



4-H VOLUNTEER TRAINING SERIES

Camp Counselor Training Guide



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An Equal Opportunity Institution. 4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization. Over 230,000 members in the State of Florida help to make up the community of more than 6.5 million young people across America. 4-H is a non-formal, practical educational program for youth. Florida 4-H is the youth development program of Florida Cooperative Extension, a part of the University of Florida/IFAS.

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Module 1: The Big Picture

Unit 1: The Florida 4-H Program

Time: 15 minutes

Materials

- 1 printed clover for each counselor

Concept: The Florida 4-H program is an ongoing effort in the county, district, and state. Introduce the 4-H program to new counselors and review the vision, motto, slogan, and 4-H pledge so that each counselor is able to understand the overall 4-H program, its purpose, and their part in it.

Program Vision

Florida 4-H aspires to be the leading youth development program and to create positive change in youth, families, and communities.

Program Motto

To make the best better.

Slogan

Learn by doing.

4-H Pledge

I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service, and my health to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world.

Activity: Practice the 4-H pledge with correct hand motions. Have experienced 4-H members lead the activity.

Debrief and Application: Print a blank 4-leaf clover on a full sheet of paper and have each counselor fill it out with an example or sketch of how they can use their head, heart, hands, and health at camp to the best of their abilities. Discuss as a group some of the ideas that they put in their clover leaves.

Additional Resources

National 4-H. (2017). 4-H Programs at a Glance. Retrieved from <http://4h.org/parents/programs-at-a-glance/>

Unit 2: Florida 4-H Camping Program Mission, Values, and Learning Principles

Time: 25 minutes

Activity: Review this page with counselors and print for them to follow along.

Program Mission

The UF/IFAS Extension 4-H Youth Development Program uses a learn-by-doing approach to help youth gain the knowledge and skills they need to be responsible, productive citizens. This mission is accomplished by creating safe and inclusive learning environments, involving caring adults, and utilizing the expertise and resources of the University of Florida and the nationwide land-grant university system.

4-H Residential Camp Counselor Training empowers youth ages 14–18 to be positive role models, leaders, and mentors to their campers through the appropriate preparation and training modules in order to reach their full potential as the next generation of community leaders.

Program Values

The 4-H Residential Camp Counselor Training Program values include:

- Commitment to the mission and values of the overall Florida 4-H program
- Research-based, age-appropriate training modules
- Youth-Adult partnership where both parties work together to provide the best camp experience possible
- High-quality experiential learning environment that promotes workforce preparation and life-skill development in participants

Program Learning Principles

1. To develop mastery, counselor trainees must acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned.
2. Goal-directed practice, coupled with targeted feedback, enhances the quality of participants' learning.
3. Students' current level of development interacts with the social, emotional, and intellectual climate of the course to impact learning.
4. Develop the individual, not just their skills and knowledge.
5. Training promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.
6. Counselor training provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating camp experiences with guidance from adults.
7. Learning increases through varied instructional techniques.

Additional Resources

Florida 4-H. (2017). Camps. Retrieved from http://florida4h.org/camps_/

Unit 3: Essential Elements

Time: 35 minutes

Materials

- 1 flip-chart page for each group and bold-tip markers for writing

Concept: Review the 4 essential elements of 4-H and describe their importance at camp.

Belonging

Establishing a safe, inclusive environment and a positive relationship with a mentor.

Mastery

Engagement in learning and opportunity for advanced skills and sharing.

Independence

Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future and for self-determination.

Generosity

Opportunity to value and practice service for others.

Activity: Split counselors into 4 groups and assign each group an essential element. Ask group members to brainstorm ways that they could incorporate their essential element while at camp. Give 5–10 minutes for them to work together and write their ideas on a large flip-chart paper, then have them present their ideas to the overall group. At the completion of each essential element presentation discuss the presented information for each element as a group, then ask the overall group if they have any additional information to add.

Debrief and Application: Essential elements build a strong foundation for 4-H. Without these 4 elements present at camp, we are unable to provide the best environment possible. Read the situations below and have your counselors decide how to incorporate the essential element needed.

1. A 12-year-old camper who is active in the shooting sports program is losing interest during air rifle class at camp. How can we provide this camper with an opportunity for independence?
2. A first-time camper who does not know anyone else is having a difficult time adjusting to life at camp. How can you encourage another camper who has attended camp for multiple years to use this opportunity for mastery?
3. Campers are preparing for free swim and one has been unable to locate his sunscreen. How can you apply generosity to this situation?
4. Two campers who are attending camp together are making new friends in their classes. One of the friends feels left out and is upset that their best friend is not spending time with her during free times. How can you build her sense of belonging while encouraging her to branch out to make new friends as well?

Additional Resources

Purdue Extension. (2010). *Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development Toolkit* [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from <https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Pages/volunteerToolkit.aspx>

Kansas 4-H. (2012). *Essential Elements of 4-H* [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from <http://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/4-h-library/4-h-clubs/strengthening-clubs-1/docs/essential-elements.pdf>

Unit 4: Chain of Command and Limits of Authority

Time: 15 minutes

Concept: Review the chain of command and limits of authority as a group. Explain the differences between the levels and the limits of each level to clarify how camp operates.

Resident Director: Adult who lives at camp and manages the camp facility, camp programs, and camp staff.

4-H Agent: Adult in charge of youth counselors and campers who is assigned to the camping cluster to lead participants, train counselors, and manage camper behavior.

Program Director: Adult in charge of camp programming and direct oversight of camp staff.

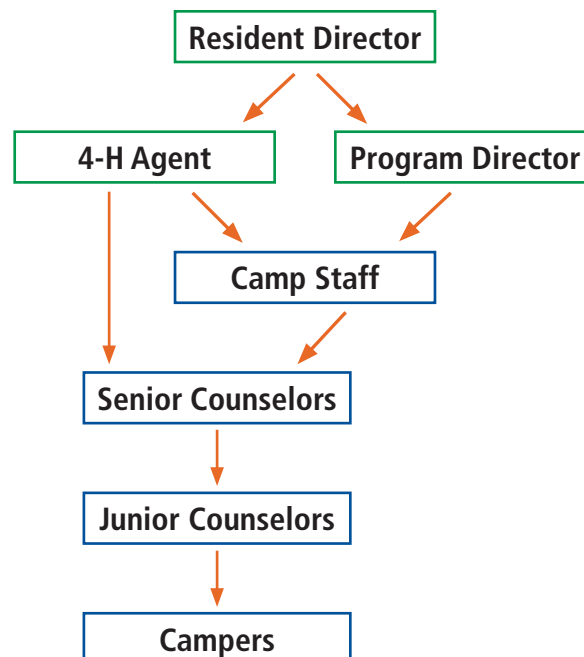
Camp Staff: Adults who serve as educators, lifeguards, and participant mentors throughout the week.

Senior Counselors: Counselors age 16–18 who are experienced working with children either at 4-H or in another camping capacity. Serve as the main supervision for campers and other counselors while in group living areas.

Junior Counselors: Counselors ages 14–15 who are a second supervisor and mentor to youth while in group living areas.

Campers: Youth participants ages 8–13 attending camp.

Activity: Print chart below and have youth take notes to further understand the chart.



Additional Resources

Florida 4-H. (2014). *Florida 4-H Summer Camp Planning Guide*. Retrieved from http://florida4h.org/camps/files/Summer_Camp_Planning_Guide.pdf

Module 2: What does it take to be part of the camping team?

