incidents occur. It is important that counselors take action when they observe behaviors that may eventually lead to bullying. If counselors hear about or see bullying, they should intervene immediately. If an incident is ignored, it will escalate quickly. Counselors should meet regularly with directors to report and discuss issues that arise. Directors and counselors should also set time aside to talk privately with children who may be targets of bullying or who may be participating in bullying. These approaches and activities will increase everyone's commitment to and responsibility for creating an environment that discourages bullying behaviors and encourages positive, supportive interactions.

What you should tell children about bullying . . .

- Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.
- If a bully bothers you, it's O.K. to stand up for yourself, walk away, or ask a friend or adult for help.
- Responding to bullying by fighting back doesn't usually work—and may make matters worse. Violence encourages more violence and fails to solve problems.
- It is important to report bullying when you see it and when you hear about it. Telling is not tattling.
- Bullying does not have to happen. Working together with adults and peers, there are specific things you can do to prevent and stop bullying.

A Camp Director's 10

A list of strategies for managing problem behavior of young campers by Ralph W. Smith

Handling inappropriate camper behavior is undoubtedly one of the most difficult and frustrating tasks faced by camp personnel'. Novice counselors often come to pre-camp orientation expecting to learn a "formula" that will work for every child in every situation, only to discover that no such prescription exists. Nevertheless, since problem situations occur, no pre-camp orientation is complete without a discussion of effective techniques for managing camper behavior. The following 10 simple strategies, although far from a panacea, may provide an appropriate framework for such a discussion.

1 Reinforce desirable behavior. It is usually much easier to establish desirable behavior patterns at the beginning of the camp session than to alter problem behavior after it has started. If staff members think positively, campers will often react positively. A smile, gesture, or brief word of support is frequently all that is necessary to encourage a camper to maintain or to increase acceptable behavior.

2 Clearly state privileges as well as rules. Most camp activities or programs have set rules and procedures that are necessary for safety and efficiency, but too many don'ts violate strategy 1. Tell campers what they may do. If they clearly understand what is permitted they will not need to test to determine acceptable limits. Why not have campers participate in establishing some of the camp's rules and regulations? Research indicates that people are more likely to internalize rules they have helped establish.

3 Tolerate some unacceptable behavior. Too much attention to annoying behavior may only interfere with an activity's effectiveness, but may serve to reinforce undesirable actions. Also, certain annoying behavior-- may be typical for the child's developmental stage, so staff members should be alert to age-typical behavior patterns.

4 Use nonverbal cues. Before verbally responding to undesirable behavior, it is often possible to eliminate it by silently indicating disapproval of the camper's actions. Eye contact, accompanied by a frown or gesture, may control the behavior without the possibility of embarrassing the camper in front of his or her peers.

5 Consider redirection to a different task or activity. One of the best ways to avoid behavior problems is to keep campers involved in the task at hand. The challenges of any activity should be consistent with the camper's skill development, so plan for varying levels of skill and try to individualize tasks to each camper's abilities. Many behavior problems result from activity dissatisfaction or boredom and may be

eliminated by “redirecting” the camper to another task or activity. Despite careful attention to the above strategies, problem behaviors may occur which require immediate intervention. In some situations staff responses will be dictated by camp policy, but any disciplinary action should be fair, consistent, and administered in an understanding manner. The next strategies may be helpful when intervention is required.

6 Clarify consequences of unacceptable behavior. A camper should clearly understand the personal impact of his or her behavior. The staff member may point out the consequences, such as anticipated disciplinary action, should undesirable behavior persist. It also may be advisable to encourage the camper to clarify the consequences of his or her own actions by asking, “What things do you think will happen if you continue to act this way?” When clarifying consequences it is important to avoid using a threatening tone of voice and, above all, the staff member must be prepared to follow through if the undesirable behavior continues.

7 Clarify benefits of acceptable behavior. This is the corollary to strategy 6, and may be useful in concert with it. Staff should be reminded, however, that pointing out the benefits of acceptable behavior will be most effective if it occurs immediately after desirable behavior (strategy 1).

8 Use “time-out” procedures. It may be necessary to temporarily remove a disruptive camper from the situation in which problem behavior is occurring and place him or her in a location where little or no enjoyable stimulation is received. Once removed, the camper should be allowed to return after a short period of time, but it is important that this return be contingent upon appropriate behavior.