Unit 1: General Counselor Responsibilities and Purpose of Counselors

Time: 20 minutes

Materials

- Flip-chart paper or whiteboard
- Bold-tip markers for writing

Concept: Counselors need to understand the roles of different counselor levels and the responsibilities of each role. In addition, this unit will cover the purpose of counselors at camp and the potential impact they can make on the camp week.

Activity: Review the roles for counselors from the last unit, then discuss the purpose of counselors in the 4-H camping program, the responsibilities of each counselor, and their unique opportunity to make a positive impact.

Purpose of Camp Counselors: to serve as youth mentors to campers, assist in the daily operation of camp and educational programming, and to provide supervision in group living areas.

Counselor Title	Potential Age Range	Responsibilities for Group Living Areas
Senior Counselor	15–18	Main supervisor
Junior Counselor	14–16	Secondary supervisor

The Rule of Three is always applied at camp, meaning that no one person or two people are allowed to be left alone on camp at any time. Counselors and adults should also never be left alone with one child at a time.

Potential Impact of Counselors: Counselors are closer in age to campers than the camp staff and adults who will be serving at camp, so these youth mentors have the potential to reach campers without age barriers to communication. Summer camp is a place for youth to grow and develop as individuals, and the connections they make during this time have the ability to shape their perspective, worldview, and social skills significantly. Camping teaches on two levels: Activity Skills and Life Skills. Counselors can teach and develop these skills through role modeling and instruction throughout the week.

Additional Resources

Braun-Silva, B. (2016). *NY Metro Parents. The Lasting Effect of Camp Counselors on Campers*. Retrieved from <http://www.nymetroparents.com/article/effect-of-camp-counselors-on-campers>

Coleman, J. (2009). *American Camp Association. The Power of Camp: Camp Changes Lives in Positive Ways*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/power-camp-camp-changes-lives-positive-ways>

Unit 2: Code of Conduct

Time: 20 minutes

Concept: The Code of Conduct serves as a contract that parents and youth sign to agree that youth will follow the policies.

Activity: Review the code of conduct with counselors. Have the counselors ask any questions. Once all the items are addressed, youth will sign the documents and bring them home for parent signatures. This document must be submitted by each counselor participant prior to counselor selection.

Florida 4-H Code of Conduct for Youth and Adults

As a participant in 4-H at the local, state, or national level, I have the responsibility of representing the UF/IFAS Extension 4-H Youth Development Program to the public. Therefore, I am expected to conduct myself in a manner that will bring honor to me, my family, my community, and 4-H.

To do that, I agree to abide by the following rules:

1. Obey local, state, and federal laws. Follow county, district, state and/or national 4-H policies. Abide by any special rules for a 4-H event or activity.
2. Speak and act in a responsible, courteous, and respectful way. Harassment, threats or bullying of any type is prohibited.
3. Act responsibly to maintain a safe environment for all participants. Acting in a manner that could endanger the health, safety or welfare of yourself or others is prohibited. Report threats to the well-being of any participant immediately to the adult in charge.
4. Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs is prohibited. Possession or use of approved medications by youth during a 4-H function must be reported to the adult in charge and must not be accessible to other participants.
5. Possession or use of weapons or other dangerous objects is prohibited, except when required as part of an approved educational program. Weapons are defined to include, but are not limited to, guns, knives and incendiary or explosive devices of any kind.
6. Respect all property, facilities, equipment, and vehicles. I will be responsible for any damage or other consequences resulting from my behavior.
7. Participate fully in 4-H functions. Be in the assigned program areas (e.g., dorms, cabins, programs, etc.) on time. If I am unable to attend or participate, I will tell the adult in charge. Help others have a pleasant experience by making every attempt to include all participants in activities.
8. Dress appropriately for each 4-H function, in accordance with 4-H dress code.
9. Use of any mobile electronic device or personal technology during this scheduled 4-H activity is prohibited unless activity-specific rules otherwise allow. When permitted, they should be used only in a manner that is consistent with the approved activity and not discourteous or disruptive.
10. The belongings of youth participants, including but not limited to bags, purses, computers, other electronic devices, lockers and vehicles, are subject to search and seizure by 4-H faculty/staff, and in some instances a volunteer designee, upon reasonable suspicion that a prohibited and/or illegally possessed substance or object is contained within that area. (If an adult is suspected, this will be handled by law enforcement.)

Member Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have read the Florida 4-H Code of Conduct above and agree to abide by it in its entirety. I realize my failure to do so could result in a loss of privileges during a 4-H event and in the future.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Unit 3: Dress Code

Time: 30 minutes

Materials

- 2 flip-chart pages for each group
- Bold-tip markers for writing

Concept: Dress code at 4-H events, especially 4-H camp, is important. The dress code is put in place to keep participants safe, comfortable, and appropriate when compared to dress code standards written for camp-specific activities.

Activity: Divide up, then have each group discuss appropriate dress code and make a drawing of appropriate dress at camp and inappropriate dress while at camp. In addition, discuss activity-specific dress code. Have each group present to the overall group once the activity is completed.

Dress Code General Camp Standards

- Camp clothing should be comfortable for all-day wear, constant moving, and all summer weather conditions
- All shorts or skorts must be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee or finger-tip length
- All shirts must have 2 straps or sleeves that are no less than 3 inches in width
- Cutoff shirts and muscle shirts are not allowed
- No offensive or graphic images or language will be tolerated on clothing, including but not limited to hats, shirts, etc.
- Clothing must cover midsection and all undergarments
- No low-cut or revealing clothing will be allowed
- Participants must wear closed-toe shoes during camp activities; the only exceptions are at the waterfront and in showering facilities
- Hats can be worn in all areas except for the dining hall
- Clothing must not be heavily distressed or have holes
- Pajamas are only acceptable for evening wear

Waterfront Dress Code Standards

- Men's swimming briefs will not be allowed
- Bikinis will not be allowed
- All waterfront clothing for females must cover the midsection and upper chest region; bathing suit covers and tee-shirts may be worn over any bathing suit that does not cover these regions
- Water shoes, sandals, and flip-flops may be worn to the waterfront

Counselors, camp staff, and adults on camp will monitor dress code and ask participants to return to their cabins to change when necessary.

Unit 4: Facilities and Site Operations

Time: 20 minutes

Materials

- Facility map of camp for each participant
- Cards written out with clues for activities that happen in 1 color, 1 set for each team
- Cards written with location names, 1 set for each team in a different color than activities

Concept: Counselors will feel more prepared and confident if they are familiarized with the daily operations and site layout of camp. Counselors will also be able to better serve during the camp week if they can easily move around camp and help their campers find their way.

Activity: Split the group into 2 teams and have them arrange cards with activities with the matching location in a relay race format. Once each team completes the task, the agent will need to check for accuracy. Examples below.

First Color (Activity)	Second Color (Location)
Arts and crafts	Classroom
Kayaking	Waterfront shed
Lunch	Singing area outside dining hall
Morning announcements before breakfast	Flag pole
4 square	Pavilion
Archery	Shooting range
Nightly medications	Nurse's station
Emergencies at night	Agent cabins
Free swim	Waterfront

Key Items to Cover with Counselors

Since each of these answers vary by camp week, assigned facility, and adults in charge, you will need to prepare answers to these questions by discussing with the camp cluster of agents, camp director, and the camping coordinator.

- Camp facilities will vary depending on assigned camp, so be sure to check maps to ensure that you have the correct site map for the activity.
- Review restricted-access points on camp, such as the waterfront area without a lifeguard or the shooting range without a range master.
- Review limited-access areas and the activities that happen in those areas: dining hall, nurse's station, offices, etc.
- Coed facility rules about group living and restroom areas.
- Arrival and departure procedures for your county and cluster.
- Cleaning assignments within cabin group and as an all-camp activity.
- Highlight the concern for safety and appropriate use of camp facilities.

Unit 5: Counselor Behavior Expectations

Time: 15 minutes

Concept: Expectations for counselors' behavior are high, and agents must trust the counselors to respect the rules and standards for appropriate behavior. Counselors will serve as role models for younger youth and assistants for camp staff and adults on camp, so they must choose to meet or exceed the expectations for good behavior in order for the youth-adult partnership at camp to work effectively.

Activity: Review the 10 expectations for counselor behavior. Have youth get into pairs and come up with 2–3 ways to meet or exceed the expectations, then discuss as a group the examples for each number.

10 Behavior Expectations

1. Follow the code of conduct and the dress code.
2. Use safe practices at all times.
3. Be responsible and make good choices.
4. Be respectful to adults on camp, camp staff, counselor team members, and campers.
5. Take care of the camp facilities as if they were your own.
6. Be mindful of others and their needs.
7. Be a positive role model and encourage the people around you.
8. Take initiative and be helpful when help is needed.
9. Be patient and understanding.
10. Keep communication lines open and be approachable.

Debrief and Application: So what?

Ask the counselors to share reasons why appropriate and positive behavior matters and how these 10 behavior expectations could transfer to another situation in their future.

If these positive and appropriate behaviors are expected for counselors, is it then also appropriate/realistic to expect campers to behave this way? If so, how can counselors be proactive?

Additional Resources

Henderson, K., K. McFadden, M. D. Bialeschki. (2012). What Parents Want to Know that Camp Counselors Should Know. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/what-parents-want-know-camp-counselors-should-know>

Unit 6: Impact of Positive Role Modeling

Time: 30–45 minutes, depending on size of group (approximately 2 minutes per person)

Materials

- Paper
- Writing utensils

Concept: Counselors will be role models for campers, counselors in training, and other counselors during their time at camp. This role comes with responsibility and a great deal of importance. Counselors have the ability to make a huge impact on other participants both at camp and for their futures.

Activity: Ask counselors to think of someone in their lives who recognized them at a young age for being special or for standing out, or someone who pushed them to reach out of their comfort zone. Give them 4–5 minutes to identify their person, then go around the room and have each counselor and adult share who this person is.

Reflection: Ask each participant to reflect on what that person meant to them at the time, what was significant about their interaction or relationship, and how it shaped them. Have each counselor write a short journal entry ($\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ page) and encourage them to turn it in. As agents, it will give insight on the type of praise or recognition that they like and some history on them.

Application: Ask counselors how they can encourage someone and build them up similarly to the person they highlighted in their personal story.

Additional Resources

Schafer, E. (2007). Training Counselors Role Models: The Basics and Beyond. Retrieved from https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.campties.org/resource/resmgr/counselor_training/role_models.pdf

Unit 7: Establishing and Keeping Trust

Time: 60 minutes

Materials

- A stack of approximately 20 newspapers for each group of 4–5 counselors
- 1 large roll of wide masking tape for each group of 4–5 people
- Timer

Concept: Creating trust within a group of people can be difficult. Some people trust others more easily, whereas some people have a very hard time trusting others. It is important for the camping team to trust one another as peers, and for counselors, camp staff, and adults at camp to be able to trust each other as well. Trust between all of these parties will make the camp week run more effectively and allow everyone to be comfortable working together without fear that they will be unable to count on one another.

Activity: Youth will be broken into groups of 4–5 people and be instructed to design and build a hammock using only newspaper and a roll of masking tape. Youth will develop a design and a strategy for building the first 5 minutes without materials, then materials will be rationed out to each of the groups. Finally, the groups will go to workspaces and begin constructing their newspaper hammock.

This hammock must be able to hold one of their team members fully suspended in the air for 30+ seconds. The hammock will be held by the teammates, and all the hammocks will be tested in a grassy or sand area for a softer landing if the hammock breaks. A timer will be set, and the groups will have 30–45 minutes to build their hammocks. The groups can test their hammock during that time period and make adjustments as needed. No other building materials can be used. All team members must participate in the planning, building, and testing of their hammock.

Debrief and Application: Ask counselors a few questions from below:

- What makes us trust people that we work with?
- How can we begin to trust new people?
- Why is trust important at camp?
- At first, did you trust that your team could complete the challenge? Why or why not?
- Was communication important for trust building? If yes, how so?
- How many attempts did it take before your hammock worked?
- Did the teammate in the hammock trust the hammock holders?
- Did anyone worry about losing the trust of their group?
- Was your group successful in the hammock challenge? Why or why not?
- Can you compare this to trust during the camp week?

Additional Resources

Hoff, N. (2017). The Importance of Building Trust. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/naphtali-hoff/the-importance-of-buildin_1_b_9366838.html

Unit 8: Customer Service

Time: 20 minutes

Materials

- Whiteboard or flip chart
- Bold-tip markers

Concept: Primarily, camp counselors are in the business of serving their campers and assisting with the daily camp happenings. Parents view quality customer service as an important feature when considering whether their child will attend a camp and whether that family will return to camp. High-quality customer service means repeat visits, positive word-of-mouth marketing, and generally an increase in new campers. Additionally, poor customer service is reported and can negatively impact future decisions about their family's business and whether or not the other families that they know will plan to attend that camp in the future.

Activity: Discuss what customer service is. What qualifies as good customer service? Then have each participant think about experiences they have had in their own lives as a consumer or customer in the past few months. Give them 2–3 minutes to recall a specific story on stellar customer service that they have received or seen. Then have volunteers share their story. Between each story have the group identify what the person(s) did to make the service received so exceptional and how we can use this story to prepare for our own work at camp in developing positive relationships with either campers or their guardians. Place the main points on a flip chart or whiteboard.

Application: What does it mean to go above the call of duty?

Reflection: Ask counselors to think of a time when they received poor customer service. Have them determine whether or not they would return to the place if given the option. Then have them decide what constituted the poor customer service and how the service provided could have been adjusted for a more positive experience.

Additional Resources

Brandwein, M. (2017). *Story Time: A Fast and Effective Way to Discover an Essential Secret to Outstanding Service at Camp* [Facilitation guide and Worksheet]. Retrieved from American Camp Association 2017 Conference.

Module 3: Working with Youth and Providing a Great Experience for Campers

Unit 1: Ages and Stages

Time: 40 minutes

Materials

- Children's book
- Index cards for each role

Concept: 4-H camping includes youth ages 8–18, and each age group has unique learning characteristics. It is important that each age group has age-appropriate activities and stimulation. Counselors should be able to identify common themes for each age group.