9 Punishment, if used, should be a last resort. Unlike the preceding strategies, punishment (of any kind) does not allow the camper to avoid the consequences by exhibiting acceptable behavior. Thus, attention is directed to the punishment itself, rather than to the problem and alternative forms of behavior. Any form of punishment should be appropriate to the situation and, of course, must conform to camp policies.

10 If in doubt, seek help. This final and very important strategy should be used whenever the staff member feels incapable of coping with a particular situation or camper. Assistance also should be sought if a staff member is unsure whether or not his or her specific responses to problem behavior were appropriate. All staff must know, in advance, the appropriate personnel who will lend assistance with camper behavior problems, and it should be stressed that seeking help is not a sign of defeat or inadequacy. No one, no matter how experienced, has all of the answers to handling camper behavior problems.

A Memorandum from Your Child

1. Don't spoil me. I know quite well that I ought not to have all I ask for. I'm only testing you.
2. Don't be afraid to be firm with me. I prefer it. It lets me know where I stand.
3. Don't use force with me. It teaches me that power is all that counts. I respond more readily to being led.
4. Don't be inconsistent. That confuses me and makes me try harder to get away with everything I can.
5. Don't make promises; you may not be able to keep them. That will discourage my trust in you.
6. Don't fall for my provocations when I say and do things just to upset you. Then I'll try for more such "victories."
7. Don't be too upset when I say "I hate you." I don't mean it but I want you to feel sorry for what you have done to me.
8. Don't make me feel smaller than I am. I will make up for it by behaving like a "big shot."
9. Don't do things for me that I can do for myself. It makes me feel like a baby and I may continue to put you in my service.
10. Don't correct me in front of people. I'll take much more notice if you talk quietly with me in private.
11. Don't try to discuss my behavior in the heat of conflict. For some reason, my hearing is not very good at this time and my cooperation is even worse. It is all right to take the action required but let's not talk about it until later.
12. Don't try to preach to me. You'd be surprised how well I know what's right and wrong.
13. Don't make me feel that my mistakes are sins. I have to learn to make mistakes without feeling that I am no good.
14. Don't nag. If you do, I shall have to protect myself by appearing deaf.
15. Don't demand explanations for my wrong behavior. I really don't know why I did it.
16. Don't tax my honesty too much. I am easily frightened into telling lies.
17. Don't forget that I love you and use experimenting. I learn from it so please don't put up with it.
18. Don't protect me from consequences. I need to learn from experience.
19. Don't take too much notice of my small ailments. I may learn to enjoy poor health if it gets me much attention.
20. Don't put me off when I ask HONEST questions. If you do, you will find that I stop asking and seek my information elsewhere.
21. Don't answer "silly" or meaningless questions. I just want you to keep busy with me.
22. Don't ever think that it is beneath your dignity to apologize to me. An honest apology makes me feel surprisingly warm toward you.
23. Don't ever suggest that you are perfect or infallible. It gives me too much to live up to.
24. Don't worry about the little amount of time we spend together. It is how we spend the time that counts.
25. Don't let my fears arouse your anxiety. Then I will become more afraid. Show me courage.
26. Don't forget that I can't thrive without lots of understanding and encouragement.
But I don't need to tell you that, do I?

**Treat me the way you treat your friends. Then I will be your friend too.
Remember, I learn more from a model than a critic.**

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How To Be A Great Camp Counselor

1. Know what the job entails. Being a counselor is a very draining experience. You will be surprised how much energy your group of campers has. You may not be used to working long hours and will find yourself asleep on the couch at 7pm until you get your “camp legs”. If you can smile through the exhaustion and desire to spend your days giving kids one of the greatest weeks of their lives, then read on. If not, you really must evaluate why you want to be a counselor. It’s a lot of fun, but a lot of work. It is not a week of being a camper, for older kids! You must be responsible, and able to handle any situation that comes up. You are an adult now and the children are looking to you for guidance, support and safety, and friendship.
2. Prepare. Take a CPR or first aid class. Go online and research fun games or child development information. If you know activities that are taught at camp that you don’t know much about, research it! This will make training so much easier, and make you invaluable in that you will be able to handle anything.
3. Pay attention in training. During our training period, you will learn everything about how the camp is run and emergency procedures. It’s very easy to tune out, DON’T! You never know when you will need it again. When little Jimmy collapses, you don’t want to be thinking to yourself “I wish I had been paying attention to the lecture instead of daydreaming.”
4. Become friends with the other counselors. You don’t all have to be best friends forever, but it is essential that you all get along, at the minimum. If counselors are arguing, even if it’s done far outside earshot of the campers, they will pick up on it. Most likely, you will have to work even a little bit with all of the other counselors, everything goes smoother if you are friends.
5. Memorize the camp schedule. You will want to know what is going to happen next. If you are constantly checking the schedule when the campers ask what is happening next, they will think that you are incompetent and you will lose their respect.
6. Get to know your campers’ names. If you run around calling Maddie by Nicola’s name and vice versa, you will lose their respect and they will feel hurt that they are not important enough to know your name. Play name games, if it helps you.
7. Get to know your camper’s personalities. Certain campers you will love, certain campers you will hate (silently, of course). The key is to know what they will do. You have to know who has to be watched constantly, and who always does what they are told. You must anticipate how they will react to each other, and activities. Try to spend at least ten minutes of face time with each camper each day. They will like you more if they feel that they are the center of attention, and it will allow you to understand them better.
8. Reflect with campers at the end of the day. It’s important to know what the campers think of each other and their day. Try one of the following: For General Reflection:

“Rose, Bud and Thorn” (What was the best and worst part of your day and what are you looking forward to most for tomorrow?) “Random Question” (If you could have any superpower, what would it be? What’s your favorite activity and why? If you had one last meal what would it be?) For Teambuilding: “Positive Points” (The campers sit in a circle and say one positive thing about each person beside them) “3 things in common” (Have the kids pair up and find out three things they have in common with their partner and share with the group when they have finished. This is also good for breaking up cliques)

9. Have a great time. It might seem like a lot of work, but you will change lives. It is amazing to see the quiet camper that sat in the corner at the beginning of the session getting along with her other campers or to see what they have learned. You are a positive role model, give yourself a pat on the back.

Tips

- Break up cliques early. It is unavoidable that there will be cliques. Make sure that you make them mingle as much as possible. Try making them sit with different people at lunch or make them partners with someone that they would not normally talk with. Don’t overdo it. They will not all be best friends, accept it; just make sure that they all respect each other and don’t bully or fight.
- Grin and bear it. You will be tired, you will be hungry because you willingly gave the last brownie to a camper that had already had four, and you will start your day without your coffee some days. If you grumble around and complain, your campers will do the same. If you bring down your campers' moods, nothing will get done, and they will be miserable. Counselors are some of the best actors in the world. The counselor that we should all emulate is the one that had four hours of sleep, has a sunburn, who’s bike got a flat tire on the way in and still bounces into work and starts singing camp songs upon arrival.
- Be prepared for the DREADED camper (or parent). You will have one. The camper that smarts off, sleeps late, and will most likely swear at you. Know how to discipline, and how to keep their foul mood from contaminating the other campers. Ask a head counselor for help if needed.

Warnings

- Don’t think it will be just another year of camp. You will now have all the responsibility of making the week enjoyable for your group. If you are just doing it to extend your childhood, don’t.
- Don’t be lazy!!!! Interact with children. Don’t just tell them what and how to do things... do it too!

- You are a role model, so act like it. The children, especially younger ones, will do what you do. Think of how you want the kids to behave, and act that way. Be professional not only in front of children but around the children too.
- Be PROACTIVE rather than REACTIVE. Anticipate what is going to happen and then plan accordingly.
- NEVER be alone with a camper. Also, be very careful with physical contact, even if you're being friendly. Children are taught to shout "don't touch me there" or they'll tell someone. Children can be very sweet but you have to keep boundaries to protect your job and reputation, and the camper.

MINI GAMES

Name Game

Gather everyone – campers and camp counselors – into a circle. Each person says their name and the name of the two people prior. Continue until going all around the circle.

Learn About Me – Candy Bowl

Have a bowl of candy. Each person tells three interesting facts about themselves and receives a piece of candy as a reward.

Pass the Ball of Energy

In a circle, have all players hold their hands up, palms facing each other. Next, ask them to imagine that they are holding a ball of energy. Invite them to feel the energy pulsating and radiating light. Have them make it larger and then smaller. After a few moments of practice, have everyone drop their hands and choose one person to create an energy ball and toss it to another player across the circle. Players can make their energy balls move quickly or very slowly. They can be large or tiny. Players receiving the energy ball can transform the ball before tossing it to another player.

Things in Common...