Ages	Common Age Characteristics	Tips
8	Easily motivated and eager to try new things; have short attention spans; work with concern for the present, not the past nor the future; communication skills still developing; learn using experimental and exploratory behaviors; strong desire for attention and affection; sensitive to criticism; tire easily	Memory games; short activities; encourage free time; alternate level of activity; be specific and clear with instructions; be encouraging
9–11	Active with a lot of energy; enjoy group activities; prefer to socialize with same gender; change interests rapidly, jumping from one activity to the next; admire and imitate older youth; easily motivated and eager to try new things; like recognition and praise; ask “why” often; want adult guidance in order to do their best	Hands-on activities; group learning; make activities brief; partner with teens; use variety; be clear with directions; recognize good work and present it in front of peers; allow them to find answers
12–14	Concerned about physical development and being well-liked by their peers; desire independence but often need help; very self-conscious and require support to develop confidence; desire to explore outside of their communities; beginning to think about their future; unclear about needs and values; becoming more interested in dating and socializing; interested in sports and activities; ready for longer, more in-depth experiences	Encourage individuality; partner with teens and adults; develop individual skills; allow practice at leading; involve both genders; encourage activity and fun, skill-centered activities; give extra time to complete tasks when able
15–18	Want and need a strong voice; like to plan own program; aspire to adult leadership roles; defined pattern of interest; looking for career choice guidance; learning community consciousness; beginning to plan for future and independent living	Emphasize social development; encourage self-expression; get them involved with planning; partner with adult role models; guide when needed; involve community; apply life skills to independence

Activity: Pull 4 youth volunteers out to one room, then send another one to a room alone to read their card, and give them a book. The only instructions for the lone volunteer are to return to the room and read the book to the group. The other 4 volunteers will be given a card with an age and the characteristics on it. Their job is to act like the age they are given without telling the group when they return. All 5 volunteers will sit in the front of the room.

Debrief: After the activity is finished, ask the other youth in the room to identify the age of each of the volunteers (excluding the reader) using their mannerisms, conduct, and speech for clues. Once that is done, have the group determine what could be done to best engage each of the age groups during an activity like this.

Application: Have counselors write down their request for an age group at camp that they feel best suited to work with. In addition, have them come up with 2–3 cabin-time activities that would be appropriate for their age group of choice.

Additional Resources

New Jersey 4-H. (1992). *Ages and Stages of 4-H Youth, Leader Training Series*. Retrieved from https://nj4h.rutgers.edu/volunteering/lts/4.1_Ages_and_Stages.pdf

Unit 2: Cultural Competence: Elements of a Safe and Inclusive Environment

Time: 25–30 minutes for each activity

Materials

- Activity 1: Bingo cards, pens or pencils
- Activity 2: Personality test for each youth and a pen, flip-chart paper and a bold-tip marker
- Activity 3: Masking or painter's tape for a line on the floor and a list of "this or that" questions

Concept: Camp is a community that has the opportunity to bring together youth from all different cultures, backgrounds, socioeconomic statuses, values, etc. It is important for this environment to be inclusive for all and for each youth to feel valued, respected, and safe.

Activity Options:

1. People Search Bingo: Make a bingo card with adjectives or descriptors for people in your group. Then give each participant a pen and a bingo card to participate. The goal is for each person to introduce themselves to others around the room and for them to find others who meet the descriptors to sign on that space for their bingo card. The first with a full line wins. Example squares could include: someone who has never camped before, someone who is 13, someone who has brown hair, someone who is homeschooled, someone who plays a sport, etc.
2. A personality test of some kind: Possible tests include true colors, shape test, Myers-Briggs, etc. Have each person join a like group once the results are finished and present their personality and best ways to communicate with them to the group.
3. This or That: Draw a line on the floor (painter's tape is appropriate). The counselors must stand on the line as the agent reads statements. All statements have two options to choose from. The agent will point for each option on a side of the line, and youth will choose which side of the line better describes them or their preferences. For each statement, youth have 5 seconds to choose before moving from the line. Once everyone has chosen a side, all youth meet in the middle on the line waiting for the next statement. This or That Examples: indoors or outdoors, cake or pie, quiet drive or radio, read a book or play a game, work with younger campers or older campers, etc.

Reflection and Application: Ask counselors questions below.

- What does it mean to be inclusive?
- Why is inclusivity important?
- Why is it important to have different types of people on the counselor team?
- What are some ways to include others who are different from you?

Additional Resource

Siperstein, G., S. Pociask, K. Barnes. (2011). Let's ALL Play: Helping to Make Inclusion in Summer Camps a Success. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/lets-all-play-helping-make-inclusion-summer-camps-success>

Unit 3: Modifying Activities (Including Physical Limitations and Atypical Learning Styles)

Time: 45 minutes

Materials

- Recreational game materials, craft supplies, other miscellaneous items
- Flip-chart paper or whiteboard
- Bold-tip markers

Concept: The University of Florida is an equal opportunity institution, and 4-H is the premier youth development program of the University. This means that 4-H must encourage differently abled youth to participate in 4-H activities, and we are encouraged to make all modifications possible in order give all youth who want it the opportunity.

Activity: Discuss what differently abled could mean and what exceptionalities these youth may have. Write each example on the whiteboard or flip chart and give the group time to ask questions and share information. From there, connect these differently abled youth and the modifications they may need with the essential elements discussed in Module 1.

Have all kinds of materials on the floor in the center of the room, such as recreational items like balls or Frisbees, paper, cards, pool noodles, markers, etc. Then have youth break into groups of 2–3 and have them develop a game and some specific modifications that assist a camp participant in having the ability to fully participate. The goal is for all youth in their cabin to be fully engaged in the activity.

Examples of a modification that could be needed:

- A camper has severe asthma, so develop a game with limited running and very minimal exposure to extreme smoke/heat
- A camper has impaired hearing, so no blindfold games
- A camper has non-verbal autism, so develop hands-on activities as opposed to public-speaking games

Debrief: Have each group present their game idea, the specific symptoms of the differently abled youth, and the modifications made. Allow other counselors to ask questions or make additions as needed.

Reflection and Application: Is it more important to focus on limitations or abilities of differently abled campers? Explain.

How can we put campers' needs first while also making activities safe?

Additional Resources

Ozier, L. (2016). Multiple Intelligences and Summer Camps. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/multiple-intelligences-summer-camps>

Melikechi, L. (2015). A Camp for Everyone! [Guide book]. Retrieved from <http://ucpde.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/a-camp-for-everyone-a-guide-to-including-children-of-all-abilities-in-summer-camp-programs.pdf>

Hall, A., T. Dunlap, J. Causton-Theoharis, G. Theoharis. (2013). The Power of the Inclusive Camp Experience. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/power-inclusive-camp-experience>

Unit 4: Active Listening

Time: 30–40 minutes, depending on number of counselors present

Concept: Hearing is different than listening; hearing is sound entering the ear, whereas listening is a practice that we have to consciously choose to do. Listening requires concentration and focus, while hearing does not. Active listening raises the levels of engagement and comprehension.

Characteristics of active listening include but are not limited to: keeping eyes open and focused on the speaker; not interrupting; keeping a still body position without fidgeting; reflecting feelings or emotions on information delivered by the speaker; asking open-ended and probing questions; having the ability to paraphrase the information provided by the speaker; requesting clarification as needed; and observing body language.

Activity: Going on a Picnic is a game that highlights listening. For this game all participants will stand in a circle with the agent. The goal for the game is for everyone to say their name and something they are bringing to the picnic. The catch is that the item must have the same letter as the player's first name (e.g., Brian will bring burgers, Stephanie will bring salad, and Andrew will bring avocados). The agent will begin, and any other participants who have played before can also go in the first few. As each person shares their name and item, the agent will let them know if they are able to bring that item or not. If it follows the letter rule, they must say yes. Also, this game is a sequence-and-repeating game, so every time a person goes, the one who is next must name everyone who has gone in front of them with their item. The sequence must go from beginning to end before the activity can be finished.

Example of a sequence:

Person 1: Hi, I'm Brian, and I'll bring burgers (agent approves)

Person 2: Brian, burgers. Hi, I'm Stephanie, and I'll bring salad (agent approves)

Person 3: Brian, burgers, Stephanie, salad. Hi, I'm Andrew, and I'll bring avocados (agent approves)

Reflection and Application: Go through the questions listed below with the counselor team.

- How can this game be related back to camp?
- If you were to think back on your listening behavior today, would you classify that as hearing, a split between hearing and listening, listening, or active listening?
- Now that you know the characteristics of active listening, how do you think you will focus on the listener's level of engagement as you are speaking?

Additional Resource

Grohol, J. (2017) *Become a Better Listener: Active Listening*. Psych Central. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/lib/become-a-better-listener-active-listening/>

Unit 5: Effective Communication

Time: 25 minutes

Materials

- Curtain or barrier
- Enough items for each team member
- Sheet of paper for each team
- Writing utensil for each team

Concept: Communication is very important in all facets of life, and counselors must learn to communicate effectively with one another, adults at camp, camp staff, and their campers.

Effective communication is the ability to speak clearly, confidently, and to send a message that is easily understood by others. Counselors will need to learn to give detail when needed, be direct, and employ appropriate tone, volume, and body language.

Activity Options:

1. Team Obstacle Course: Divide all counselors into two teams. Set up two identical obstacle courses with colored paper obstacles and cones as well as a tape around the edges to establish a safe boundary. The teams will have three directors assigned to guide their team, then each of the participants on their team will be blindfolded. The goal is to get all team members through the obstacle course before the other team.
2. Mystery Object: Have a curtain set up with miscellaneous mystery objects behind it and an agent to assign the items for each team. From there have a group representative come to the curtained area to get a look at their item. Their job then is to go back to their group and describe the item without using the name of the item and answer questions from their group members about the item. If the team identifies the item, they can send a new representative to see the next item. If the item is not correctly identified, the team will receive a 15-second penalty before sending their next representative for an item. Each team will continue sending different representatives until everyone has had a chance.

Potential items: rubber chicken, roll of stickers, strainer/colander, hair brush, shoe, etc.

Debrief and Application: Ask the questions below and expand on their experiences.

- Was it difficult to keep the attention of the listeners?
- What could the obstacles or items simulate for the camp week?
- As a listener in Activity 1, was it frustrating to be blindfolded and have to rely on the direction from someone else?
- As a mystery solver in Activity 2, what communication styles did you appreciate?

Additional Resources

Fee, S. (2014). How to Speak So Others Listen. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/how-speak-so-others-listen>

Unit 6: Setting the Tone: Group Leadership Skills and Tools that Encourage Good Behavior

Time: 20 minutes

Materials

- 1 worksheet for each youth
- 1 writing utensil for each youth
- Flip chart or whiteboard
- Bold-tip marker

Concept: Counselors serve as the teen leadership team for the program, so extra emphasis must be put on modeling good behavior and setting the tone for the camp week by their actions.

Activity: Review 10 Ways to Set the Tone at Camp. Give youth worksheet to add a way to do each of the recommendations and explain how it will help campers by encouraging good behavior.

1. Follow the rules
2. Have a good attitude
3. Get into routines and set up a structure
4. Share resources as needed
5. Sing!
6. Have patience
7. Be inclusive, welcoming, and friendly
8. Be a team player
9. Take initiative and be responsible/accountable
10. Try new things

Review the internal motivators for youth:

- Acceptance: youth strive to be accepted and well-liked by their peers
- Accomplishment: youth enjoy succeeding in competition and being recognized for good choices or performance
- Attention: some youth are motivated by attention from adults, their peers, or other youth mentors

Application: What is one way that you can internally motivate youth by using acceptance, accomplishment, or attention? Share with a partner.

Additional Resources

Ditter, B. (2008). *Top 10 Tips for Working with Today's Campers*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/top-10-tips-working-todays-campers>

Coleman, J. (2009). *The Power of Camp: Camp Changes Lives in Positive Way*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/power-camp-camp-changes-lives-positive-ways>

Wallace, S. (2010). *Confessions of a Disciplinarian: How Managing Camper Behavior Can Save the Summer*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/confessions-disciplinarian-how-managing-camper-behavior-can-save-summer>

Unit 7: Community Building

Time

Activity 1: 15 minutes	Activity 5: 15 minutes
Activity 2: 30 minutes	Activity 6: 35 minutes
Activity 3: 10 minutes	Activity 7: 20 minutes
Activity 4: 10 minutes	Activity 8: 10 minutes

Concept: During counselor training, it is important to do community builders that enrich the relationships of group members. These activities can include icebreakers and team building.

Materials:

- **Activity 1.** Pool noodle
- **Activity 2.** Index cards with famous pairs written on them, tape
- **Activity 3.** None
- **Activity 4.** Table and enough chairs for each participant
- **Activity 5.** None
- **Activity 6.** None
- **Activity 7.** Post-It notes with each letter of the alphabet for each of the two teams, and a list of camp words
- **Activity 8.** One sheet of colored paper for all participants minus one.

Activity Ideas:

1. **Noodle Name Game:** The goal is to learn the names of each person and be able to quickly say a name across the circle when your name is called. Everyone will make a circle where each person can touch hands. The person who is “it” stands in the middle and starts by saying the name of someone in the circle and attempting to tag them with the noodle. Once the name is called, that person must name a different person on the outside of the circle before they are tagged with the noodle. If someone is tagged by the noodle before saying a name, they are now “it” and change places with the person in the middle to begin again.
2. **Pair Up!:** Put an index card on the back of each participant and have them circulate the room to ask yes or no questions to find out who they are. (Each index card will have the name of a well-known item or person that is part of a pair or trio.) Once they discover who they are, they must find their pair and share three things about themselves. Once everyone finds their partner and completes the task, they will introduce their partner to the group as a whole.
3. **Elbow Tag:** Participants all get a partner and link at the elbow. Once linked they stand in a circle with the other linked pairs. Choose one pair to be the chaser and the person being chased. Once the chaser tags the person being chased, their roles reverse. The one being chased will link with someone in the circle and set their partner on the opposite side free, and that person will become the person who is being chased. Only the chaser may run through the circle.
4. **Table Orders:** Have youth split into groups of 6–10 and sit at a table. They will determine where the “head” of the table is. For each question they will arrange themselves clockwise, starting at the head of the table. Example questions: birthday by month and day, shoe size, height, number of broken bones, number of people in their household, etc.
5. **Speed Greeting:** Have an inner circle and an outer circle facing one another with the same number in each. Every 60 seconds, the outside circle will rotate clockwise after speaking to the person directly in front of them.
6. **Magic Shoes:** All participants will be stranded on a desert island and can only travel off the island with magic shoes. The shoes may only cross with a person wearing them one time. All participants must get to safety and leave the island. Mark a safe place and barriers to the island.