This game works best if you have floor markers or indicators of where each person should stand. Everyone is in a circle, except one person in the center. The person in the center says one thing about themselves. For example, "I went on a roller coaster that went upside down," or "I like to eat ice cream." Everyone who has this in common, needs to leave their place in the circle and find a new spot. Encourage players to cross the circle when finding a new place – the rule is that you cannot end in the position you began, or to either spot immediately next to that position. Whoever is left without a place at the end gets to be the new person in the middle and make the next statement.

Categories

In a sitting circle, lead all players in slapping their thighs to a rhythm. Next, name a category such as: colors, fruit; types of cars; words that start with 'b'; etc. One at a time, going around the circle, each person must come up with something that fits the category and say it in rhythm. If a person stumbles or duplicates another player's answer, he must offer a new category and start again.

Machines

Tell everyone that they will be building a 'machine,' and announce what kind of machine it is, such as a 'bubble gum making machine.' One player enters the playing area and creates a simple sound and motion that starts to build the machine. Once another player has an idea on how to add to the machine, they join the first person, forming a connection and relation to the first sound/movement. Players must physically connect with some part of the machine, but they needn't be in order. Coach kids that they can join anytime, as long as it's one player at a time. If two people rush in, gently remind them that it is one at a time and to sense when it's their turn.

What Are You Doing?

Start everyone in a circle. One person goes into the center of the circle and starts an action (such as brushing her teeth). Choose a person to go next. That person asks, "What are you doing?" The person brushing her teeth answers by saying something other than what she is doing. For example: "I'm dribbling a basketball."

The first person then leaves, and the new person starts "dribbling a basketball." Then a new person asks, "What are you doing?" And so on...

Encourage students to make new choices each time (No repeats). Remember to enforce the 'no disgusting things' rule. For whatever reason, this particular game compels students to be gross.

What Time Is It Mr. Fox?

Start the game by having all students lined side by side on one end of the gym. One person is, "Mr. Fox" and stands across the way. The group of students asks: "What time is it, Mr. Fox?"

Mr. Fox calls out a time (ex. 10:00) and the students take N-amount of steps forward (ex. 10 steps). This continues until Mr. Fox says, "Dinner Time!" At that point, the children try to run to the other end of the area without Mr. Fox tagging them. If Mr. Fox tags those that they can prior to the students reaching the start line. Those who are tagged are out. The game continues until one person is the winner; that person gets to start the next game as "Mr. Fox."

Connected Campers

Use a ball of yarn or string. Have campers stand in a circle and have one camper hold one end of the string. Have campers toss the ball of yarn or string to other campers at random, saying their names out loud to let that person know they should catch the string. Each camper should hold the string as they catch it and cannot let go. When the last camper has caught the string, give the campers the challenge of untangling themselves by climbing over or moving under the lengths of string that connect them.

Poop Deck

Explain the rules to the campers. The game is a lot like Simon Says. The leader will call out several phrases, each requiring the players to perform the correct action. Here are common examples, but feel free to expand:

Hit the deck – all players get on the floor, stomach down

Salute the captain – all players salute the leader

Row your boat – all players pretend to row a boat

Man overboard – all players pretend to be swimming

Mutant jellyfish – all players pretend to be jellyfish

Blob Tag

Select 1 or 2 campers to begin the blob ("its"). The rest of the players will scatter about the playing area. On the signal, the "it" or future blob will attempt to tag the other players. A player getting tagged must join (literally, they must join a hand) the "it" and continue developing the blob. These 2 players must now stay joined and attempt to tag other players. As more players get tagged, they must add to the outside of the blob. So, at any one time, the blob will only have two hands available for tagging (one on each end). The more players that get tagged, the larger the blob grows. The object of the game is to be the last player captured by the blob. Following are some rules to follow:

1. Only the end players of the blob can tag others.
2. The blob must remain connected to tag others.

Before starting, demonstrate safe tagging:

Safe tags: Light touch, like butterfly wings, on the back or shoulders.

Unsafe tags: hard contact that might cause the person being tagged to fall.

APPENDIX A – Camper Accident/Injury Report

Date of Incident: ____/____/____

Time of Incident: _____

Name of child:

Location:

Details of Incident (include type of incident: behavioral, injury, etc. and details of what occurred):

Action taken (include any discipline, or first aid administered):

Were parents notified? (*Parents should be immediately notified for any head injury*): Yes

No

Comments:

Report Completed By (signature): _____

Parent Acknowledgement (signature): _____