7. **Word Scramble:** Break into two teams and give each member of the team two sticky notes with letters from the alphabet. The agent will call a word that relates to camp, and each team must assemble from right to left facing the agent. The fastest team to assemble correctly will receive a point. Example words: camp, canoe, rifle, shoe, nurse, etc.
8. **Common Ground:** Pieces of paper will be placed on the floor throughout the room for participants to stand on, except for the first speaker. The person without a paper to stand on will say a statement about themselves or an experience they have had. Anyone who can agree or has done the same thing will race to any available sheet of paper. All who do not agree or have not had the experience will stay still on their sheet of paper. There will be a new person without a paper to stand on each time, and the game continues until everyone has had a turn.

Reflection and Application: Discuss the questions below with the group as a whole.

- Why are icebreakers important for a sense of belonging?
- How can team-building impact the camp week?
- Can everyone on the team fill the same role? If so, how does that work and if not, how can we determine what roles each counselor should play on the team?

Module 4: Preventing Bad Experiences

Unit 1: Risk Management

Time: 45 Minutes

Concept: Each counselor will influence the health and well-being of other camp participants. It is very important for counselors to learn to be present and take a quick inventory of the potential risks while being an active participant in camp activities.

Review Key Terms Below

Negligence: failure to take proper/reasonable care, resulting in injury or damage to property.

Liability: the state of being responsible by law.

Duty of Care: providing a standard of reasonable care and avoiding acts or omissions that could be seen as harmful to others.

Steps to Managing Risk

1. Risk awareness and identification

Strive to see potential consequences for both people and damage to property.

2. Evaluate the risk

Determine whether the risk is mild, moderate, or severe.

3. Risk control

Decide how to manage the risk: reduce, avoid or transfer the risk.

Examples: avoid by establishing rules, reduce by requiring everyone wear a life jacket on a kayak, transfer by having a waiver or insurance.

Activity Options: Have youth choose a location on camp, identify a risky feature or activity there, and then describe how they can make a plan to avoid or reduce the risk for that location and activity.

Reflection and Application: How can risks change and how can counselors prepare for changes to their risk plans?

Additional Resources

Schirick, E. (2014). *Risk Management- A Letter to Camp Staff*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/risk-management-open-letter-camp-staff>

Schirick, E. (n.d.). *Risk Management: Camp Management Liability- Evolving Risk*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/risk-management-camp-management-liability-%E2%80%94-evolving-risk>

Unit 2: Conflict Resolution

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

- Acting props if available

Concept: Group living and lack of rest can create a stressful environment, and people who are under stress are generally prone to conflicts. Conflict can arise when gathering different people together in close proximity. At camp people come from multiple counties and can easily have disagreements based on their different beliefs or backgrounds.

Counselors should strive to reduce, relieve, and remove conflict whenever possible. Counselors are asked to remain objective, open-minded, and reasonable so that they can provide an opinion from a neutral third party.

Activity: Ask counselors to choose a conflict that could happen at camp, then get a group of two or more together to develop a skit about the conflict. For their skits, one person must play counselor and any other actors can be counselors or campers. They can choose a conflict they have witnessed or been a part of or a conflict that has potential to happen during camp. Groups will have 5–10 minutes to make the skit. They can decide to show good conflict resolution or poor conflict resolution. The order of skit presentations can be assigned or by volunteer. After each skit is completed in front of the overall group, the counselors can decide if they think the conflict was handled well or poorly.

Reflection: Is it more difficult to solve a conflict as an outside party or as someone who is directly involved in the conflict? Instruct them to choose wisely and be able to defend their choice.

Additional Resources

Gross, G. (2016). *Conflict Resolution for Tweens and Teens*. *Huffington Post*. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-gail-gross/conflict-resolution-for-tweens-and-teens_b_8286108.html

Unit 4: Sensitive Issues

Time: 40 minutes

Concept: Counselors serve as the teen leadership team for the program. Extra emphasis must be put on modeling good behavior and setting the tone for the camp week by their actions.

Activity: Read off statements with tough conversations, statements, or happenings. Have the counselors evaluate whether or not the items will need to be reported, and if so, which leadership group they would subtly report the issue to.

- A camper pulls you aside and confides in you that she is being physically abused at home.
- Another counselor pulls you aside and begins talking badly about others in the counselor group.
- You walk past two people kissing on camp. It is consensual.
- Two campers are name-calling at the archery range.
- Cabin 3 is telling ghost stories while waiting for the showers and they are scaring your cabinmates.
- A male staff member keeps following the same counselor, showing favoritism, and asking the counselor for their phone number to connect after camp.
- An adult on camp is bullying a camper who is out of dress code, and the adult is not being professional.
- A camper's father recently passed away, and they are constantly upset and making sarcastic jokes and rude comments about death to cope.
- You have concerns about another camper or counselor who is rumored to be causing harm to themselves, and they are acting withdrawn and very private.

Review the importance of safe space and reporting anything that you see as inappropriate or important.

Furthermore, the agent should present what support will be given to counselors who respond to a traumatic situation at camp, such as grief counseling and emotional support.

Reflection and Application: Ask questions below to the group and have members discuss the questions together. Help guide them if counselors have any questions or concerns.

- How can we prevent some of these sensitive issues from happening at camp?
- If someone confides in you, how can you respond to make them feel comfortable?

Additional Resources

Ditter, B. (2015, May). *Handling Sensitive Issues that Campers Bring You*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/handling-sensitive-issues-campers-bring-you>

Unit 5: Banned Substances

Time: 20 minutes

Concept: Certain items are banned from camp to increase camper engagement, keep camp attendees safe, and reduce risk.

Activity: Review the list of banned items below and allow youth to ask questions about why items are banned.

- Cell phones and all personal technology devices
- Alcohol
- Medications that have not been properly submitted to the nurse for dispersal
- Recreational drugs
- Tobacco products
- Fireworks
- Firearms, knives, or anything else that could be considered a weapon
- Money or expensive items that are not needed for camp
- Lighters or matches
- Food or candy of any kind
- Pets that are not certified service animals

Reflection: Ask questions below.

- Should there be consequences for people who break the rules and bring a banned substance?
- Would having an amnesty period where youth could turn in banned items during the first few hours be a good way to get youth to follow the rules because they wouldn't get in trouble if items were turned in by the specified time?

Application: You are in your cabin cleaning and find a cell phone on the night stand as well as food stored in a camper's area. How do you handle the situation?

Additional Resources

Smith, A. (2012). *No Cellphones at Summer Camp- Acceptable or Archaic?* Retrieved from <http://mashable.com/2012/06/25/no-cellphones-summer-camp/#Pi4CYyOfvgqY>

Module 5: Working with Youth and Providing a Great Experience for Campers

Unit 1: General Discipline

Time: 15 minutes

Materials

- 1 slip of red paper for each participant
- 1 slip of yellow paper for each participant
- 1 slip of green paper for each participant
- List of behavior choices for agent to read from

Concept: When rules or policies are disregarded at camp, there must be consequences. Consequences help prevent the same youth breaking rules repeatedly without remorse. At camp, discipline is primarily addressed by the camp staff and the adults at camp, but the chain of command allows junior and senior counselors to help redirect behavior too.

Activity: Refer back to the chain of command document so that counselors have a visual reminder of the roles at camp. From there, assign the following colors: **red = camp director or agent**, **yellow = camp staff or program director**, **green = junior or senior counselors**. Give each youth a small slip of paper in each of the three colors. The agent will read behaviors, and the counselors must raise the color for which member of the camping team should address the poor behavior choice.

Examples:

- Two campers disagreeing on their bunk selection = green
- Counselor keeps leaving youth in cabin unattended = red
- Campers are at waterfront without directions to do so or lifeguard present = yellow

Reflection: What does it mean to redirect behavior, and is it effective? How can redirecting behavior be effective or ineffective?

Additional Resources

American Camp Association (2016). *Behavior and Discipline Guidelines*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/sites/default/.../05-HR-Behavior-and-Discipline-6-16.doc>

Unit 2: Accountability

Time: 20 minutes

Materials

- Directions worksheet for each participant
- 1 writing utensil for each participant

Concept: Being accountable and responsible for your actions is very important, especially when working as a part of a team. Accountability promotes trust within the group, improves ownership, and promotes maturity.

Activity: For this unit, the activity will be done first without any preface. The activity is a worksheet that youth will complete by reading and following the directions. They must wait until time is called to submit the worksheet, and they are instructed only to read the instructions and begin quickly because there is limited time. Once the worksheet is handed out, the agent will stand aside with a 6–8-minute timer set and not answer any questions.

The directions game recap: ask for counselors to turn in the document and for volunteers to share their experience with the game.

Ask the group:

- Did they follow the instructions or get caught up in the worry about time and skip the instructions?
- Did anyone blame the agent for not sharing more information or for giving a short time to complete the task?

Reflection: Is 4-H a safe place to make a mistake and be accountable for it?

Additional Resources

Leiken, J. (2004). *Transitioning Teens in to Responsible Young Adults*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/camping-magazine/transitioning-teens-responsible-young-adults>

Unit 3: First Aid and Medical Needs

Time: 45–75 minutes, depending on guest speaker

Materials

- 1 worksheet for each youth
- 1 writing utensil for each youth
- Flip chart or whiteboard
- Bold-tip marker

Concept: Establishing a care team at camp is essential, and this team should be easily accessible for the counselor team.

Care Team Roles:

Nurse or Medical Staff: Will give daily medicines and assess the need for further medical attention in extreme cases. Try to recruit a volunteer who works in the medical field to serve in this role. They could be an EMT, nurse, doctor, etc. At minimum, they should be first-aid and CPR certified; ideally, they will possess a medical license. Must keep log of all care.

Camp Staff: Will be first-aid and CPR certified and can provide basic care such as bandages, ice packs, etc.

Counselors: Will be able to identify whether medical attention is needed and if so, what to do until help arrives.

Activity:

Great Human Hunt is an activity where the returning counselors (if available) or more experienced participants will serve as the human patients. They will be given an index card with symptoms to read when the care team of counselors comes to assess the situation.

Groups of 2–4 will establish care teams and seek out patients around the room to ask questions, attempt to stabilize them, and help them get the care that they need.

Examples: bug bites, allergic reaction to food, homesickness, fainting, dehydration, etc.

Reflection and Application:

- Was there a medical issue today that your group was unable to solve? If so, what would be the best way to handle the situation?
- Looking forward to the camp week, what is one medical situation that could happen at camp that you would like to learn more about to be best prepared for your role?

Additional Resources

American Camp Association (2017). *Health and Wellness Standards Resources*. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/accreditation-standards/health-wellness-standards-resources>

Unit 4: Emergency Policies and Procedures

Time: 35 minutes

Materials

- 1 worksheet for each youth
- 1 writing utensil for each youth
- Flip chart or whiteboard
- Bold-tip marker

Concept: Emergencies at camp do happen, and no two emergencies are the same. It is important to outline the potential emergencies with a plan of action so that all camp participants are safe.

Activity: Make a list of potential emergencies as a group, then have the overall group break out into subgroups of 2–3. Assign each group one emergency and allow each group 10 minutes to address it by completing a plan. Each group will then present together. After each presentation, allow the rest of the group to provide feedback and suggest changes as needed.

Examples: Fire, sinking kayak, near-drowning at the waterfront, intruder on camp, missing person, thunderstorm at waterfront, loss of electricity, etc.

Debrief and Application: Give helpful tips for handling a crisis that counselors can apply to each situation.

1. Keep calm. Do not panic.
2. Be clear and short with directions.
3. Find the appropriate level of help—lifeguard, nurse, etc.
4. Have facts ready and be direct.
5. Do not spread fear or drama.
6. Be safe as the main goal.

Additional Resources

Mickelson, R., S. Yoder. (2015) Emergency Preparedness. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/emergency-preparedness>

American Camp Association. (2016). *Emergency Procedures Sample*. [Fact sheet] Retrieved from www.acacamps.org/sites/default/files/.../04-OM-Emergency-Procedures-sample.doc

American Camp Association. (2016). ACA Standards and Crisis Planning. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/aca-standards-crisis-planning>

Module 6: Beyond Camp

Unit 1: Expanding 4-H Participation and Camp as a Delivery Mode

Time: 30 minutes

Materials

- 1 sheet of blank, lined paper for each counselor
- 1 writing utensil for each counselor

Concept: 4-H camp is recognized as a delivery mode for the 4-H program because it is an educational, experiential learning environment that is proven to have a lasting impact on youth, despite the short time frame of the program.

Camp may be the first introduction to the 4-H program for some youth, or a way to get members more engaged with 4-H projects that interest them. Counselors should try to recruit new youth to join 4-H if they are not involved and encourage or inspire youth members who are interested in further involvement in the 4-H program.

Activity: Discuss the ways that counselors can promote the 4-H program while at camp and during the rest of the year.

Have each one write a short story ½–1 page about their 4-H experience and why they choose to do 4-H. Give youth 10 minutes to complete the task and ask for volunteers to share with the group to practice telling their stories. In writing these short stories, youth are preparing something that can be shared with their campers or other youth.

The American Camp Association says:

Organized camping is a sustained experience that provides creative, recreational, and educational opportunities in group living in the outdoors. It utilizes trained leadership and the resources of our natural surroundings to contribute to each camper's mental, physical, social, and spiritual growth.

Reflection: Give each counselor candidate the Life Skills Wheel and explain its purpose. Ask youth the two questions below and discuss as a group.

- What life skills can youth learn at camp?
- What is the most valuable thing camp has taught you?



Unit 2: Guidelines for Camper, Counselor, and Staff Contact

Time: 20 minutes

Concept: While at camp, people build lasting relationships with friends. These friendships can be camper-camper, camper-counselor, counselor-counselor, counselor-camp staff, camper-camp staff, etc. Many youth want these friendships to continue after camp, and modern technology enables youth to connect in a variety of ways.

Activity: Review Guidelines for Appropriate Communications after Camp (see below).

1. Only use public communication forums unless the friend is in the same age bracket (e.g., camper-camper or counselor-counselor contact).
2. Do not use direct message or private message features. This will protect counselors and staff members from potential allegations of misconduct.
3. Only allow people access to your page if all material is age-appropriate for them.
4. You are a role model and a representative of the camp program, so do not link your personal page to the program or camp pages if content is inappropriate.
5. Do not privately meet up with anyone who is not in your age bracket at camp unless it is a mentor, you choose a group meeting place, and parents/guardians approve of this choice.
6. Do not post any photos of campers without consent from their parent/guardian, and do not post any photos of counselors without their consent.
7. All complaints or reports filed to the Extension office about inappropriate contact using social media, personal technology devices, etc. will be reviewed on an annual basis with application for rehire in mind.

Debrief and Application: Beat the Clock

State a scenario for a hangout or use of communication between counselors, campers, and staff. Then, give students ten seconds to confer with peers before you call on a random student to answer whether or not the contact follows the guidelines. Repeat.

Example statements: private messaging another counselor to make plans for rooming together at the next overnight 4-H event, a counselor accepting a friend request from a camper, a camp staff member taking a counselor to a movie, etc.

Additional Resources

Hansen-Stamp, C., C. Gregg. (2014). Camp Staff Use of Electronic Devices and Social Media: Some Issues and Solutions. Retrieved from <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/articles/camp-staff-use-electronic-devices-social-media-some-issues-solutions>

Unit 3: Continuing Respect for Nature and the Environment

Time: 120 minutes

Materials

- 1 pack with fire-building materials (or grill if building a fire is not an option)
- Sticks for roasting food over the fire
- Desired ingredient(s) for meal or snack

Concept: Camp is an outdoor classroom with the ability to educate youth on environmental science and nature. With more youth living in populated areas and spending a majority of their time indoors, camps are needed to help youth foster an appreciation for the outdoors.

Activity: In this activity youth will practice responsible behavior by cleaning up the outdoors, learning about habitats and the environment around them, and not harming any of their natural surroundings.

Youth will go on a scenic nature walk and practice leaving no trace while doing team-building and using outdoor skills. Youth will bring a grill or build a fire and cook a meal on it, then clean up the area, leaving no litter or remnants of the activity behind. While walking on the trail, youth will be educated on poisonous plants, wildlife encounters, and the importance of respect for the living classroom.

Reflection: Ask questions below and have youth share their answers with the group.

- Camp is an adventure. What are you most excited to discover or see this summer?
- Why is it important to leave places, especially natural environments, better than we found them?
- What benefits can be received from an outdoor classroom that are not possible when learning inside?

Additional Resources

Louv, R. (2008). *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill.

Appendix

Frequently Asked Questions to Prepare For

Some of these questions require different answers depending on camp facility, camp cluster, etc. If you are unable to answer any of these questions, contact your resident camp director, cluster lead agent, or state camping coordinator.

What does the camp schedule generally look like?

Why doesn't camp allow cell phones and personal technology devices?

Why should people choose Florida 4-H Camp? Who supervises youth at camp?

What are the facilities like at camp?

Can youth who are not 4-H members attend camp and/or become counselors? Is there a discount for low-income families?

How do I apply for the summer food program? How much does it cost for counselors to attend?

Can my child room with their older sibling at camp? Can parents visit camp?

Can my child call me while they are away at camp? How close is the nearest hospital to camp?

What is the driving distance from our county to camp? Can I send mail to my child at camp?

Can I send a care package to camp?

Can we invite family members or friends who are visiting for the summer?

If a child has a developmental disability, do you follow their age when assigning cabins? Are roommate requests always honored?

How many adults are at camp and what is the ratio of youth to adults?

My child is on medications to modify behavior during the year. Should we send them to camp?

My child has dietary restrictions. Can the camp accommodate this or do I need to make arrangements to send food?

General Reflection and Debrief Activities

The reflection piece in an activity is often the most important part. Take the time to ask tough questions, encourage deep thought, and review. This will help youth gain a great understanding for the activities and content and will also aid youth in applying the information to their role as a camp counselor.

Highs and Lows: Make a large circle and have youth name the high point of their day and a low point or challenge in their day.

Me Too!: Someone makes a statement about something they struggled with at camp or a celebration for the day, and if others had the same experience, they shout "Me too!" and link arms. Continue until everyone is linked together.

Story Scribbles: Have youth draw a picture of their favorite part of the day. Another option is to use story dice and have each youth choose the picture on the dice that best relates to their day. Share with the group once pictures are drawn or selected.

Web of Appreciation: Take a ball of yarn and have the first person hold it, then in random order have youth choose someone they appreciated today and what they did to gain their appreciation. Each time someone is selected the speaker holds on to one piece of the yarn and throws it to the person they complimented, go around until everyone has gone and a web is built. Stress that a web cannot be built with one connection and that all parties are needed and appreciated for making the camp week successful.

Snow Storm: Have each counselor get a small slip of paper and a pencil. Ask them to write a question for someone regarding their day, experience at camp, etc. Examples could be: best part of your day, favorite activity, biggest challenge, most frustrating thing that happened, etc. Crumple the paper into a snow ball and throw them into the middle of the floor. Each person then picks up a snowball and reads the question and their answer to the question for everyone to hear. Go around until all snowballs are read and answered.

Exit Interview: Make a list of questions following the camp week to ask counselors. Preferably this would be with all adult camp advisors in a face-to-face format, but an email survey could also suffice. Ask questions about their level of confidence in terms of training background, how they can use their skills learned in the future, and whether they plan to return to the camping team next year.

Counselor Application Questions

Easy one-page reference for annual camp files

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Youth Email Address: _____

Parent Email Address: _____

4-H member (y/n)? _____ Age as of 9/1 of the current school year: _____

Race: _____ Ethnicity: _____

List 3 past volunteer experiences where you worked with children. Please describe the organization and what you did there.

Describe any camp experiences you have and which camps they were at. Why are you interested in becoming a 4-H Camp counselor?

What characteristics do you have that make you unique?

What are some other activities that you are involved with? Please list school or extracurricular clubs, sports, and hobbies.

Please answer the following questions using a scale of 1–10, with 10 being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

1. How well do you cope with stress?
2. How well do you keep a positive attitude in tough situations?
3. How well do you handle confrontation?
4. How well can you communicate your feelings and ideas with others?
5. How much do you enjoy working with children?
6. How mature are you?
7. How comfortable are you speaking with adults?

Please list 2 references who have knowledge of your qualifications but are not related to you, and their contact information.

Counselor Signature

Date

Parent/Gaurdian Signature

Date

An Equal Opportunity Institution.

Potential Interview Questions

Take 5 minutes to interview each of your counselor candidates. Example questions are below.

Share with me the reasons why you would like to be a camp counselor. What is your strongest quality that will aid you in being a camp counselor? What is an area that you require growth in to be a better camp counselor?

Scenario: You have a camper who is disengaged from the group and is crying. He has asked to go home. What do you do?

Scenario: You are walking your campers down to the waterfront and a camper steps over a snake sunning itself. What do you do?

When you tell people about camp, what do you tell them? If you were a kitchen tool, what would you be and why?

Is your preference to work with older youth or younger youth at camp? What led you to make this choice?

What is the most important lesson that you have learned at counselor training?

Scenario: Half of your cabin is finished showering, but you, your co-counselor, and 3 other campers still need a turn at the bathhouse. Do you send the campers who are finished back or have them wait for everyone to return to the cabin?

What is the importance of head counts at camp?

What is something you are passionate about and why?

What are your goals for this year?

Scenario: Two counselors are pairing off and excluding the group of campers and counselors. They are gossiping about others on camp and being openly judgmental. How do you handle it?

Scenario: A parent appears at the camp facility and wants to take their child out of your cabin and bring them home on Tuesday. What do you do?

Scenario: A camper wets the bed Wednesday night; how do you handle the situation and avoid embarrassment for the camper?

How do you facilitate fun when plans change? (Example: kayaking is cancelled due to thunderstorm.)

What animal best represents your personality and disposition? Why?